



**STOUR VALE
ACADEMY
TRUST**

ANNUAL CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

FRIDAY 5TH DECEMBER 2025

CREATING THE DIFFERENCE **TOGETHER**



We are delighted to welcome staff from Stour Vale schools to our annual conference on **Friday 5th December 2025** - a day dedicated to inspiration, collaboration, and professional growth.

At Stour Vale Academy Trust, our mission is clear: to transform life opportunities for children and young people by delivering the very best in education and care. We believe that when we work together, we are stronger — and that the power of collaboration can unlock extraordinary outcomes for both staff and pupils.

The conference will bring colleagues together to spark new ideas and learn from leading voices in education. Most importantly, it is a chance to pause, reflect, and invest in ourselves so that we can continue to give our very best to the children and communities we serve.

As our trust continues to grow, gathering all staff in one place is not possible. Instead, the conference will take place across four of our schools — ensuring that we remain focused on keeping resources where they matter most, with pupils in classrooms.

Why This Conference Matters

Now in its third year, the Stour Vale Conference has been shaped by your feedback and by the priorities within our schools, ensuring it is directly relevant to the challenges and opportunities we face together.

This year, our objectives are to:

- Provide opportunities to enhance staff well-being
- Support staff in delivering excellent education for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND
- Explore ways to boost productivity through the effective use of Artificial Intelligence
- Highlight the benefits of working as part of Stour Vale Academy Trust

The conference is our chance to connect, recharge, and leave inspired to make an even greater difference together.



The conferences will run simultaneously at four different Stour Vale schools:

- Redhill School, Junction Road, Stourbridge DY8 1JX
- The Earls High School, Furnace Lane, Halesowen B63 3SL
- Oldbury Academy, Pound Road, Oldbury B68 8NE
- Moat Farm Infant School, Brookfields Road, Oldbury, B68 9QR

Staff will not be required to move between venues. If for example, you select to attend Redhill School's conference you will remain there for the day.

BOOKING YOUR PLACE AT ONE OF THE CONFERENCES

Staff attending will choose which conference they would like to attend and book their place through Eventbrite. The link for booking is: [Stour Vale Academy Trust Conference - 5th December 2025 Tickets, Fri 5 Dec 2025 at 09:00 | Eventbrite](#)

Full details of the speakers can be found towards the end of this document.

If you are attending the Oldbury Academy conference there will be a variety of ticket options because of the choice of different workshops on offer—simply choose the one that has the workshop that you wish to attend.

Please only book one ticket for one of the conferences.

Eventbrite will open for bookings at 4pm on Monday 17th November and will close at 8am on Monday 24th November. Any staff who should be attending a conference but have not booked a place, will be allocated a conference by their headteacher.

Numbers will be limited at each venue. If you have a strong preference due to location or the speakers you want to see, book your place early to avoid disappointment.



CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Time	Conference 1 at Oldbury Academy
9.00-9.30am	Registration and Refreshments
9.30-9.45am	Welcome
9.45- 10.45am	Daniel Sobel
10.45-11.15am	Break and Refreshments
11.15-12.15pm	Workshops
12.15-1.00pm	Lunch
1.00-1.45pm	CEO: Rachel Salter
1.45-2.00pm	Conference close

Time	Conference 2 at The Earls High School
9.00-9.30am	Registration and Refreshments
9.30-9.45am	Welcome
9.45- 10.30am	CEO: Rachel Salter
10.30-11.00am	Break and Refreshments
11.00-12.00pm	The AI Educator
12.00-12.45pm	Lunch
12.45-1.45pm	Jim Lawless
1.45-2.00pm	Conference close

Time	Conference 3 at Redhill School
9.00-9.30am	Registration and Refreshments
9.30-9.45am	Welcome
9.45-10.45am	Marc Rowland
10.45-11.15am	Break and Refreshments
11.15-12.00pm	CEO: Rachel Salter
12.00-12.45pm	Lunch
12.45-1.45pm	The AI Educator – Dan Fitzpatrick
1.45-2.00pm	Conference close

Time	Conference 4 at Moat Farm Infant School
8.30-8.45am	Registration and Refreshments
8.45-9.05am	Welcome from CEO
9.05-10.15am	Deborah Udakis – Session 1
10.15-10.45am	Break and Refreshments
10.45-12.00pm	Deborah Udakis – Session 2
12.00-12.45pm	Lunch
12.45-1.30pm	Deborah Udakis – Session 3
1.30pm	Conference close



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CONFERENCE 2025

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



DAN FITZPATRICK

The AI Educator.
Bestselling author of The
AI Classroom.



