



FUTURE FWD
ENABLING NEXTGEN

REVIEW & NEXT STEPS

5 February 2023

Warwick
Schools
Foundation



**FUTURE
FWD**

2023

DATES CONFIRMED: 3-4 JULY

**REGISTER YOUR
ATTENDANCE NOW**

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A VEHICLE CREATED TO DRIVE CHANGE...



As a vehicle for driving dynamic, radical change in the education sector, Future Fwd is committed to enabling students to thrive in society and their careers as a result of education, rather than simply to survive. In particular,

- Future Fwd identified impatience amongst delegates to drive forward and implement significant change in the school education sector.
- A strength of the conference was that time was given to listen to and engage with the views of the coming generation in their wish to forge substantial change in a world where conventional ways of doing things have proved untenable and unsustainable.
- Through the Future Fwd vehicle, ongoing, progressive conversations across society, influencing education policy and the delivery of education are possible.
- Future Fwd demonstrated ways in which young people could be empowered to take on the immense challenges of the future with confidence, empathy and effectiveness.
- Future Fwd championed the educational balance between an essential, human dimension driving creativity, empathy and societal change, and a dynamic and complementary use of automation, artificial intelligence and quantum computing, to forge a better world.
- Future Fwd demonstrated the commitment to ensuring that education fully plays its central role in the formation of a dynamic, successful, humane and sustainable society, capitalising on past successes whilst driving organic, creative change.

...BROUGHT PEOPLE TOGETHER...

Future Fwd began as a two day conference convened in Warwick at the start of July 2022.

Its brief was simple: to bring together people from across the country to discuss the future of education, particularly in schools, and to bring about significant positive change within the national education sector in England and more widely.

Richard Nicholson, Foundation Principal at the Warwick Schools Foundation, outlined his hopes for the conference in his opening address to delegates.

This paper aims to bring into being concrete actions arising out of the discussions which took place at the conference.



Simply by coming together we are making an important statement. We are setting aside time ... to engage in vital and urgent dialogue. That conversation is about the future of education.

It is my hope that our deliberations will result in tangible support for curriculum development, stronger links across education sectors, and a more joined-up approach between education, industry and commerce.

What has struck me is the need for granular solutions to challenges and opportunities we know exist. We will be creating our conference 'white paper' to share our thoughts, good practice, advice, and – I hope – to start moving the dial, however slowly, on future-ready key skill development.

...TO INSPIRE, COLLABORATE AND INNOVATE...

Delegates came from across the United Kingdom and from various sectors of the economy. Education was comprehensively represented, both at school and university level, but there were also delegates from industry, business, politics and local communities.

A defining feature of the conference was its focus on 'next gen' and 'generation Z', spotlighting the views of 'generation Z' on education, work and careers. The emphasis here was on listening: recognising that the careers of 'generation Z' are already looking very different from traditional career models, the conference aimed to understand better the way in which the expectations of 'generation Z' concerning education, work and life are changing rapidly, and how these expectations might define and influence future career trends.

All participants in the conference were energised by the challenge laid down by the brief: to take the best of the conversations, discussions and debates, and to bring the most innovative and positive ideas into the realm of practice, forging change and improvement in education, thus bringing about transformative change in the lives of young people of current and future generations, equipping them all to make substantial contributions to the betterment and advancement of society.





...BY SHARING IDEAS

Papers, presentations, discussions, dialogues, Q and A sessions – as well as informal dialogue arising from the vital chance encounters which conferences bring about – all contributed to the ideas which are outlined in this document.

What was striking about the conference was the extent to which delegates were united in their conviction that education needs to change, and that it needs to do so in order to enable young people to take their place as drivers of substantial, positive change in the society to which they are preparing to contribute.

Conference delegates see the future not as an intimidating and alien place dominated by malevolent uses of automation and artificial intelligence, but rather as a place where enhanced, sophisticated ‘human skills’ must be affirmed and empowered to lead positive change, supported by a complementary deployment of the best of technology.

The focus of the conference was on school education, and thus the resulting recommendations focused on the school sector in England, primary and secondary, state and independent.

Special education was represented through the work of Evergreen School and its Head. More on this sector and on primary years will be explored at Future Fed 2023.

CONTEXT TO THE DISCUSSION

As part of the run-up to the conference, MTM Consulting conducted a survey on perceptions of education from a representative sample of UK-based parents. The report from this survey, delivered at the conference, helped shape an understanding of where mainstream views might lie in respect of the conference's theme of the education of the future. MTM Consulting's excellent survey report suggested that over half of parents of current school-age students feel that the current curriculum offerings of schools prepare children well or very well for an uncertain future, whilst a fifth do not.

