

Meet THE Heads

WHAT IS THE TRUE CHARACTER OF AN EDINBURGH HEAD TEACHER? STRICT AND SCARY? SECURE AND SOUND? WE ASKED SOME INDEPENDENT SCHOOL HEAD TEACHERS TO GIVE US AN INSIGHT, IN A FEW WORDS, ABOUT THEIR LIFE AND WORK.

Head: Lesley Franklin

Age: 51

School:

George Heriot's School

Children: Two daughters – aged 17 and 20

Favourite TV programme:

Masterchef – I love to cook!

What was your favourite subject at school: PE

What one song would be on your Desert Island play list:

John Martyn 'Spencer the Rover'

Your Desert island book:

Robin Jenkins 'The Thistle and the Grail'

What do you like most about your job?

The variety – every day is different

What is the hardest part of your job?

Balancing everyone's needs

What do you think gives your school its edge?

The hard work and kindness of our pupils

If your philosophy of life could be summarised

on a car sticker, what would it say?

Be grateful and be positive!



 George Heriot's School
Founded 1628

Head: Mark Lauder

Age: 50

School: Strathallan School

Children: 2 – William (16) and James (14)

Favourite TV programme:

The West Wing (while on) or Have I Got News For You.

What was your favourite subject at school: History

What one song would be on your Desert Island play list:

Dire Straits "Going Home" (from Local Hero)

Your Desert Island book: Robert Graves 'I Claudias'

What do you like most about your job?

Time speaking to pupils

What is the hardest part of your job?

Trying to be in three places at once!

What do you think gives your school its edge?

A strong pastoral care underpins ambition and success – pupils strive to succeed as a result.

If your philosophy of life could be summarised

on a car sticker, what would it say?

'Dare Greatly'



 STRATHALLAN
Excellence for all to meet

Rector: Barry Welsh

Age: 48

School: Edinburgh Academy

Children: 2 boys, Robbie (10) and Oscar (7)

Favourite TV programme:

Scrapheap Challenge (when it was still airing!) but now most probably Masterchef – that's ageing for you!!

What was your favourite subject at school: Geography

What one song would be on your Desert Island play list:

The Gael (Theme from Last of the Mohicans)

Your Desert island book:

The Ascent of Rum Doodle by W. E. Bowman.

A bit niche, but a funny book for those attempting big



mountain expeditions.

What do you like most about your job?

It changes every day – no two days are the same – ever!

What is the hardest part of your job?

Trying to 'prioritise' fairly when everything that is presented to me is someone's priority and a reflection of someone's passion and interest.

What do you think gives your school its edge?

Our community – belonging to the Academy means a great deal to all who go to school or work here. Our strong community allows for a powerful character education to partner the excellent academic education that all our students receive.

If your philosophy of life could be summarised

on a car sticker, what would it say?

"Never, never, never, give up."



Head: Melvyn Roffe

Age: 53

School: George Watson's College

Children: 2 (a daughter aged 23 working in Armenia and a son age 21 working in London)



Favourite TV programme: (Ever) The West Wing (Recent) House of Cards

What was your favourite subject at school: English

What one song would be on your Desert Island play list: *Total Eclipse of The Heart* (Bonnie Tyler - I know, but it's a long story...)

Your Desert Island book: *Waterland* by Graham Swift

What do you like most about your job? The incredible variety of people I get to meet

What is the hardest part of your job?

Remembering the names of the incredible variety of people I get to meet

What do you think gives your school its edge?

Big school benefits; small school feel

If your philosophy of life could be summarised on a car sticker, what would it say?

"Feel the drunkenness of things being various"



Head: Rod Grant

Age: 53

School: Clifton Hall

Children: Amos (10)

Favourite TV programme:

Line of Duty

What was your favourite subject at school: English

What one song would be on your Desert Island play list:

You to me are everything (The Real Thing)

Your Desert Island book:

The Outsider by Albert Camus

What do you like most about your job?

Being the boss of course

What is the hardest part of your job?

I'm an optimist so I don't see any part of my job as being 'the hardest'. There are times when you can feel disappointed by a student's behaviour, upset by a parent or staff member's opposition to change but, largely, my job is an overwhelming joy.

What do you think gives your school its edge?

Inclusivity; celebrating the individual; collective vision.

If your philosophy of life could be summarised on a car sticker, what would it say?

Have conviction in what you believe.



Head: Mark Becher

Age: 52

School: The Compass School

Children:

Two daughters:
2 years old and 23 years old



Favourite TV programme:

I have watched and enjoyed the series Homeland since its inception. Most recently I have enjoyed McMafia and The Night Watchman; therefore, I suppose thrillers with an international dimension must be my favourite viewing!

What was your favourite subject at school:

There was not one subject in particular, though as I went on to do a history degree, I suppose that subject must be up there as a favourite!

What one song would be on your Desert Island play list:

Dignity (Deacon Blue) – it has many memories and stories wrapped up in it!

Your Desert Island book:

Again, there is not one that stands out above the rest. I have enjoyed the Ian Rankin/Detective Rebus series and international thrillers also appeal.

What do you like most about your job?

Being able to lead and manage a very happy and successful school at the same time as being able to have time to teach and work with children; the latter which is often difficult for those in school leadership to achieve due to their many other demands on their time.

What is the hardest part of your job?

Making time for everybody; so important in ensuring that children, parents and staff always feel valued.

What do you think gives your school its edge?

It's size and our strong sense of family and belonging; our small class sizes and school roll (130) at The Compass ensure that every child receives high levels of support and attention.