RACHEL SALTER

CEO of Stour Vale
Academy Trust.



MARC ROWLAND

Pupil Premium and
Disadvantage. Author of
The A-Z of Addressing
Disadvantage.



JIM LAWLESS

One of the world's most
sought-after motivational
speakers and author of
Taming Tigers.



DEBORAH UDAKIS

Early Years Specialist
Consultant.



DANIEL SOBEL

Inclusion expert and
author of The Inclusive
Classroom.

CREATING THE DIFFERENCE TOGETHER

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Rachel Salter: Rachel is the CEO of Stour Vale Academy Trust and in her session, she will talk about the benefits of working in our trust. She will outline the collaboration, support and professional development opportunities that exist as the trust continues to grow and develop. **Rachel will speak at each of the four conferences.**

Jim Lawless: Jim is one of the world's most sought-after motivational speakers. He has inspired over a million people across five continents.

The reason he immediately captivates the audience is because he's done it himself.

His deep audience connection comes from his understanding of human emotions, vulnerability and self-doubt when faced with uncertainty and change.

Audiences respect the fact that he has tested his approach to these on himself first. He became the deepest freediver in British history with an incredible dive to 101m without air in just 8 months and transitioned from non-rider to televised jockey in just 12.

Jim has advised on transformation and performance to organisations including Apple, Diageo and Microsoft and the Swiss Olympic Team.

His 2008 book *Taming Tigers* has been described as a shrewd, inspiring and practical blueprint for anyone determined to find greater and deeper satisfactions in life.

Daniel Sobel: Daniel Sobel is the Founder and President of the World Inclusion Congress, Chair of the International Forums of Inclusion Practitioners (IFIP) which has representation in 138 countries, Founder of the Global Inclusive Teaching Initiative (GITI) used in 70+ countries, CEO of Inclusion Expert, consultant and advisor to over ten thousand schools, regional and national governments as well as UNESCO, UN and the EU.

Daniel was highly commended at the Educational Business Awards for his outstanding insights and strategic thinking in education, and Inclusion Expert won a Grand Prix at the Education Investor Awards in 2015. Daniel is the author of *Narrowing the Attainment Gap* and *Leading on Pastoral Care* and is a featured columnist for *The Guardian*. He has also written for the *Times Educational Supplement* and regularly speaks on educational inclusion, social and behavioural issues, special educational needs, managing mental health,

foster care children and impoverishment at national and international conferences.

Dan Fitzpatrick: Dan is known as The AI Educator.

He wrote the bestselling book "The AI Classroom: The Ultimate Guide to Artificial Intelligence in Education." Dan has helped countless educators and parents worldwide navigate AI and education. He works with schools, universities, and businesses to innovate for the future of emergent technology.

As an international keynote speaker, he travels between the UK, USA, and Far East. He shares his expertise on the transformative power of AI in education. His purpose is simple: help keep educational systems relevant, so that all learners are prepared for success in a rapidly changing world.

He empowers educators and learners to embrace AI's potential.

He also writes weekly for Forbes on educational transformation for educators, parents and entrepreneurs.

Marc Rowland: Marc has worked / is working with numerous Local Authorities, Multi Academy Trusts, Research Schools, Teaching School Hubs, English hubs and groups of schools nationally on long term projects to support better outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. He has carried many area-based programmes, from Cumbria to Cornwall focussed on the experiences of disadvantaged pupils in schools and classrooms nationally.

Marc works with and advises the Department for Education on addressing educational disadvantage in schools. He has worked with well over 1000 individual schools to support them with their strategies to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.

Marc is the education adviser to the Driftwood Association, a Swiss charitable foundation running education and development projects in Nepal.

He was formerly director of the Research School at Rosendale Primary School in Lambeth, and the Deputy Director of the National Education Trust (now NET Academies Trust).

Marc's most recent book is A-Z of Addressing Disadvantage was published in May 2025. 'Addressing Educational Disadvantage' was published in February 2021. The second edition of his award-winning book, 'An Updated Practical Guide to the



Pupil Premium', was published in December 2015 (John Catt Educational). His book 'Learning without Labels' was published by John Catt in March 2017.

