

THE HFL DISADVANTAGE CONFERENCE 2025

“SCHOOL: A PLACE WHERE I BELONG.”

Tuesday 28th January 2025, 8:45am – 4:30pm

Venue: Online

Time	Details	Location
8:30 – 8:45am	Conference registration Pre-recorded 'how to' and navigation	
8:45 – 9:00am	Welcome from Rachel Macfarlane , Lead Adviser for Underserved Learners, HFL Education	
9:00 – 9:45am	Fatima's Story , Fatima Whitbread, MBE Talk and Q & A Fatima will talk about her rise to success as an Olympic medallist and the trials and tribulations as she reached her goal. In addition, she will discuss her TV career from I'm a Celebrity to her more recent documentary. She will talk about her work/that of her charity to support children in care and from underserved backgrounds.	Main Stage
9:45 – 10:00 am	Break	
10:00 – 11:30am	Embracing equity in education , Lee Elliot Major, OBE FAcSS In his talk, Lee will highlight practical strategies to level the playing field in education. Lee's book 'Equity in Education' set outs a new approach to schooling which strives to make classrooms genuinely inclusive, while addressing some of the key impediments to learning outside the school gates. Lee Elliot Major argues that we need to ditch deficit mindsets to tackle persistent school achievement divides. This includes replacing unhelpful labels such as 'disadvantaged pupils', removing social class biases and barriers in the classroom and renewing relationships with pupils and parents.	Main stage
11:30 – 11:40am	Break	
11:40 – 12.10pm	Panel discussion	Main stage

12:10 – 1:00pm	Lunch Break	
1:00 – 1:15pm	Making School Unmissable & Fostering a Sense of Belonging	
1:15 – 1:45pm	<p>Spotlights on making school unmissable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Years, led by Jennifer Ferguson, Early Years Adviser, HFL Education & Nicki Waller, District Early Years Adviser, HFL Education • Primary, led by Joanna Di Bella, District School Effectiveness Adviser, HFL Education • Secondary • Special 	Spotlights/Main stage
1:45 – 1:55pm	Break	
1:55 – 2:40pm	<p>Supporting refugee children in school, Catherine Gladwell, Refugee Education UK's Chief Executive and Schools Project Manager</p> <p>Catherine's session will address the common challenges refugee children face in the classroom, and the evidence and practice informed strategies school leaders and teachers can adopt to support refugee children to thrive. REUK is the UK's leading refugee education charity, supporting several thousand refugee children through their frontline work each year, as well as carrying out training, strategy and research in partnership with schools, local authorities and UN agencies.</p>	Main stage
2:40 – 2:50pm	Break	
2:50 – 3:50 pm	<p>Belonging in School: why exclusion is the end of belonging, Tier Blundell, Founder of Excluded from School</p> <p>Talk and Q & A</p> <p>Tier will talk about the conditions which enable children to 'belong' in school and class. Speaking from personal experience, he will reflect on the ways in which exclusion damages a sense of belonging for life. His talk will contain contextual, functional and psychological examples as well as lived experience.</p>	Main stage

3:50 – 3:55pm	Break	
3:55 – 4:25 pm	Panel discussion	Main stage
4:25 – 4:30 pm	Closing words from Rachel Macfarlane , Lead Adviser for Underserved Learners, HFL Education	