

ASSOCIATE

JARLATH O'BRIEN

“Every child, no matter how complex their needs, can achieve great things with the right teaching and support”



*“All negative behaviour communicates an unmet need” -
Don't Send Him in Tomorrow*

When Jarlath says, with disarming frankness, ‘Some of the young people I have worked with have gone to Cambridge; some have gone to prison’ you know he is the sort of leader who is all about inclusion and working with the child in front of him.

Currently Director of Schools for a multi-academy trust of special schools in London. Jarlath has been a teacher for 15 years, working with children from 2 to 19, and has worked in comprehensive and selective independent schools and in special schools for children with emotional and behavioural difficulties and moderate, severe and profound and multiple learning difficulties.

He has shown he can turn around a school's behaviour from ‘Requires improvement’ to ‘Outstanding’ in 14 months without losing sight of – or the confidence of – the children, the staff and the parents and is engaged now in whole-school sustainable school improvement that is transforming the lives of children with profound special needs. His approach is one that focuses

on what the child can do, without forgetting the severe physical and emotional challenges the child may be facing on a daily basis. Totally against the current rhetoric around ‘zero tolerance’ and ‘no excuses’, Jarlath's wide experience across a range of schools shows him that children who are presenting problems in the classroom are children who need listening to, not to be punished into silence.

He is a member of the London Leadership Strategy's SEN Leaders team and carries out reviews of SEN provision in schools nationally. He is also a board member of Wellington College's Teaching School, a school with which his school has pioneered an inspiring student-led partnership.

An increasingly vocal advocate of the educational rights of all young people, Jarlath is a member of Headteachers' Roundtable, regularly speaks at conferences on leadership, behaviour and SEND and writes for the Times Educational Supplement and was even a Special Constable with Thames Valley Police.

Feedback from recent Events:

“You are truly an inspirational man and I'm so grateful my son has benefited from being under your excellent guidance for the last 3 years.”

“What an amazing, caring person you are but above all else an outstanding head teacher and professional. Thank you.”

Books written by Jarlath O'Brien:

- *Don't Send Him in Tomorrow*
- *The Working Class* (contributor)

Jarlath has been with Independent Thinking since March 2016.

All Independent Thinking Associates are DBS checked.

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www.independentthinking.co.uk
for more information.