Deborah Udakis: Deborah was previously one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and is a highly qualified early years practitioner and leader. She previously worked in leadership roles in London local authority nurseries and children's centres and held a senior role in a local authority Registration and Inspection Unit.

Deborah has extensive experience of inspection, investigation and survey work across nursery, infant and primary schools, children's centres, and early years.

With almost 40 years experience in the early years field, she is passionate about improving the life chances of children. She is committed to ensuring that the quality of early years provision and outcomes for children continue to improve at the end of the foundation stage.

Deborah will run three sessions at Moat Farm Infants and the focus will be on play and effective strategies to improve learning for SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) children; and approaches to help create inclusive, supportive, and accessible learning environments.

WORKSHOP OPTIONS AT OLDBURY ACADEMY

Daniel Sobel: The Inclusive Classroom

Following his Keynote session, Daniel will share more practical ideas to support the inclusion of all children in the classroom.

Kelly Hannaghan: Supporting students with SEMH

Kelly is renowned as an award-winning motivational speaker, author, and creator of the 'Family Matters' programme. Kelly has spearheaded the DFE Wellbeing for Education Return project and continues to lead education development processes, earning recognition from the DfE, NCB, The Anna Freud Centre, and The Education Support Partnership as a key influencer in mental health and wellbeing within education. Her workshop will focus on how staff can support children with SEMH needs through improving attendance (EBSA), parental engagement and developing belonging.



Stephen Fessey: Accentuate the Positive Using the evidence-based PERMA model to help promote mental wellbeing in staff and pupils

The PERMA model—developed by psychologist Martin Seligman— focuses on Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment. By weaving in ideas from PERMA you can turn these principles into practical, everyday actions for you, your staff and your pupils. This session will give an overview of the model and exercises to practically implement aspects of it. The strategies are helpful to all, but particularly useful for children who need additional mentoring and emotional support.

Nina Male: Attachment in the classroom. Most staff now have an understanding about the impact of significant relational traumas and losses upon pupils. In this session Nina (who is an Educational Psychologist with Dudley Educational Psychology and Counselling Service) will develop further the strategies that can be used to support students with these needs in the classroom.

Alison Parr: (Whole School SEND) Inclusion, belonging and making it real in the classroom.

‘Complexity is the new norm’ – how can we, as classroom teachers, re-think our approaches to inclusion, belonging and adaptive practice to meet this challenge?’

Using the resources freely available from Whole School SEND this session will be collaborative and practical, where we work together to find solutions to the challenge facing mainstream teachers.

Johnathan Newport: (Team Teach) Behaviour and the Brain

This session is ideal for anyone working with children and young people in education, health, or social care settings from ages 2-18. Johnathan will explore brain development, factors affecting the brain and how the brain can change to form new habits. It will unpack self-regulation, co-regulation and the role of the nervous system in emotional control.

Mica Coleman (Team Teach): Making Education Work for Everyone

Mica is head of provision at Lilya Lighthouse Trust and their vision is to create educational provision that values individuality, neurodiversity, and curiosity and supports young people to develop self-confidence, build on skills and interests, and achieve the best they can academically, within a nurturing environment that values kindness, social connections, and emotional well-being.



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Mica will talk about how she works with staff, students and families to achieve this vision.

Jenna Durose: Building Bridges of Understanding: Supporting Children with Autism

In today's diverse classrooms, understanding and supporting students with Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) is more important than ever.

Students on the spectrum bring unique strengths, insights, and ways of engaging with the world—enriching our school communities in meaningful ways. Alongside these strengths also come individual needs that require thoughtful and targeted support.

Effective support for students with autism begins with understanding. Meaningful connections empower not only the learners themselves but also the educators who guide them.

This session will provide educators with practical, evidence-based strategies to create inclusive, supportive learning environments for students with Autism. Through a strengths-based lens, we'll explore how to build bridges of understanding, adapt classroom practices, and create environments where every student can thrive.

STAFF SURVEY FOLLOWING THE CONFERENCE

Following the conference, you will receive an email inviting you to complete a survey through Edurio. This should take around 15 minutes to complete.

The purpose of the survey is to gather feedback about the conference and to better understand how our staff feel about working within Stour Vale- what's going well and where we can improve. Your feedback will help create a workplace where everyone feels supported to do their best work.

The survey will be anonymous and your honest views will directly shape future decisions and improvements.

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