

PEGGY OSTERMAN

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Profile

- 12 years' teaching experience in an academically-focussed secondary school in UK (GCSE results 82% A-C including English and Maths; A level English literature 100% A-C, 30% A-A* during my teaching)
- 8 years as Assistant Head of Sixth Form of 260+ students, including developing student leadership programme, UCAS coordinator (33% acceptance rate to Oxford and Cambridge during my tenure), 12 years serving as a form tutor and delivering PSHE curriculum
- 3 years working as a Careers Guidance Adviser in a range of secondary schools and colleges, including serving as Team Leader for final 18 months
- 10 years' experience in publishing
- International perspective: born and raised in USA, lived in North East England for 23 years

Qualifications

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| • MA Educational Leadership and Management | Warwick University | Nov 2013 |
| • NVQ Level 4 Leadership and Management | Chartered Management Institute | Jun 2008 |
| • PGCE English with QTS | Newcastle University | Jun 2008 |
| • NVQ Level 4 Careers Advice and Guidance | City & Guilds | Sept 2005 |
| • Postgraduate Diploma Career Guidance | Northumbria University | Jun 2004 |
| • BA Hons English and History | Macalester College, USA | May 1994 |

Initial impressions of education in St Helena

- The English department is well staffed with committed and hard-working teachers who are passionate about their students' progress. However, for many years they have needed to make do with frequently changing staff. I believe that teaching across the range of education needs to have a higher profile in St Helena, with more Saints being encouraged into leadership roles.
- The advent of the Equiano cable and increased media access will have a profound effect on the island. To prepare for this, critical thinking skills and media literacy need to be delivered throughout the curriculum, beginning in primary school. However, students will not be able to access this unless the current standard of literacy is raised.
- Raising the current standard of literacy is undoubtedly a current goal of the Education Department and would benefit from appointing a children's literacy specialist to work across sectors. In particular, more needs to be done to encourage reading in the home; e.g. scrapping the 20% customs duty on children's books; making library access available to communities; giving books as prizes instead of days out of education; using the radio to deliver programmes for children and adults; helping the bookstore, public and school libraries to work together to promote reading. I have capacity to develop some of these activities, but primary education is not my background and I would advise appointing a passionate specialist to coordinate this.
- The Saint dialect will come under threat as international communication becomes more available. Dialect as an important part of cultural heritage should be recognised in a formal policy, which would also outline where and why Standard English is taught and used.
- If the aims of the school are to encourage gender equality and social mobility, and promote the safeguarding of young people, the name of the school should be changed immediately.
- The school benefits from fresh air, beautiful grounds and a sense of openness long vanished elsewhere. Similarly, the recent 'zero tolerance' approach towards low level classroom disruption is commendable. Overall however, the school would benefit from a more businesslike environment where students have higher expectations of their conduct and their achievement.
- In the long term, a rigid alignment with UK qualifications may not serve the community. However, investigating a switch to (for example) the International Baccalaureate would not be possible until baseline literacy is raised and a culture of high expectations is achieved.