
Parkstone 's
Alumni Bios



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Alumni Bios



Dr. Herbert

Dr. Jo Herbert's passion for science began at Parkstone Grammar School, where inspiring teachers encouraged her curiosity through extracurricular studies and research projects. After leaving in 2015, she studied Veterinary Bioscience BSc. at the University of Surrey, gaining global research experience in Spain and Brazil. She then completed a Master's degree at the University of Cambridge, predicting the emergence of bacterial pathogens, before earning her Ph.D at the University of Portsmouth, exploring how bacteria break down plastics to support sustainable recycling. Now a Postdoctoral Researcher at ETH Zürich, Switzerland, Jo studies how microorganisms can capture carbon from the air, a groundbreaking step toward tackling climate change. She hopes to inspire future scientists to follow their curiosity and drive positive change—just as she once did at Parkstone.

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Megan



Former Parkstone student, Megan, has had tremendous success in science:

After studying Geology at A-Level at Parkstone Grammar School, Megan went on to graduate from the University of Leeds with a masters degree with distinction in Structural Geology and Geophysics. From this she secured a job at CGG as a Geoscientist where she has been a part of many projects within the oil and gas, geothermal and CCUS industry, including writing published papers about new and innovative techniques and their applications to the energy industry.

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Dr. Williams



Dr Williams, awarded a Doctorate in Professional Practice by The University of Wales Trinity Saint David, developed an Employability Framework to prepare students for policing careers. Her research focused on the Police Student Volunteer scheme's impact on employability skills. She also joined a collaborative working group to develop Swansea Help Point, an alcohol treatment centre aiding 1,000 people annually. Dr Williams received the Medal of the Order of St John Sister for her public safety efforts. A magistrate and Magistrates' Association member, she balanced her academic pursuits with family life, earning three qualifications from UWTSD since 2007.

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Amelia



Since leaving Parkstone Grammar School in 2018, I completed a Digital Marketing Apprenticeship at Bournemouth and Poole College, and achieved a Distinction. I carried on working at a local Dorset based Marketing Agency.

I then left to join Farrow & Ball, the local luxury paint manufacturer as a E-commerce Executive in 2021. I have worked here for almost four years now and have recently been promoted to Digital Marketing Manager where I lead our paid media strategy.



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Tara



After leaving Parkstone Grammar I studied English at Oxford University, where I began my career in journalism writing for the student newspaper. I interned at Conde Nast then was accepted as a graduate trainee on a financial newspaper in London. I spent six years in London writing for Dow Jones and the Wall Street Journal before moving to Hong Kong for ten years with my husband, during which time I became Editor in Chief of a luxury magazine called 'Billionaire'. We moved to New York in 2023 for my husband's job at JP Morgan, where I continue to run Billionaire magazine (bllnr.com) as well as freelancing for BBC Storyworks, The Financial Times, The Times, The Telegraph and the South China Morning Post among other titles. We have a boy and a girl aged 9 and 6, named Archie and Juno.

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Dr. Edington



I went to the University of Surrey to train to be a vet after I left Parkstone Grammar School. Surrey was a great place to live and go to uni.

I've now been a small animal general practice vet locally for the last three and a half years and have just finished my training to be a new graduate adviser. My clinical interests include imaging, medicine and cardiology, and I'm hoping to do a certificate later in my career.

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Katie

BSc BN RN PGDipNS MClined



I remember my days at Parkstone Grammar School very fondly. I left Parkstone and emigrated to New Zealand. I had turned down a place in Medical School at the University of East Anglia and planned to study medicine at the University of Otago. Halfway through the pre-medicine year, I decided that I didn't want to become a doctor, and I changed my course to a Bachelor of Science with a Major in Anatomy and a Minor in Physiology. After completing this I went on to study a Bachelor of Nursing and became a New Zealand Registered Nurse. Since qualifying I have worked in several hospitals around New Zealand in general medicine, palliative care, delirium, general surgery and women's health. I am now the Coordinator for Moving and Handling and Restraint Minimisation at my local hospital. I have completed my Master's in Clinical Education and have lead projects to improve National education within my field. I hope my story helps someone who is undecided about their future.

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Dr. Mikešová-Stephens

MChiro DC LRCC

After leaving Parkstone Grammar School in 2018, Dr. Mikešová-Stephens attended the University of South Wales for five years and was awarded a Distinction in her Master of Chiropractic degree. During this time, she got married and settled in South Wales, working since 2023 in private practice as a Doctor of Chiropractic serving her local community. She has since continued with postgraduate training and has received an additional Diploma in Chiropractic as well as Licentiate Membership to the Royal College of Chiropractors. Despite struggling in school, the endless support provided from PGS undoubtedly allowed Dr. Mikešová-Stephens to succeed professionally. She hopes to remind the current students to believe in themselves and know that truly anything is possible, regardless of their current circumstance.

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Laura



After a much-loved 6 years at PGS, Laura left in 2009 to study Public Relations at Bournemouth University. During the 4-year course, she undertook a placement year with two local marketing agencies which helped uncover a passion for all things digital.