Traditional skills such as reading, writing and social skills featured high on the list of 'important features' of education, whilst – disappointingly in the view of a number of conference delegates – the arts, drama and music were seen as less important. Interestingly, though, whilst confidence amongst parents was high that schools are preparing students well for the 'working world', there was strong evidence nevertheless that parents are keen to see creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving and life-skills featuring prominently in the curriculum of the future.

Views from current students and representatives of 'Generation Z' were represented throughout the conference, and emphasised that conventional careers are seen as unattractive in a post-Covid world, and that job applicants are clear about wanting to prioritise a versatile, creative, healthy, holistic work / life balance once established in the world of work. 'Generation Z' is enthusiastic about a portfolio approach to career-building, capitalising on online communications (and particularly the creative use of social media), working from home, and a proactive approach to managing the balance between work and leisure.





**KEY
INITIAL
RECOMMENDATIONS**

ARTS & CULTURE

- Understand the importance of the Arts in developing whole human beings.
- Integrate arts and creativity multifariously and substantially into the complete fibre of everyday school life – e.g. singing the class register in primary schools.
- Reverse recent decline in basic arts provision in schools, establishing understanding of and participation in the arts as a fundamental building-block of future-proof education.
- Prepare students to be happy and fulfilled human beings, focusing not just on employability but equally on creativity.
- Enable students to find their passions and to develop entrepreneurial mindsets.
- Through the Arts teach students systematically how to be resilient, as this will be a key attribute needed in order to manage change in career and life.
- Teach students to listen effectively, to develop empathy, and to connect with others, in order to build change and cultivate success.
- Educate teachers in the benefits of arts and creativity through broader and more imaginative teacher training.
- Collate and articulate findings of research which demonstrates the centrality of the arts and creativity in building success, individual and societal.



BUSINESS & INDUSTRY

- Include business and industry at the heart of discussions on education and its future.
- Develop close, ongoing dialogue with business and industry such that the training needs of the future are met proactively and strategically by the education sector.
- Draw on the existing contributions made by business and industry to the educational sector, and integrate business and industry into innovative, forward-thinking provision in schools.



CAREERS GUIDANCE

- High quality, imaginative career guidance is needed at every stage in every school, delivering consistent guidance, supported by and integrated into the curriculum.
- Set up structured, creative, active dialogue and collaboration with business and industry in devising and implementing a careers curriculum.
- Integrate the expertise of alumni and parents in presenting diverse career paths to students.
- Create time within school life to ensure that the provision can be delivered effectively.
- Careers education must also educate for happy and fulfilled lives – not all of life is about employed work, and happy and balanced employees are the most productive and successful.
- Careers education must emphasise that careers of the future will enable students to leverage their passions and interests – thus careers guidance must complement what students are discovering about themselves through arts and creativity.

CURRICULUM & LEARNING

- Skills, rather than subject-knowledge alone, demand a central place in the curriculum of the future: these skills include creativity, critical thinking, collaboration and communication.
- An appropriate balance in the curriculum between skills, knowledge and content is imperative.

