



CAMBRIDGE

Welcome back!

Cambridge Schools Conference, July 2024

Cambridge Schools Conference, July 2024

Effective communication: from competence to confidence



CAMBRIDGE

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Laura Kahwati

Education Manager

Educating for communication, confidence and moral purpose on a fragile planet

Cambridge Schools Conference

7th July 2024

Dr Rupert Higham

Associate Professor of Educational Leadership
UCL Institute of Education

My career in a nutshell:

How can we challenge and support young people to act in accordance with their values?

Youth support worker
English teacher
PhD student
Researcher
Teacher educator



Dialogic Theory
Student Leadership
Index for Inclusion
Research with
International Schools
Climate Emergency

How should education respond to the civilisational threats we face?

Kurt Hahn (1886 - 1974)

Hahn founded:

- Salem and Gordonstoun schools
- Outward Bound
- Duke of Edinburgh Award
- United World Colleges

Experiential education

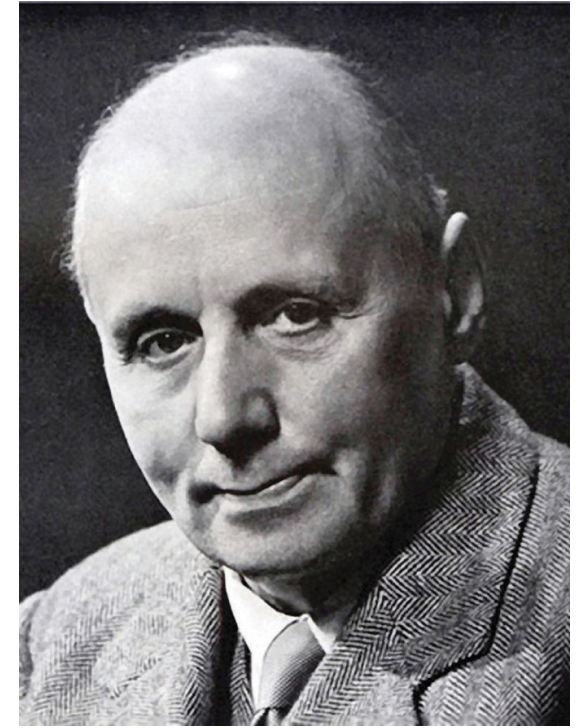
Public service - 'servant leadership'

Personal discipline and character

'muscular Christianity' (Millikan 2013)

Pioneers who 'accelerate developments through example'

(van Oord 2010)



“The foremost task of education is to insure... an enterprising curiosity, an undefeatable spirit, tenacity in pursuit, readiness for sensible self denial, and above all, compassion.”

International Schools: a changing landscape

From League of Nations diplomats...

1990: <1000 schools

2000: 2,500

2024: 14,000

...to the 'global middle class'

'Education for international-mindedness'

VS

'Globalist international education'

(Cambridge and Thompson 2004)



