



Kleeneze
HOMECARE



MIDLAND

Swyddfa'r Post
The Post Office



Jardine Insurance Brokers

British Gas
Northern

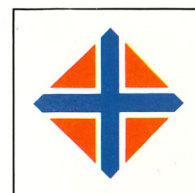


WHITBREAD

Baring Securities



Girobank



Christian Salvesen PLC

MAKING EDUCATION THEIR BUSINESS

Reports of visits made by
20 business leaders into
inner city schools

With a foreword by
His Royal Highness
The Prince of Wales

OXFORD

Northern Foods

Royal Insurance

ijd

NORWICH
UNION

MAKING EDUCATION THEIR BUSINESS

This book contains reports by 20 business leaders who visited Inner City schools. As the contents page shows, they are made up of chairmen, chief executives, managing directors and directors of major companies. At the Partnerships in Practice Conference in London on 26th June 1989 they discussed their findings with the Prince of Wales, who refers to them in his Foreword.

Published by Business in the Community

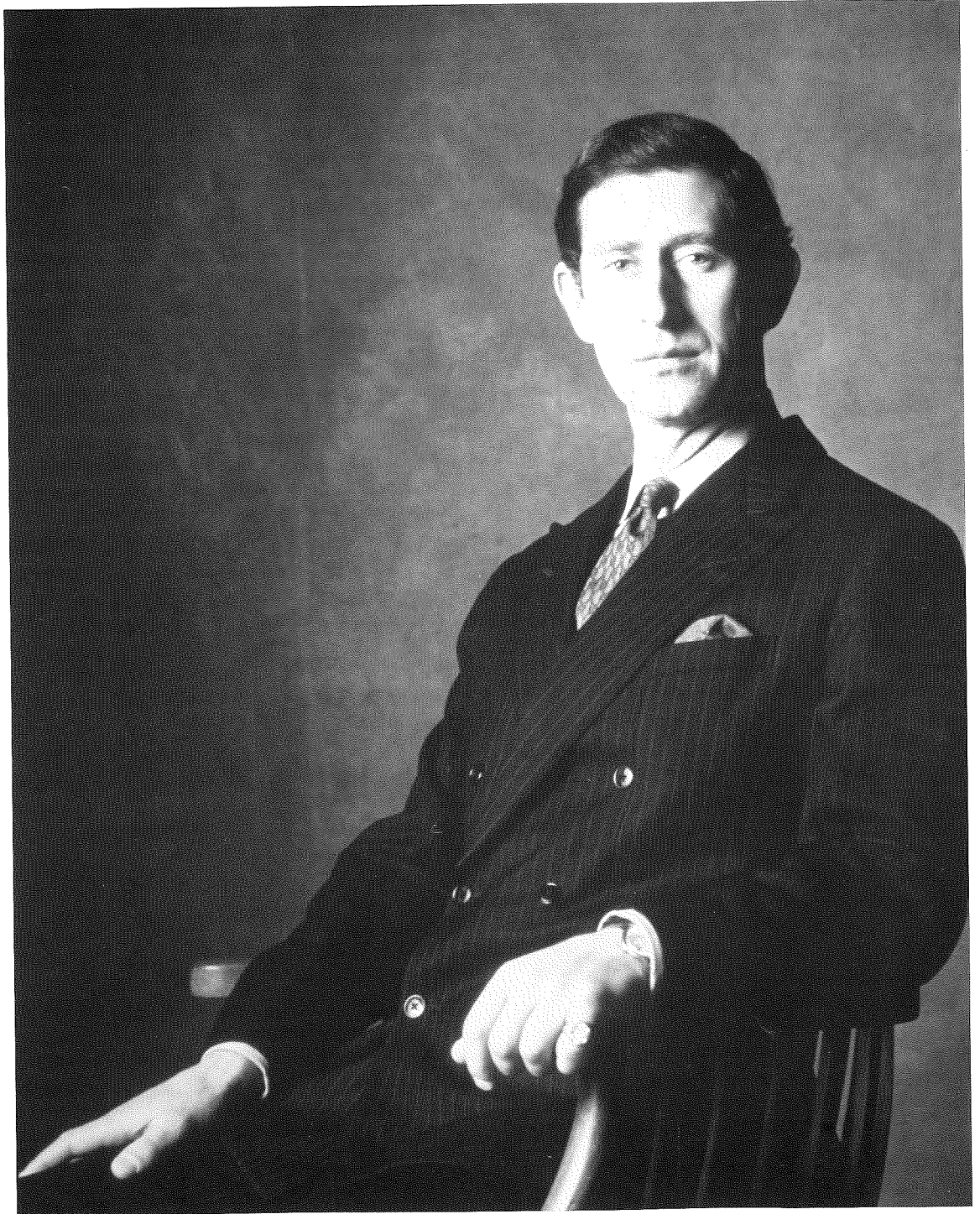
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FOREWORD



KENSINGTON PALACE

by His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales

At the launch of the Foundation for Education Business Partnerships I met young people and their teachers from the Compact schools in Leicester, Newham, West London and Birmingham. I was delighted to hear from them of the success of Compacts in bringing together education, business and young people in a constructive partnership.

