



Monday 18th January 2021 - Community Assembly

'The Art of Fairness'



Many things unite us, of course, but during this global pandemic the lived experience of leadership, in its many guises, is something that we have all had to deal with. Whether a national leader, a parent or a student – people have had to face new situations, respond to fast-changing circumstances, look beyond themselves to the wellbeing and welfare of others (whether family, friends or strangers) and learn to live, work and study differently.

Our School vision – developing the leaders of tomorrow – has always spoken to leadership in a broad sense. At the heart of this is a progressive conception of citizenship: *to inspire future citizens to think for themselves and to act for others.*

The manner in which people lead, including how they view and treat other people, animates David Bodanis' book, *'The Art of Fairness'*. Bodanis makes the case for “decency in a world gone mean.” He takes us through a series of events, identifying the place and power of decency in helping people to meet challenges, achieve extraordinary things and complete projects; and, importantly, the ruinous results when a sense of decency did not distinguish thought and action.

A key starting-point for all good things are values. We work with our students and staff to pursue:

Distinction: *provide students with an outstanding education, with students doing their best in all endeavours.*

Challenge: *motivate students to acquire new knowledge & understanding and stimulate them to develop new skills & attributes.*

Duty: *ensure students conduct themselves with civility and compassion at all times, supporting each other and looking beyond themselves.*

Imagination: *enable students to explore new ideas and empathise with the thinking of others, without limitation or risk.*

Enlightenment: *equip students with the insight and determination to embrace new ideas, technology and innovation, enabling them to contribute to the ever-changing natural and physical world around them.*

Community: *provide students with the tools to respect and celebrate the great diversity of cultures, backgrounds and beliefs, within and beyond the School, whilst recognising that we have more in common than that which divides us.*

With social interactions, again, disrupted, there is an opportunity for us all to appreciate all of those in our lives – attend to them, address them, keep in touch with them and treat them with decency.

As Bodanis makes clear in his book, ambition and drive civilised by decency and fairness are powerful things indeed.

Mr Lawlor