Growing tensions

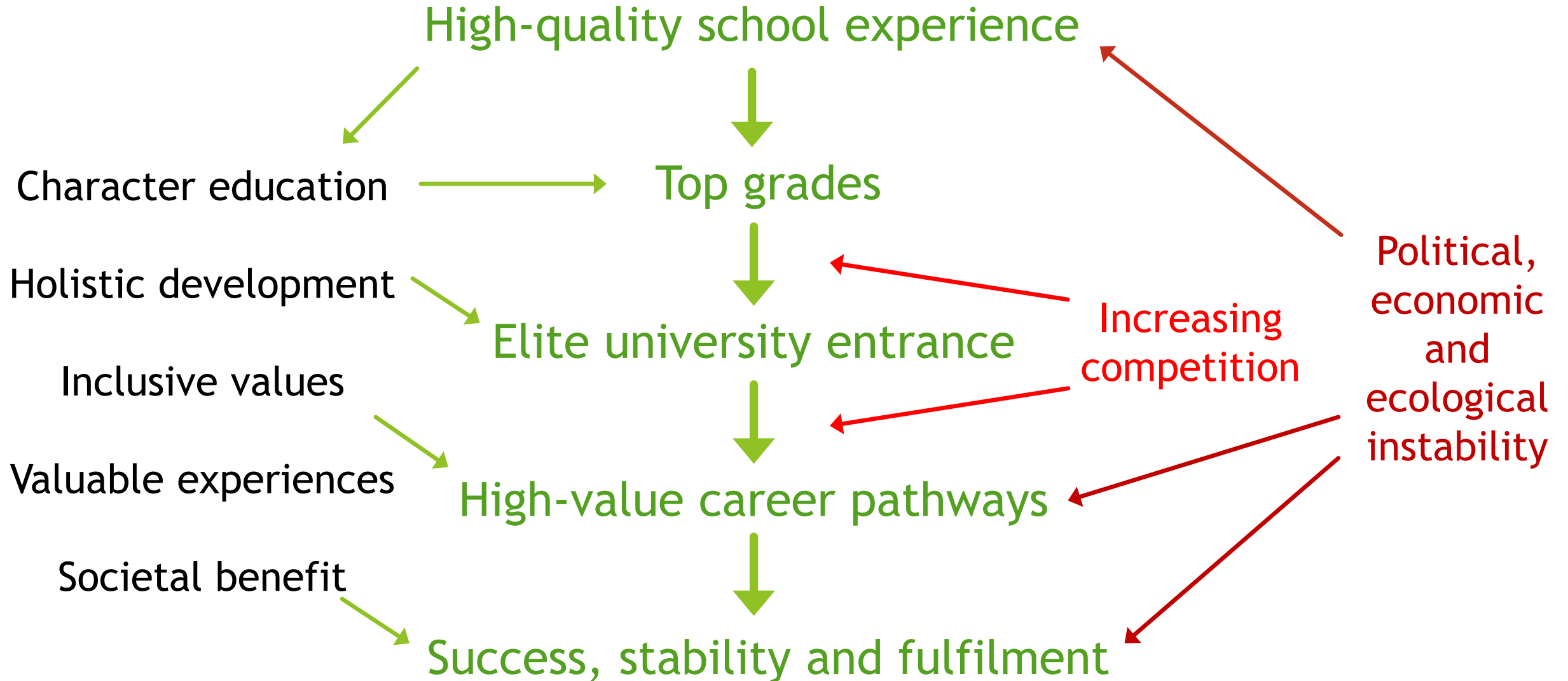
35% of EU 13-year-olds and 40% of 15-year-olds “reported feeling low, nervous and experienced psychosomatic symptoms more than once a week.” (Cefai et al. 2021)

45% of 15 to 16-year-olds across 10 countries say climate change anxiety “affects their everyday lives”; 75% describe the future as “frightening” (Hickman et al. 2022)

Gap between pressures and conscience

“What do I do, save the environment or let children go hungry?”

The International School Offer



Back to first principles

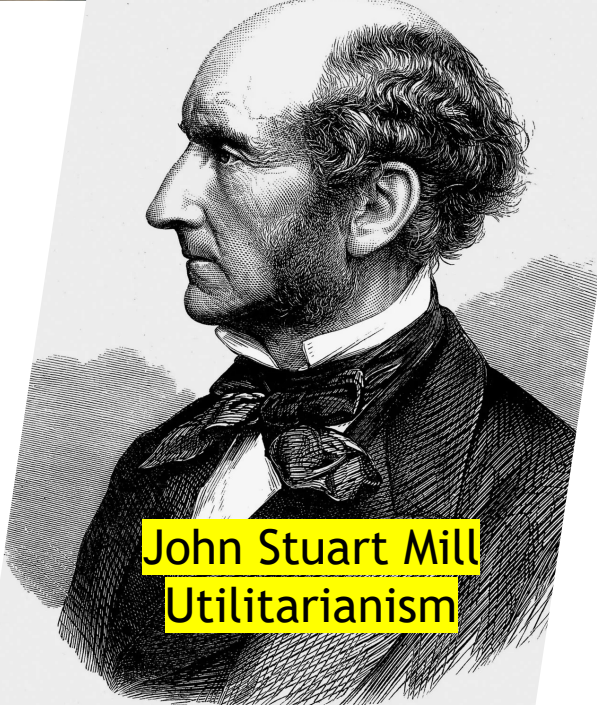
What is a good life?
How do we educate for it?