If your philosophy of life could be summarised on a car sticker, what would it say?

Make the most of every new day!





Head: Rob Taylor
Age: 50
School: Cargilfield School
Children: Andrew (17), Edward (14), Laura (11)
Favourite TV programme: Match of the Day

What was your favourite subject at school: History

What one song would be on your Desert Island play list: *Wild West Hero* – Electric Light Orchestra

Your Desert Island book: *Howard's End*

What do you like most about your job? Teaching

What is the hardest part of your job? Finding time for everything

What do you think gives your school its edge? Longer days but no homework in Upper School

If your philosophy of life could be summarised on a car sticker, what would it say? Be kind



Head: Dr Michael Carslaw
Age: The new 40
School: St Leonards
Children: Three daughters all away at universities
Favourite TV programme: Six Nations

What was your favourite subject at school: History

What one song would be on your Desert Island play list: *The Lark Ascending* by Vaughan Williams

Your Desert Island book: Any book by Dostoyevsky

What do you like most about your job? Its unpredictability

What is the hardest part of your job? Its unpredictability

What do you think gives your school its edge? Our traditional approach with a twist: we embrace the IB, have an amazing community of full, weekly, flexi-boarders and day students and we are in a stunning seaside location in the heart of St Andrews

If your philosophy of life could be summarised on a car sticker, what would it say? Lifelong learner



Head: Jonathan Anderson
Age: 43
School: Merchiston Castle School
Children: Two girls; Emily (3 years old) and Matilda (3 weeks old)

Favourite TV programme: Only Connect. I enjoy the puzzles, even though I struggle to answer many/most of them.

What was your favourite subject at school: I studied Geography at university, but I really enjoyed History at school and continue to take a keen interest in Modern History in particular.

What one song would be on your Desert Island play list: Anything by Radiohead - a band of my teenage years that I still enjoy listening to.

Your Desert Island book: *The Rider* by Tim Krabbe - a book that captures the culture and drama of road cycle-racing and appeals to the frustrated road racer in me!

What do you like most about your job? Working with young people every day and helping them

prepare for their lives after school. I am not a fan of the 'snowflake generation' tag; I think young people today do not and will not have it easy, so it is important that we equip them with the skills that will allow them to compete in an ever changing world.

What is the hardest part of your job?

There are not many aspects of my job that I dislike, but the parts I find the hardest are those that distract me from the core purpose of getting the best out of our pupils.

What do you think gives your school its edge?

The fact that we are able to tailor what we offer to meet the needs of the boys in our care; relentless focus on the individual is something we take great pride in delivering.

If your philosophy of life could be summarised on a car sticker, what would it say?

In my school days, I was a reasonably successful athlete and my coach at the time had a well-used maxim he often shared with us. I have never forgotten it and think that it is not a bad philosophy to follow: 'Reach for the top of the tree and you may not get off the ground. Reach for the moon and you might get to the top of the tree'.



Head: Dr Graham Hawley

Age: 53

School: Loretto

Children: Daughter 18 years old; son 17

Favourite TV programme:

Test match cricket or major golf championship

What was your favourite subject at school: Biology

What one song would be on your Desert Island play list: *Soul Limbo* (theme music to Test Match Special)

Your Desert Island book:

Assuming I have a copy of the Bible my additional book would be Hugh Falkus' *Salmon Fishing*: entertaining and useful for survival

What do you like most about your job?

Strong sense of purpose – educating the next generation to solve the problems created by my generation

What is the hardest part of your job?

Balancing priorities

What do you think gives your school its edge?

The warmth of a community that allows children to 'have a go' without fearing failure

If your philosophy of life could be summarised on a car sticker, what would it say?

Never fear failure



Head: Emma Rattigan

Age: 38

School: Edinburgh Montessori Arts School

Children: Mine or the school? 3 and 75 respectively!

Favourite TV programme:

Anything narrated by David Attenborough

What was your favourite subject at school:

A combination of Art, Science and Geography – nothing can be learned in isolation right?

What one song would be on your Desert Island play list:

Chopin Nocturnes

Your Desert Island book:

The Wind Up Bird Chronicles by Haruki Murakami

What do you like most about your job?

Seeing the children blossom and adapting our school as they grow.

What is the hardest part of your job?

Not having enough hours in a day, ever.

What do you think gives your school its edge?

The benefits for the children of Maria Montessori's awesome approach.

If your philosophy of life could be summarised on a car sticker, what would it say?

Teach Peace



Head: Mrs Alex Hems

Age: 48

School: St George's School for Girls

Children: Two daughters aged 11 and 12

Favourite TV programme:

I hardly watch any television but The Great British Bake Off is a regular fixture for the whole family.

What was your favourite subject at school:

English, with History a close second

What one song would be on your Desert Island play list:

Impossible to choose between Aretha Franklin and Annie Lennox singing *Sisters are Doing it For Themselves* and the *Agnus Dei* from Fauré's Requiem

Your Desert island book:

George Eliot's *Middlemarch*, for its wisdom and humanity, and plenty of characters to people my island with.



What do you like most about your job?

The creativity and love of learning that I see in the young people and hard-working professionals with whom I am lucky enough to spend my time.

What is the hardest part of your job?

In a busy and vibrant school there is always so much going on, and sadly I have not yet mastered being in two places at once.

What do you think gives your school its edge?

We are large enough to be able to offer a really wide range of subjects and opportunities but small enough to offer flexibility in a setting in which every girl can be truly well known and supported to be the very best she can be.

If your philosophy of life could be summarised on a car sticker, what would it say?

Never waste a moment, but always take time to be kind.