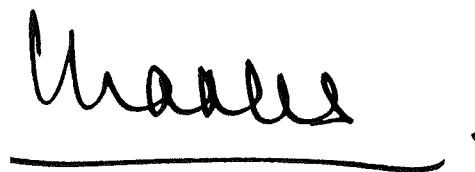
They told of being involved in setting their own Compact goals to improve their performance, of interesting work experience, and running their own mini-enterprises.

This reinforced the impressions I had received from the senior company executives who had spent half a day in Compact schools. They spoke of their preconceptions before their visits and their greater awareness afterwards not only of the problems, but also of real achievement and success.

What struck them overwhelmingly, I think, was the commitment and dedication of teachers and Headteachers in schools. Some are struggling with many difficulties as I realise only too well, particularly through my visits to the Inner Cities, but their enthusiasm and commitment to the future of young people was obvious.

I am asking a further forty Chief Executives to accompany me on Compact school visits this year under the auspices of the Foundation for Education Business Partnerships. This is so that we can see at first hand some of the achievements and challenges, and identify how business working through Education Business Partnerships can support the vital task in schools.

I hope that people in education will recognise that business leaders are willing to listen and are determined to be advocates for schools and colleges.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Charles', followed by a horizontal line.

INTRODUCTION

We all have a strong interest in building better and closer collaboration between business and education. Much excellent work is already taking place to achieve this goal and the Foundation for Education Business Partnerships will seek to encourage many more companies to work with schools up and down the country.

Effective participation by companies demands commitment at the top. We shall need support at Board level if we are to achieve real and lasting partnerships with education. This is why the experiences of the business leaders described in this book are so important. I am very pleased that the programme is expanding – with the great encouragement of the Prince of Wales – to encompass a further 40 top executives. I strongly commend this book to the business community.



IAIN VALLANCE
Chairman, British Telecom

*Chairman (Designate)
Foundation for Education
Business Partnerships*

British
TELECOM

SUMMARY

This is a unique book, and for each of the business leaders who took time out of their busy schedules the experience was unique. Each of the reports, recording first hand impressions and views, has something unusual and distinctive to say. Each is worth reading for the particular insights it offers.

There were, however, some common reactions and common themes. There was, for example, almost universally expressed surprise – surprise that things were quite different – often, very much better – than the businessmen expected! In some cases the surprise came from an encounter with a particular headteacher or a particular pupil. Sometimes, the surprise was the realisation of how out of touch the executive had become with the realities of the educational world today.

These are some of the common themes coming out of the reports –

Management issues: A number of the business leaders comment on the size of the budgets a Headteacher is directly or indirectly responsible for – from around £1 million to £3 million per annum. They were made conscious of the tremendous pressures heads and their staff are under in managing such a diverse and complex institution as a school, and of the need for management skills of a high order. They saw the new demands, as a result of recent legislation, which the devolvement of greater responsibilities to governing bodies and heads will bring.

Teacher commitment: Most of the business leaders go out of their way to praise the commitment and dedication of the Headteachers and their staff – ‘manifest leadership qualities and vision’, ‘enterprise and enthusiasm’, ‘professional staff doing a first class job’, ‘commitment and entrepreneurial drive’, ‘strong sense of involvement’ – these are some of the comments to be found in the reports.

Resources: Linked with management issues, many of the business leaders comment on the scarcity of resources, as reflected, for example, in the state of buildings, in the shortage of books and scientific and other equipment, and in the abandonment of vital courses. Two commented on the plight of schools with declining rolls, which already also have poorly

maintained buildings and so forth, when local budgeting and greater parental choice of school are introduced – such schools may, through no management fault, go into a spiralling decline.

Curriculum: Despite the constraints on resources, many of the business leaders were delighted to discover the extent to which the new technologies, including information technology and ‘high-tec’ topics, are now getting into the curriculum. There are favourable comments on the emphasis that is now given to familiarisation with computers and on new methods of teaching – the use of project work, for example, and greater pupil participation. One or two were surprised to find that teaching methods had changed for the better.

Practical ideas and outcomes: The visits inspired a number of immediate ideas and actions. For example, one managing director urges catering companies to offer the skills of experienced instructors to home economics classes. Another offered to provide the school he visited with a speaker on banking. Another suggests that companies should provide more information about their businesses to help career choices. A chief executive agreed with the head of a school he visited that they would ‘shadow’ each other for two days. A managing director pointed out that employers could provide pens and T-shirts and the like as recognition of achievement – the cost would mean little to the employer, and would help promote the company, while the benefit to the pupils could be considerable. A chairman changed his view on the relative importance of academic attainments.

Strengthening partnerships: An important outcome of the visits, reflected in many of the reports – possibly the most important outcome of all – is the determination of the business leaders to build on the experience of their visits and to develop and strengthen partnerships, through Compacts and in other ways.

Though this is a unique book, it is hoped that it will not prove to be a unique experience – and that the practice of businessmen at all levels of seniority getting into schools to see and learn for themselves will become commonplace.