Immanuel Kant
Deontology (rules-based)



Aristotle
Virtue Ethics



John Stuart Mill
Utilitarianism

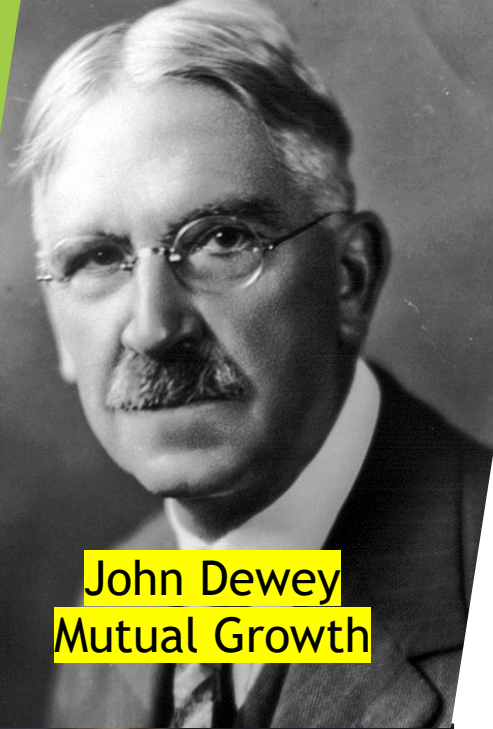
The morality of the past and present should shape our future

Ethics as relating and responding

“To possess virtue does not mean to have developed a few nameable and exclusive traits; it means to be fully and adequately what one is capable of becoming through association with others in all the offices of life.” (Dewey 1916)

Ethics of Care

- **Engrossment:** “an open, nonselective receptivity to the cared-for”... “what are you going through?”
- **Motivational displacement:** “our motive energy is flowing towards others and their projects”
- “Human beings can care about ideas or objects.” (Noddings 2005)



John Dewey
Mutual Growth



Nel Noddings
Ethics of Care

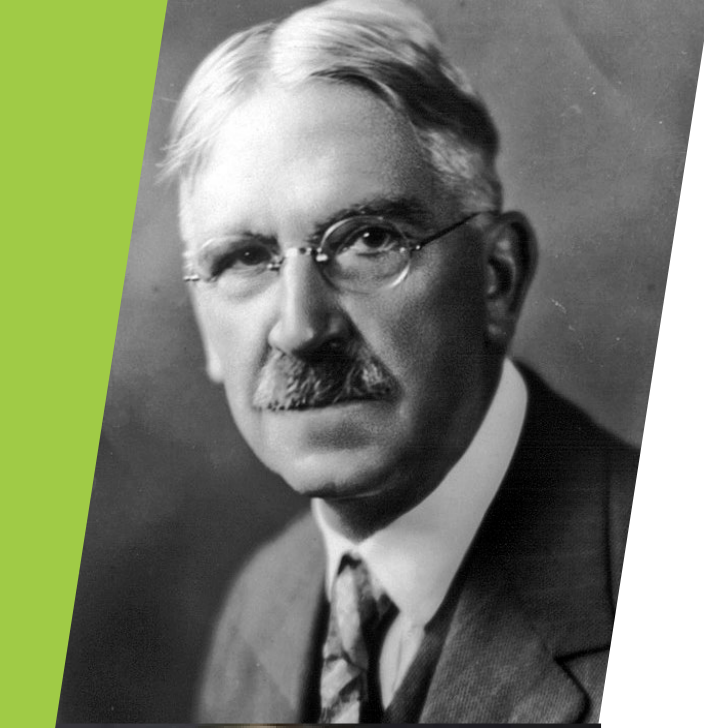
Education as caring response

The value of knowledge is subordinate to its use in thinking. For we live not in a settled and finished world, but in one which is going on, and where our main task is prospective... (Dewey 1916)

If we were to give grades for care-giving, students might well begin to compete for honours... if we neither grade nor credit such work, it may have second-class status... (Noddings 2005)

Education as responding
knowledgeably, intelligently and humanely

Aims as **timely** not **timeless**; **open** not **final**



Cambridge: ahead of the curve

Cambridge learners	Cambridge teachers
Confident in working with information and ideas – their own and those of others.	Confident in teaching their subject and engaging each student in learning.
Responsible for themselves, responsive to and respectful of others.	Responsible for themselves, responsive to and respectful of others.
Reflective as learners, developing their ability to learn.	Reflective as learners themselves, developing their practice.
Innovative and equipped for new and future challenges.	Innovative and equipped for new and future challenges.
Engaged intellectually and socially, ready to make a difference.	Engaged intellectually, professionally and socially, ready to make a difference.

Multidisciplinary
Research-informed
Integrated
Futures-oriented
Responsive
Context-aware
Pedagogical
Knowledge, skills and attitudes (dispositions)
Active learning

Cambridge IGCSE Learner Award 2023: Action on Climate Change

Introducing the next generation of climate innovators



Best in region winner by team 'Green Threads' from GIS in Singapore



From preparing to acting

‘developing intellectual virtues’
‘equipped for new and useful challenges’
‘ready to make a difference’

The starting point of any process of thinking is something going on, something... incomplete or unfulfilled. Its meaning lies literally in what is going to be. (Dewey 1916)

How do we ensure habitable biospheres and humane societies for our grandchildren?

