

THE MARCH WEBINAR

“State of the Nation: what is actually happening to the sector?”

The webinar will be delivered live on 3 occasions by Mungo Dunnett, who has become established as the most forensic and strategically insightful critic of the schools sector, and of individual schools’ commercial performance.

He is also amongst the best-regarded speakers in the sector. In the last two years his various webinars analysing the rapid changes in the sector have been attended by over 1,200 people.

Synopsis

Last term produced some dire warnings, not least from our own associations, about the challenges facing the sector: primarily the threat of a Labour government, but also the more immediate cost challenges. It has precipitated urgent questioning from governing bodies. How grave is our situation? Which type of schools are most at risk? How best should schools shore up their finances?

The webinar addresses these issues in two ways. First, it lays out the actual cost and income challenges. Based on interviews Mungo has just carried out with over 200 leadership teams, it explains how schools are actually being affected right now: what are enquiry levels and expected numbers for Sept 2023; and what are the actual amounts being paid, or budgeted for, on the burgeoning cost side. It answers the question: are the associations right in their warnings?

Secondly, what are the learnings and strategies that are becoming apparent? As with the early days of Covid, as schools last sought to steer a path through the unknown, where are the useful analogies? What are the immediate implications: for pricing, TPS plans, energy cost mitigation and leadership of the staff body? What are the key information inputs to a robust 5-year strategic plan?

Agenda

The webinar will consider the following issues:

- *How parents are responding to recessionary pressures:* patterns of stability and instability evidenced in pipeline behaviour since September
- *The immediate cost challenges:* post-Brexit inflation, Business Rates Relief, energy costs – the actual numbers, and the scale of the challenge
- *Deconstructing the Labour threat:* the scale of the challenge; threats vs realistic likelihood; actual exposure to parents’ declining affordability
- *Commercial impact of the cost and income challenges:* likely duration and sequential effect of recession on the sector; which schools and parent types are most affected; the weak vs the strong; the lucky vs the unlucky
- *Managing cost reductions:* most fruitful avenues to explore; maintaining staff morale whilst reducing cost; ring-fencing vital quality determinants
- *Outlook on TPS:* reasons why schools remain in; case studies of successful vs botched exits
- *Managing fee setting:* lessons in elasticity; unexpected room for manoeuvre
- *Lessons in leadership:* the importance of confidence when keeping stakeholders on board

About these sessions

Mungo Dunnett Associates are the leading strategic research company working in the UK independent schools sector. We have carried out detailed strategic research projects for 277 schools of all types, worked to steer or facilitate strategic debate for 69 sets of school governors, delivered 122 Inset talks, and, most importantly, carried out 38,000 in-depth qualitative interviews with parents, providing an unchallenged perspective on the strategic and commercial issues facing our independent schools.

These webinars – and the masterclass sessions which preceded them – allow our enormous data set to be brought to bear on the various issues being faced by Britain’s independent schools.

Call etiquette

Each webinar is limited to 25 delegates. To avoid distraction and bandwidth issues please note that all participants will automatically be muted, and have their camera disabled, for the duration of the talk.

Delegates will be given a Zoom login, and will be admitted individually into the meeting by the administrator.

Q&A opportunity

These webinars are structured as lectures, although delegates are invited to ask questions via the Chat function. Mungo is happy to stay online after the 60 minute webinar to address these. Note that Chat questions, if sent solely to Mungo rather to everyone, will be addressed **without identifying the person or school involved**, thus preserving your own anonymity.

In previous webinars this has been an important aspect of the session. Delegates may wish to diarise a further 15 minutes after the 60 minute lecture in order to benefit from the Q&A aspect.

Three opportunities

To enable convenient participation, the same webinar will be delivered live on three separate occasions:

- Wed 1 March, 6.00–7.00pm
- Thu 2 March, 2.00–3.00pm
- Mon 6 March, 2.00–3.00pm

Delegates

This session is intended for Heads, Deputy Heads, Bursars and Governors.

Booking details

Delegate places are charged at **£240** each (inc. VAT). As these webinars invariably sell out, there is a limit of two delegates per school. Schools are asked to make their bookings as soon as they are able.

Bookings and enquiries for your preferred date/time should be directed to:

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