

# Student returns to school as volunteer PE teacher

A PE student is back at her Harlow school volunteering as a teacher during the coronavirus shutdown. Daisy Perry left Burnt Mill Academy in 2015 with the ambition of returning to teach PE when she qualified as a teacher. Since leaving, the former head girl has returned to the school at every opportunity, doing a weekly placement for a year while at sixth form, helping out on sports days and open evenings, invigilating during exams and running summer school sessions for new students joining Year 7. Now, she is volunteering her time to help run PE lessons for children of key workers at Burnt Mill and neighbouring Sir Frederick Gibberd College three days per week during the school closures. The 21-year-old, who is in her

second year of a four-year PE degree at the University of Bedfordshire, said: "I loved PE when I was at Burnt Mill and it's my dream to return there as a teacher after I graduate. I keep in contact with many teachers and they are always asking me when I'm coming back to teach. "I was due to be starting a seven-week school placement as part of my degree, but that was cancelled due to the coronavirus. I could not just sit at home and I knew the schools would be open for children of key workers. I said I could be there to help if they needed me." Miss Perry has been helping to run PE classes, including fitness, cricket and badminton. She said: "It is nice to give something back to the parents who are out there working to help us."



Former Burnt Mill Academy pupil Daisy Perry is teaching PE during the lockdown

## Jail for burglar

A SERIAL burglar has been jailed for six years.

Cieran Brytz, of Bowhill Way, Harlow, embarked on a burglary spree in Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk last summer.

He broke into three homes, stole four vehicles and attempted to burgle four other homes.

On one occasion in August last year, Brytz burgled a property in Finchmoor, Harlow, and stole a Vauxhall Vivaro and Peugeot 207.

That same night, he bungled break-in attempts at two homes, also in Finchmoor, and attempted to burgle another home in Stansted the following day.

Brytz had already targeted three other homes in Norfolk and Suffolk.

He broke into a house in St Olaves and attempted to burgle another house in the same village. He was also involved in a burglary in Beccles, where a Mercedes AMG and a BMW XR were stolen.

The 32-year-old was jailed for six years for three burglaries, two years each for four attempted burglaries, and 15 months each for four counts of theft of a vehicle. The sentences will run concurrently.

He had previously admitted the charges last year.

# MP slams criminals after coronavirus crimes

HARLOW'S MP is calling for tougher sentencing for criminals exploiting the coronavirus lockdown after a spate of crimes shocked the town.

Thieves have stolen laptop computers and iPads from Lotton Green Primary Academy, which was open to teach the children of key workers such as doctors, nurses, and

those keeping essential shops open and services running.

A box of vital respirator masks was taken from outside an address in Hollyfield where it was waiting to be picked up by a courier.

A doctor was mugged on his way to the work, and robbers wearing surgical masks attacked two men who were

in a queue in a supermarket. Conservative MP Robert Halfon, who has paid tribute to the hard work of council staff and volunteers during the Covid-19 pandemic, was furious.

He said: "At a time when so many people in our community, our NHS, volunteers, the armed forces, police, teach-

ers and other community and faith organisations are doing so much good and working day and night to help vulnerable people in Harlow, it is so sad to hear of criminals, coming out to steal vital NHS equipment, laptops from schools and food from those most in need.

"I will be writing to the

Home Secretary and Justice Secretary to call for severe punishments and tougher sentencing for when these sewer rats are caught. They should be put in prison with the key thrown away. The truth is that thieves ignore the coronavirus and the lockdown. We need to be ever vigilant."

# Call for end to 'fail to appear' warrants

## But some say court no-shows cause justice delays

By Lewis Berrill

ALMOST 2,000 arrest warrants were issued last year for people who failed to turn up to court in Essex.

But legal charity Transform Justice says the warrants, which can lead to prison time, are a waste of police time and an unfair punishment.

Ministry of Justice figures show 1,826 failure to appear warrants were issued in magistrates courts in the Essex Local Criminal Justice Board area in 2019 - 15 per cent more than in 2018.

Across England and Wales, more than 70,000 failure to appear warrants were issued, with defendants potentially receiving a fine or being sent to prison for the offence.

Penelope Gibbs, director of Transform Justice, said she was not convinced the "punishment fits the crime".

"Someone who doesn't turn up for their court hearing may not have got the letter, or may have mental health problems or lead a chaotic life," she said.

"They should of course turn



The warrants have been called a waste of police time

up for their court hearing, but the response to failure to appear may need to be different."

With 51,000 court hearings in Essex last year, it means that failure to appear warrants were needed for around 3.6 per cent - slightly above the average across England and Wales.

More than 60 per cent were issued for offences such as theft and burglary, which could be heard in either magistrates' or crown courts.

Ms Gibbs says failure to ap-

pear warrants were a poor use of police resources, particularly for people who "seldom pose an immediate threat to public safety".

She suggested new approaches such as the use of text messages to remind people about trial dates and giving them a second chance to come to court if they can be reached by phone.

Though the number of warrants issued across the country has been falling, Ms Gibbs said this was probably because magistrates dealing with less serious cases have been instructed to sentence people in their absence if they do not appear.

But John Bache, national chairman of the Magistrates Association, said the number of failure to appear warrants being issued is still very concerning.

He said: "When people do not attend court it leads to delays in the justice system, which is a waste of scarce resources and may be upsetting for victims."

A Ministry of Justice spokesman said the warrants ensure people attend court and prevent further delays, but that the decision to issue them is a matter for the independent judiciary.

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