A group of approximately ten business professionals are seated around a long white conference table in a modern office setting. They are dressed in business attire and appear to be in the middle of a meeting. In the background, a large, realistic-looking elephant is positioned, its trunk extending towards the group. A light green speech bubble with a dark green outline is superimposed over the scene, containing the text "Isn't this getting political?".

Isn't this getting political?

An epistemology of not-yet-fully-knowing

Core school curricula still present what is **known**

The answers-in-advance to adult life's questions

University curricula: spaces of exploration and dialogue between what's **known**, **unknown**, and **disputed**

Rich problem-spaces that generate new valuable possibilities

BUT...

Hard to move from the periphery to the core

Real-world problems aren't disciplinary

Schools as listening, questioning and responding



Envisioning a better future

Educating using SDGs across subjects

Interrupting opinions with care

Social action through local projects

Year 5: Disasters (SDGs 2,3,4 and 6)

Who is responsible for helping after a disaster?

Year 6: Nationalism (SDGs 4,10,16)

We are the British: Is nationalism a force for good, for evil, or both?



Social Action

Moral Questions

Sustainable Development Goals

Rights Respecting

Debate Mate

‘At XP we build our community through activism, leadership and equity sharing our stories as we go.’

Cross-disciplinary learning expeditions

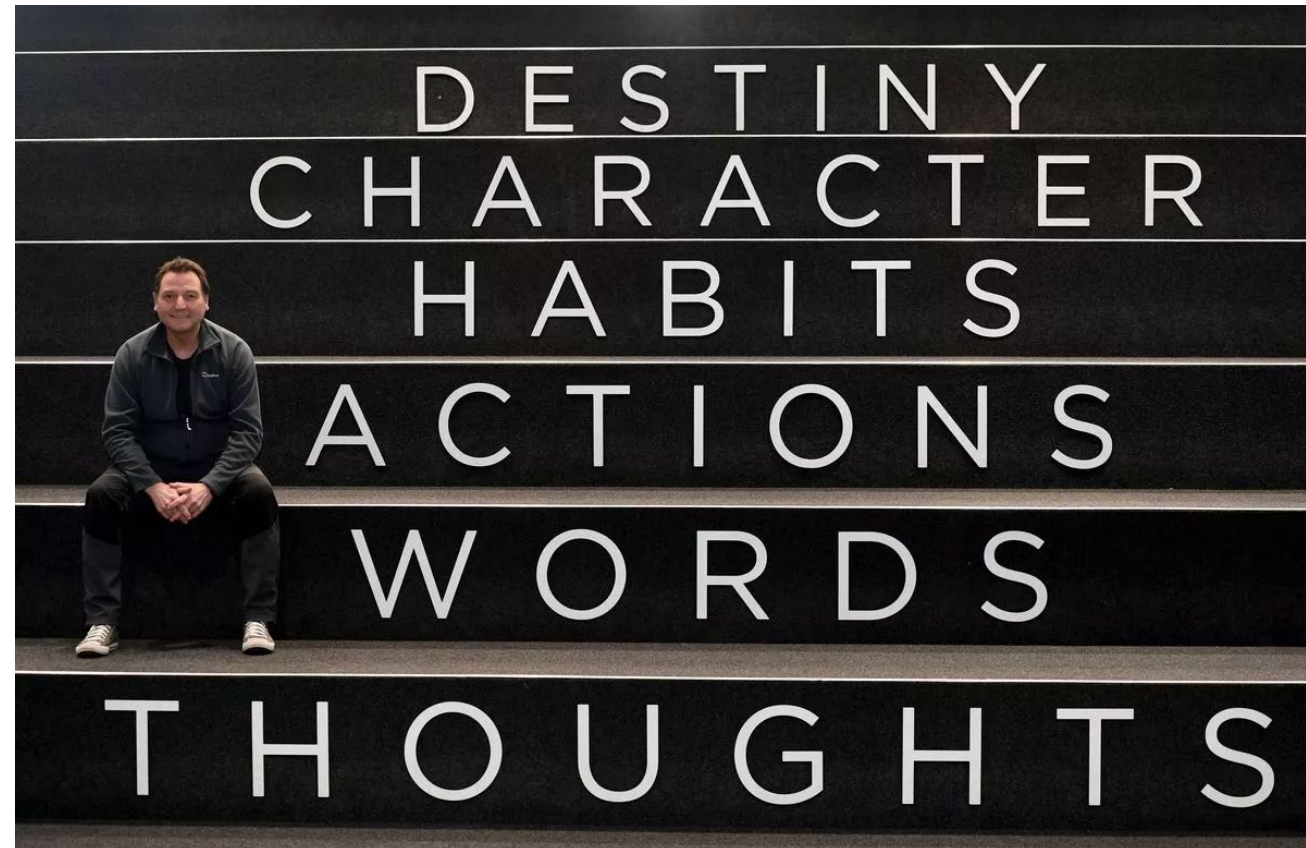
Standards-based projects subjects that encourage deep and purposeful learning

