

## Futuremind conference on mindfulness inspires delegates to action.

TEACHERS need to be mindful themselves in order to encourage mindfulness in classrooms. Training up front is a key requirement for any successful implementation in a school. Introducing mindfulness in any meaningful way also takes time – perhaps years – but the benefits are increasingly evidenced in research. Schools should start sooner rather than later and have a clear implementation policy that can lead to fundamentally different ways of working. Many of the delegates left the conference feeling inspired to do just that.



This was the second Futuremind one-day event on 'Mindfulness in the Curriculum' and was held at Friends House, Euston on Tuesday, 18<sup>th</sup> November 2014. The audience both UK and internationally based, represented primary and secondary schools from independent and state schools and also included medical staff, educational psychologists and academics. The day was "inspirational and thought provoking", one delegate wrote, and included many examples of schools using mindfulness principles and activities in school.

**David Rycroft** (pictured left) of ['Mind with Heart'](#), an international charity dedicated to equipping young people with the social & emotional skills necessary to their well-being & to building a more sustainable society, helped the audience to distinguish the key features and aims of mindfulness practice whilst teaching delegates how to do it. **Kevin Jones**, Headmaster of [St John's College School, Cambridge](#) spoke movingly on childhood; the responsibility educators have to care for childhood and why children need mindfulness in the modern world. He explained the approaches to mindfulness that are part of the every-day curriculum at St John's.

**Claire Kelly**, Director of Operations at the ['Mindfulness in Schools Project'](#), offered practical advice whilst explaining the 'B' and 'PawsB' programmes offered by the organisation for both primary and secondary students. **Bea Hartley** (Acting Head) and **Alison Mayo** (Head of Nursery) explained how the [Dharma Primary School](#), the only school founded on Buddhist principles in Western Europe, embedded mindfulness practice in its daily life. Delegates were each given a tangerine and taken through a mindful eating practice. All speakers presented the evidence, both experiential and externally validated, on the benefits for pupils and staff of working with mindfulness in schools. There were many movements throughout the day.

**David Thomson**, Founder Director of [Futuremind](#), an educational consultancy he established in 2001, said "Of all the conferences we have run, this one will be especially memorable for its depth and inspiring call to action in asserting subtle approaches to child development. These are a million miles from the pressures of attainment young people in schools face today and particularly in the UK. I am grateful to the speakers for their outstanding contributions to the day and for inspiring us to be mindful of our responsibilities to ourselves as well as to childhood. I look forward to our next event on this topic."