After a short stint working at Bournemouth University, supporting vulnerable students, Laura went on to manage the digital marketing presence of Bournemouth-based dance organisation Pavilion Dance South West. Then, in 2017, she took up a web content admin position with local heritage paint brand Farrow & Ball.

Laura has continued to progress in her career at Farrow & Ball and is now working as their Digital Experience Manager; leading a team of three and owning the design, creation, optimisation and experimentation of the brand's global, award-winning web platform.

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Alison



Alison has always been a lover of nature and, following her time at Parkstone, continued this interest by studying Environmental Earth Science at Aberystwyth University and then onto a Masters at the Centre for Alternative Technology completing her studies in sustainable architecture and renewable energy with merit.

Fast forward through various environmental education and community engagement roles, Alison now runs an expanding outdoor learning business, TRIBE, with her partner and young son, developing skills along the way including in all aspects of running a business. Recognised as an IOL Professional in Outdoor Learning (POL), she has spearheaded becoming an accredited and regulated training provider in bushcraft, providing opportunities for young people and adults to achieve practical qualifications in alternative learning settings.

Alison encourages you to 'follow your heart, even if it takes you a wiggly, unconventional route'.

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Isla



Isla took a gap year after leaving PGS in 2012 to do a ski season and never left the ski industry. She is now a full-time race coach and instructor, working across France, Norway and Australia. She holds the position of head coach in Australia, where she has won multiple awards from Snow Australia for her work. She is also the Head Coach for the British army intelligence corps. Remember, you don't have to go to uni to find your dream career!

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Jo

Starting with a love of journalism, my passions and ambitions have taken me on a creative journey from writing the news to creating it and, even further, to building global brands. After university, I went into PR and Communications for some of the biggest brands in the world - Coca-Cola, Disney, McDonald's, Lego and Microsoft to name a few. As my love of building brands grew, I moved into Brand Marketing and have launched new cruise ships, opened new hotels and restaurants for global travel brands.

I am now Marketing Director for Pizza Express - developing advertising campaigns, launching new products and nurturing the nation's love of dough balls.

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Dr Harris (née Cronk)



The first thing I did when leaving Parkstone in 1980 was to fulfil my first ambition and train as an occupational therapist. I worked in the NHS in a variety of clinical settings, culminating in a community team role in West Sussex. I then had a shift of direction and moved to work in the organisational development team, still in the NHS.

I was not one of the 'highflyers' in my year group (it is hard to shine amongst so much brilliance). However, I have learned the importance of recognising transferrable skills and looking at things from alternative angles. I have never stopped learning and developing, passing my doctoral viva two weeks after my 60th birthday, and becoming a dinghy instructor at the age of 62. Who knows what I shall do next!

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Mae



Mae left PGS in 2018 and went on to read Drama and English at the University of Birmingham. During her time in Birmingham, she studied different elements of theory and practice including Shakespearean Studies, Popular Music as Performance and Theatre for Young Audiences, and was President of the University of Birmingham Gilbert & Sullivan Society in 2020/21.

After leaving UoB, Mae went on to work as a Performing Arts & Boarding Graduate Tutor in Worcestershire. Working in the Drama classroom during the day and boarding houses during the evening opened her eyes to a career in education, advocating for academic excellence alongside outstanding pastoral care. She then moved to Berkhamsted School in Hertfordshire as a Graduate Teaching Assistant and then to Queenswood School as a Boarding Assistant.

Mae will train to teach English and lead the University Flat Experience for Sixth Form students in the academic year 2025/26 at Queenswood School. She thanks all of her teachers from PGS for helping her get to this position and fulfil her dream of becoming a teacher.

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Stephanie

After leaving Parkstone Grammar School, Stephanie went on to study a Degree in Dance and Theatre Performance at Bird College. She has built a notable career across film, television, and theatre as both a dancer and choreographer.

Recent film work includes dancing in *Wicked Part One and Two*, *Snow White for Disney*, March 2025, and *Matilda*. Stephanie was also the UK dance coach for Tom Hiddleston, on *The Life of Chuck*, May 2025 release. Her involvement in West End theatre productions include *Dirty Dancing*, *Grease as ChaCha* and *We Will Rock You* as well as touring in *Wicked*, and *Mary Poppins*.

Television appearances include appearing on *So You Think You Can Dance, UK*, *The National Television Awards 2024*, *The Olivier Awards*, and *Saturday Night Takeaway*. Stephanie also worked as an assistant choreographer on *Strictly Come Dancing* for over a decade.

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Photo credit: Andy Scaysbrook

Alumni Bios

Georgie Codd



Following her time at Parkstone Grammar School, Georgie studied English at Sussex University, before graduating from the University of East Anglia's renowned Creative Writing MA.

After a long interlude in three cities, she returned to Dorset to live in 2020. That same year, she published the fish-themed memoir 'We Swim to the Shark' and founded the Time Out award-winning 'antiviral' literary festival BookBound 2020 in aid of mental health charities.

'Never Had a Dad' is her second book, and has been optioned for a TV series by a major production company.