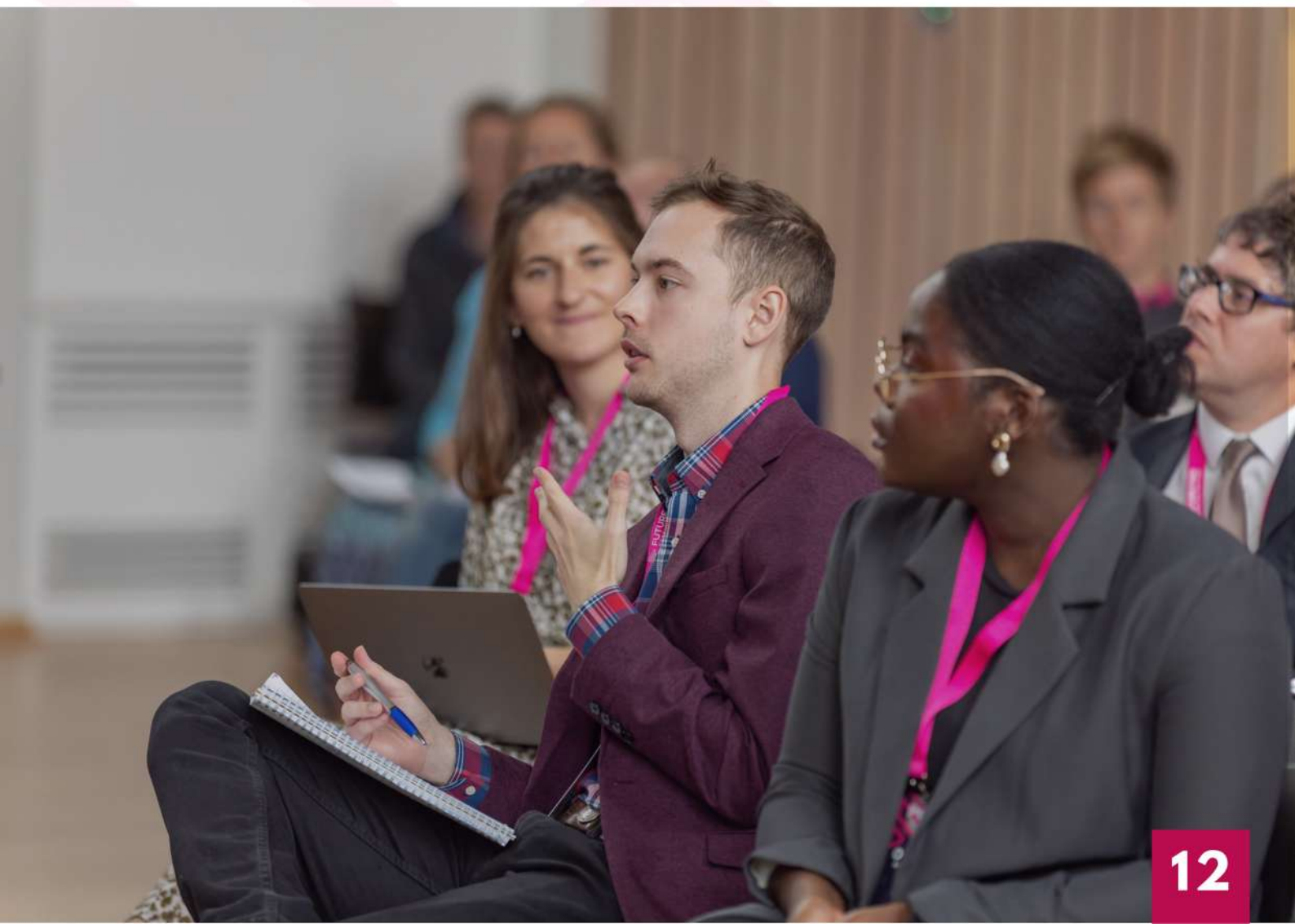


- Cross-curricular learning opportunities and projects need to feature large in the curriculum, especially opportunities that enable students to engage with real-world scenarios and problems, evaluating, assessing and thinking effectively.
- At ages 14 - 16, for example, the number of GCSE subjects needs to be subordinated to balance better knowledge and skills. Additionally, alternative courses to GCSEs need to be explored, devised and trialled.
- Build new curriculum in collaboration with teacher-training providers to ensure coherence and to empower teachers to deliver effectively.
- From the curriculum to the means of assessment – there needs to be complete redefinition – moving away from assessing pupils by their ability to ‘recall and remember’ facts and being coached to pass summative assessments, to an education system where creativity is rewarded: a system in which ability is defined by how an individual is able to access information and apply it to solve a problem.
- In partnership with stakeholders from academia and industry, and in conversation with our Gen Z stakeholders, new content needs to be integrated into the curriculum to reflect major global developments and areas of innovation.



ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- Cultivate entrepreneurial attitudes and aptitudes from primary upwards.
- Focus on entrepreneurship in schools by introducing basic 'business education' at GCSE level or earlier; clear space in the curriculum to do so.
- Cultivate an entrepreneurship culture in schools by removing the fear of failure from the minds of students, instead encouraging experimentation through 'real world' trial of business ideas, stage by stage.
- Encourage students to find entrepreneurial motivation by identifying, developing and following their passions.
- Incorporate entrepreneurship into the mainstream school curriculum, using successes in entrepreneurship education from the less regulated private sector to influence and shape curriculum design in the more regulated state sector.



LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION



Leadership in education:

- Needs to be clear about its purpose:
 - To prepare pupils for life, and to prepare them to change the world for the better;
 - To give young people confidence and a sense of service (rather than a sense of entitlement) so that they ask, ‘What can I give?’ before ‘What can I gain?’
 - To enable positive access for all – to open doors, widen possibilities and enable young people to navigate the different paths ahead of them;
 - To involve strong representation and integration with a focus on diversity, inclusion, equity and justice.
- Needs to serve across communities, building collaboration across society, and communicating clearly.
- Needs to have time to think and to develop vision and strategy, articulating clear, sustainable priorities, not short-term ‘headliners’.
- Needs to share good practice across the schools sector, fostering creative, collaborative operations.
- Needs to establish clear vision for education, underlining to politicians and policy-makers that ‘less is more’, thus moving away from a quantity-and-results-driven qualification culture, towards a broader, holistic view of education as fostering informed and effective student self-realisation, enabling students to drive sustainable change in building a better future.