Aims

- Produce beautiful work
- Grow their character
- Make better than expected academic progress

Themes

- Protecting Our Planet
- Standing for Social Justice
- Cultivating Diversity and Belonging



‘We are crew, not passengers, strengthened by acts of consequential service to others’

Start with a week of Outward Bound activity

Groups of 12-13, built on family values

45 minutes a day for support and reflection



Expeditions end with public engagement



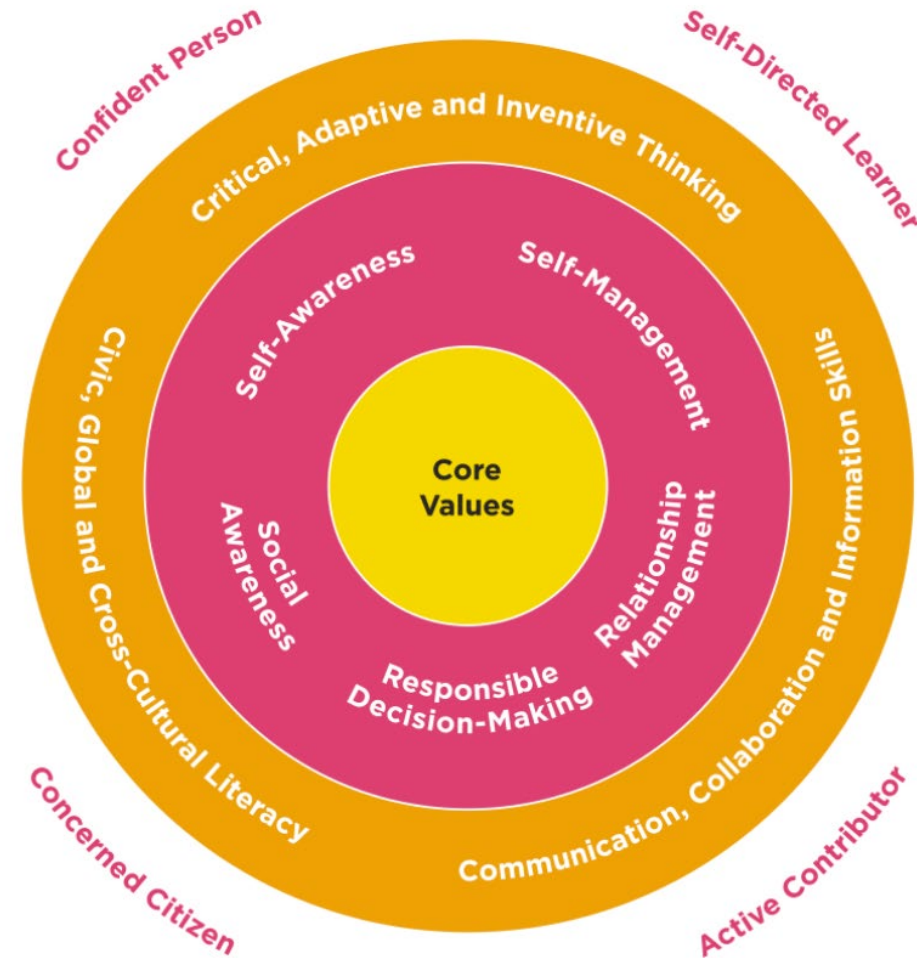
Singapore: Finding ‘joy in learning’

The ability to score in an examination frankly may not matter very much later on in the life of a child...
Ong Ye Kung, Minister for Education

Beyond ‘well-being’ to
‘wholeness and purpose’

‘The VIA programme cultivates values and ethics, equips students to have a good impact on society and trains them to be compassionate and accountable citizens.’

Framework for 21st Century Competencies and Student Outcomes



Breaking the mould?

Cambridge International Education: all in the name!