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Rhiannon



After leaving Parkstone Grammar School in 2009 I trained as a Paramedic. I gained additional qualifications developing clinically to become a Paramedic Practitioner dealing with urgent and chronic conditions. In addition, I undertook a range of leadership roles. As Head of Operations for East Sussex I managed emergency provision for a large area as well as two emergency hubs. In this role I worked as a commander at a strategic, tactical and operational level and as part of the UK emergency mutual aid team in the Covid pandemic. After my undergraduate degree at Oxford Brookes University, I studied at St Georges London on their practitioner program before completing my MSc in Healthcare Leadership at the University of Birmingham in association with the NHS Leadership Academy.

I now work as a Helicopter Paramedic in Devon, attending the most critically unwell and injured patients as well as an operations manager supporting a team of critical care paramedics.

Growing up in Poole, I've always been passionate about the RNLI and have volunteered as boat crew in a range of locations, something which has complimented my commitment to delivering exceptional patient care and learning new skills in challenging environments.

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Lily

After completing her GCSEs, Lily left Parkstone Grammar School in 2018 and relocated to Perth, Scotland. She began her studies at the University of St Andrews in 2019, pursuing a BA in Geography — a subject she was inspired to study by her dedicated teachers at PGS, especially Mrs Moore!

During her time at St Andrews, Lily developed a strong interest in housing inequality and founded a student-led affordable housing campaign. Her commitment to the issue culminated in a First-Class dissertation exploring solutions to the student housing crisis, which she was invited to present at the prestigious annual housing conference hosted by the Architectural Association in London.

Now based in Glasgow, Lily works as a Data Analyst for Barnardo's, where her geographical expertise and analytical skills support the organisation's mission to improve the lives of vulnerable children and families.

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Clare

I moved to Parkstone Grammar School from Australia at 15 and loved my time there — it's where I met my best friends and spent evenings and weekends playing volleyball for Wessex. I left PGS convinced I'd work in sport, but after starting a physiotherapy degree, I quickly realised it wasn't for me. So, I travelled, explored, and found my true passion: marketing. I went on to study Business and Marketing Management at Oxford Brookes — three years that shaped me both personally and professionally.

My career took me from working at BMW HQ, launching their electric cars and supporting their London Olympics sponsorship to leading the national advertising and digital marketing at Morrisons HQ. In 2021, I took the leap and founded Husk, a brand and marketing agency. Running Husk has been transformative — it's given me the freedom to be creative, build brands with purpose, and lead a team that challenges the norm. We work with companies ready to think differently, stand out for the right reasons and grow at pace.

Your path won't always be clear — and that's okay. Success isn't defined by your A-level choices and very often isn't linear. Be bold, trust yourself and smash that glass ceiling.

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Kate



I left PGS in 1992 and went into banking before training as a software developer — a career I loved for 15 years at Markel and RBS.

After having kids, I transitioned to becoming an artist, working in oils, watercolours, and acrylics but I am also a digital artist and work with Procreate on my iPad and Adobe Photoshop on my laptop. I now sell prints of my paintings on Amazon, Etsy, and my website, as well as original artwork locally.

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Marianne

Marianne is Global Director of Inclusivity at Interbrand Group. With 18 years' experience in the world of design. Marianne has spent her career working to harness and empower the world's best brands to shift attitudes towards disability and better ageing. She has shared her work on platforms across the world, including The World Economic Forum and The United Nations.

Marianne has won multiple awards for her work, including the Woman of the Future Award for Media 2017, the IPA Women of Tomorrow Award 2018, Campaign's 2018 50 Trailblazers of the Future and is a Forbes 30 Under 30 Honoree.

Marianne was the UK Government's first Disability and Access Ambassador for Design and has been a Trustee of Boccia UK and Brainkind. Marianne is also Executive Sponsor for Disability at Omnicom Group.

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Clemency

After leaving Parkstone in 2006, I studied Fine Art at Aberystwyth University before spending a year in Ikaria, Greece, working as a scientific illustrator of Marine life. Inspired by years of painting scenery for Brownsea Open Air Theatre and with the encouragement of our fantastic drama teacher, Mrs. Parks, I returned to university in 2011 to study Scenic Art at RWCMD in Cardiff. This vocational course led me to work on Doctor Who and major films like The Muppets, Indiana Jones, Aladdin, and Gladiator II. Alongside this, I run a successful greeting card publishing business, selling my illustrated designs to retailers like TK Maxx and the National Trust. My foundation in Art and Media Studies at Parkstone gave me the confidence to pursue a creative career that combines painting, storytelling, and craftsmanship.

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Catherine



I left Parkstone in 1995 to study English at Oxford University, moving on to an MA in Medieval Studies at Reading and a PhD at King's College, London. As an academic, I've taught at universities including Oxford and Swansea, and was appointed to a personal chair in English at the University of Southampton in 2012. I'm still a Visiting Professor in English Literature at Southampton, as well as, now, Professor of History at the Institute of Historical Research, University of London, where I lead a research centre and direct a big history project which has been running since 1899! In addition to my academic books and articles, I love sharing my passion for history and literature with public audiences, through radio, occasional TV, and, most recently, my book *A History of England in 25 Poems* (Penguin, 2025). Thank you, Parkstone, for all the inspiration and for setting me on my journey!

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