

V ACEIA DOS FORUM

Lugar: **TECS, The English Centre.**
Crt. Fuentebravía Km 1. Puerto de Sta. María (Cádiz)

Sábado 11 de Abril, 2026

▶ 09.00 - 09.30

Registration, coffee & welcome – **LISA DOLD**

▶ 09.30 - 10.00

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Meet fellow Directors of Studies and set goals for the day in a relaxed, interactive session.

▶ 10.00 - 10.45



Simon Pearlman

MANAGING STUDENTS: WORKING ON RETENTION

Students are the most important people in our schools. How we work with them impacts hugely on how happy they are, their success and whether they stay with us in the short term as well as, hopefully, for years to come. We need to balance what students want, what they need and, also, what we need too. How can we work with individual students within our systems?

In this workshop we will consider a real case study in a medium-sized language school which implemented a system that balances the sometimes conflicting needs of our students. We will also have time to share our thoughts, our questions and our experiences.

Simon is co-founder and co-director of Active Language, Cádiz. He has worked in ELT since 1997 as a teacher, teacher trainer and since 2005 combining these roles with language school management.

Active Language has the Centros de Idiomas, the language school, and Teacher Training offering Trinity Cert and DipTESOL as well as Teaching Younger Learners courses, more information at www.activelanguage.net

▶ 10.45 - 11.15

Coffee

▶ 11.15 - 12.00



Jordan Putman

MANAGING PARENTS: UPHOLDING ACADEMIC INTEGRITY IN PRIVATE EDUCATION

In this sessions, we'll put on our customer service hats and explore one of the central tensions of private education. We are constantly balancing two sometimes competing priorities: upholding academic integrity and meeting the expectations of paying families.

While we all strive for a world where pedagogical 'best' practice and parent satisfaction align, the reality is often more complex.

What happens when customer expectations conflict with our academic ideals? Where should we draw the line between flexibility and compromise? Are there moments when making concessions is necessary to retain families—and others when protecting academic standards must take precedence, even at a cost?

This session will be a reflective, open discussion on how we can navigate these dilemmas thoughtfully and consistently, drawing on real-life scenarios and shared experience to develop principled, practical approaches for our schools.

Jordan has been a director at ELI for the past four years. During his time as a teacher and director, he has always been very interested in how diverse and inclusive spaces can be created both within the classroom and in language schools in general. He holds a degree in Spanish Language, DELTA Modules 1 and 3, and has completed several courses in language school management, such as the Academic Management Diploma from International House.

▶ 12.00 – 12.15

Break

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MANAGING TEACHERS: CULTIVATING EXCELLENCE FROM DAY ONE TO DECADE THREE

In our 30 years at St. James we've navigated every personality and scenario imaginable (we hope). Join us to explore the teacher lifecycle—from the initial application to supporting +15-year veterans. We'll discuss balancing a welcoming culture with high professional standards, covering everything from tech support to performance management. Discover practical strategies for fostering long-term growth and handling daily challenges, ensuring your staff feels valued and empowered to perform at their very best.



Borja Uruñuela, Colin Robinson and Zoi Sechlidou

The academic leadership team at St. James brings together decades of diverse ELT expertise to this forum. Borja Uruñuela, Head of Education and former ACEIA President, has been teaching since 1991 and is a recognized trainer specializing in Emotional Intelligence and material writing. He is joined by Director of Studies Colin Robinson, who draws on over 15 years of experience—from Young Learners to Proficiency levels—to mentor teachers and present at international conferences like TESOL. Rounding out the trio is Zoi Sechlidou, Assistant to the Director of Studies and QTS-qualified educator, who brings a specialized background in Young Learners and academic research to the team's management approach. Together, they combine long-term vision with hands-on leadership to foster a thriving professional environment.



▶ 13.00 - 13.45



Lisa Dold

INNOVATION IN YOUR CENTRE

In this session we will have the opportunity to share projects that we are carrying out in our centres and continue thinking about ways to offer the best experience to our teaching teams and students.

▶ 13.45 – 13.00

Lunch

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Liv Palmer

MANAGING YOURSELF: WHO'S MANAGING THE MANAGER?

Leading an academy/ education team requires constant decision-making, emotional energy and resilience — yet many of us were never taught how to manage ourselves as intentionally as we manage our teams.

This session explores the personal side of leadership: clarifying your values, defining the kind of manager you want to be, and building sustainable habits that support both professional effectiveness and personal wellbeing. Through reflection and discussion, we'll consider how self-awareness, structure and intentional leadership choices shape not only our own performance, but the culture of the organisations we lead. Blending practical insight with personal development, this session invites educational leaders to step back, reset and strengthen the foundation of their leadership: themselves.

Language Programmes Director at TECS, Liv Palmer, leads both the year-round academy and large-scale residential summer camps. With experience managing a team of academy teachers during the academic year and overseeing upwards of 50 staff each summer, her work spans curriculum design, staff development and operational leadership.

Liv began her journey at TECS as a Full Immersion Intern (FIPS), progressing through a range of academic and leadership roles before stepping into senior management. This internal growth shapes her leadership approach: combining hands-on experience with intentional, values-led leadership, and a strong focus on team culture, professional development and long-term sustainability. Through her work, she is committed to building structured systems that support staff performance, foster the all-round progression of students and camps, and ensure meaningful organisational growth.

▶ 15.45 – 16.15

Closing / feedback / Raffle