A unique position to reflect, respond and lead:

1. Formidable reputation for academic quality
2. Network of brilliant schools
3. Scope to innovate in curricula, pedagogy, assessments

Time to start changing the rules and spirit of the game?

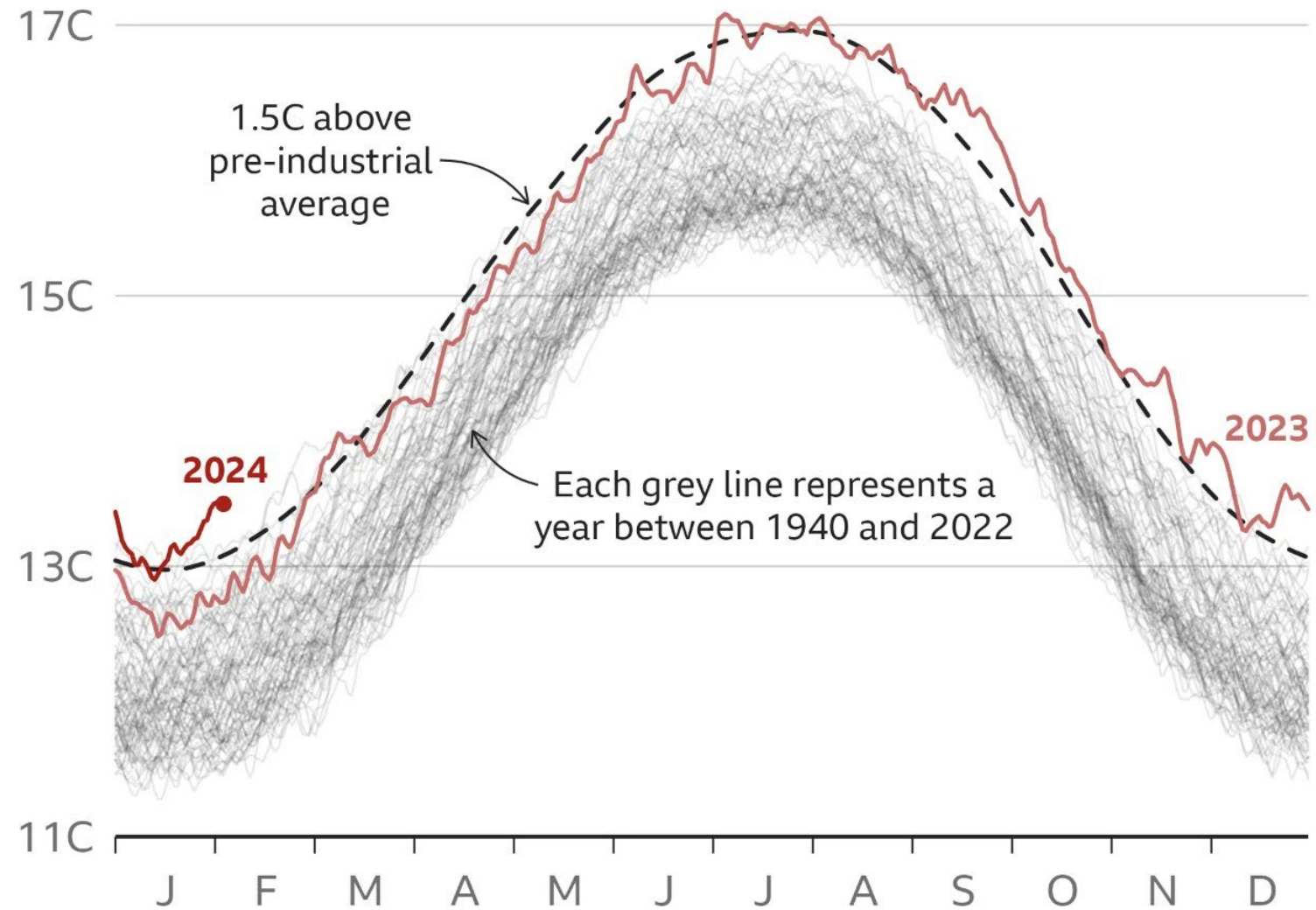
If not now, when?

If not us, who?

I want you to act as if our house is on fire. Because it is.
Greta Thunberg, 2019

Global temperatures remain at record levels

Daily global average air temperature, 1940-2024



Note: Temperature data for 3 February 2024 is preliminary

Source: ERA5, C3S/ECMWF



cambridge.org/internationaleducation

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What's next?

10.30-11.30 Breakout 3

11.30-12.00 Break and exhibition