IT, EDTECH & TECHNOLOGICAL PROGRESS



- All education in the use of technological advances should empower students and enhance their success, thus **'teaching them how to stand on the shoulders of tech'**.
- Digital native IT literacy must be cultivated in all students in preparation for their careers and aspirations.



- Integrate tech and IT education into the whole curriculum and into the overall educational experience.
- Make time to develop truly effective IT strategy so that its benefits support innovative education.
- Ensure that all school staff are trained properly to deliver benefits of technology.

**WHAT
SPECIFICALLY
IS
COMING
NEXT?**

Future Fwd 2023 dates have been set as 3-4 July 2023.

- Further engagement with Gen Z to explore their ideas concerning careers and what the future of work looks like.
- Further focus on arts and creativity in schools.
- Further focus on business engagement, including entrepreneurship.
- Further focus on the role of school leadership in driving forward change.
- Detailed focus on how schools can exploit the benefits of ICT and technology in shaping an educational provision which empowers students to benefit from the ready availability of information, knowledge, AI and automation.
- Deploy technological advancements to better equip people in areas of wellbeing, mental health and employability
- Review the impact of new curriculum models and School Directed Courses.



TO MOVE THE DIAL, WE NEED TO BE ACTIVE:

- Preach, proselytise and persuade - to influence those with the power to bring about change and bring others on board
- Practice what we preach - we need to experiment, evaluate and share good practice with each other
- Partner with others and make common cause- rather than duplicate efforts, we need to seek out others striving in this space so we can work together, making the sum greater than the parts.

Following the recommendations from 2022, for the next conference we are working with MTM Consulting on a major survey, to be presented at the Conference. The survey will cover the following aspects:

- Parental attitudes to preparing children for the future workplace and associated skills
- Current and desired provision for careers guidance in primary settings (targeting primary teachers and school leaders)
- Examples of strong industry/business links in schools
- Attitudes to AI and Ed Tech amongst: parents, pupils, teachers, school leaders

AND PROGRESSION IS IN OUR DNA...

In addition, the 2023 Conference will address in more detail:

- Primary education
- Special Needs education

Speakers will also address **practical skills development** in the following areas:

- Entrepreneurship
- Business and Industry links in schools (and schools links with business)
- Cultural education
- Embedding future-ready skills
- AI and EdTech

THANK YOU TO OUR 2022 PARTNERS:



WARWICK

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK



THANK YOU TO OUR 2022 CONTRIBUTORS:

The quality of the talks at Future Fwd in 2022 was down to the knowledge, expertise and professionalism of our speakers, facilitators and contributors:

Alexei Hamblin
Angela Joyce
Prof. A C Grayling CBE
Prof. Bo Kelestyn
Celia Fraser
Prof. Chris White
Crispin Woodhead
Dave Coplin
David Harkin
Dr. Helen Wright
Henry Godfrey
Jacqui O'Hanlon MBE
James Leggett
Jodh Dhesi
John Liggins
Prof. Jonathan Wheals
Jeremy Dibb
Dr. Jill Berry
Keith Ayling

Kim Wyatt
Kirsty von Malaisé
Dr. Lucy Gill-Simmen
Martin Dury
Matt Kidston
Prof. Neil Mercer
Neil Sheldon
Nick Evans
Dr. Phil Seal
Peter Husband
Richard Tawn
Rachel Sandby-Thomas CB
Prof. Simon Barnes
Simon Toyne
Simon Noakes
Srivaas Venkataramanan
Prof. Tina Kiefer
Will Fairbairn

We thank you enormously for giving up your time to prepare and speak to our 2022 cohort.

**THANK YOU TO EVERYONE AT
WARWICK SCHOOLS
FOUNDATION.**

**STAGING AND HOSTING THIS
EVENT FOR THE FIRST TIME WAS
AN AMBITIOUS TEAM EFFORT.**

**HERE'S SOME OF THE STAFF AND
STUDENTS WHO HELPED MAKE IT
A RESOUNDING SUCCESS:**



**JOIN US
ON**

**3-4 JULY 2023
IN WARWICK**



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