

Eastern Daily Press

SERVING THE COMMUNITY
SINCE 1870

Vital to recognise the hard work of teachers and heads

Schools in Norfolk and Suffolk have had a rough ride in recent years. Their failures have been highlighted very publicly at the highest levels of government.

Scrutiny is vital. If politicians and teachers are letting down our youngsters, this needs to be addressed.

But when improvements are made, they should be trumpeted. There are many fantastic teachers and headteachers and it is important we recognise this. Those who have been successful in helping others, and the schools which are working so hard to do better, must be commended.

Ofsted has recorded improvements, with a number of examples highlighted by Norfolk County Council today.

But we must not get complacent at either a regional or a national level.

Despite a government announcement of extra funding for schools last week, our students still receive significantly less than their counterparts in Hackney, and other parts of London, which are held up as shining examples of excellence.

The boost to per-pupil funding is welcome, but there is still much further to go. And Norfolk County Council must keep up the pressure.

Those schools still falling below the level needed to equip the next generation with the skills they need to get the best jobs and help our businesses, public services and economy and region to thrive, must know the spotlight will not move until they are excellent too.

Can't scrimp on defence

After a winter when Britain was battered by bad weather, the Chancellor has to reassess how much he contributes to flood repair and protection in this budget.

For those whose homes are still drying out, it may not feel like it, but the east coast got off lightly – certainly compared to the south-west.

But experts have warned that a similar tidal surge with different weather conditions could be a very different matter.

The money announced over the last few months has been welcome and anything extra in Wednesday's budget is an improvement. But much more needs to be done in both long term thinking and cash terms, or we may have a different, much worse, story to tell in years to come.

It is a false economy to scrimp on defences vital to our region's prosperity.

Terrific for Tara

Tara has come a long way from being left to die on the streets of the Ukraine to poster dog for the charity Safe Rescue for Dogs.

After going through a horrible operation, she will get her new paws just in time for the summer and like her many other canine companions will be able to enjoy walks exploring our beautiful region.

The many dog lovers in this region will be horrified to hear this story could have had a very different ending.

Congratulations to the charity for putting this young Beagle-cross back on her feet.

looking for GOD.com

The Lord is faithful and will strengthen you and protect you against the evil one.
2 Thessalonians 3:3

tlc
tlcnorwich.com

READER'S PICTURE OF THE DAY

iwitness24



■ Caister Castle, photographed by EDP reader Richard Lay. If you would like to submit a picture for possible publication in the EDP, visit www.iwitness24.co.uk

Father's art reminds me of prejudice he faced

Peter
Trudgill



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The Norwich 20 Group is 70 years old this year. Their anniversary exhibition, "The story of a unique group of artists in Norfolk", is being hosted by The Bridewell Museum from March 18 to May 24.

The original Twenty Group were a collection of radical, forward-looking local artists who, in the last months of the Second World War, got together to promote better understanding of contemporary art and to counter widespread hostility and prejudice against it. My father was one of the original members. He moved, we can say, in distinguished artistic circles.

He also came to move in elevated business circles, as the manager of Jarrold's Publication department, and mixed with all sorts of nationally-known figures.

But he'd grown up in a working-class family and originally spoken with a real Norwich accent, as his parents did all their lives. He didn't speak like that in later life, though – you could tell he came from Norwich, but he'd modified his accent considerably.

That modification came at a cost. Dad knew that some people in business circles would look down on him if he spoke in the way that came most naturally to a young man from a terraced house in New Catton, and that opportunities might be denied to him.

So throughout his adult life, on important and formal occasions, he suffered the



■ Burnham Overy Staithe, a painting by John Trudgill, one of the founder members of the Norwich 20 Group.
Picture: SUBMITTED

anxiety that goes with having to think, not only about what you're saying, but about how you're pronouncing it.

No one should have to do that. No one should have to feel, because of the bigotry of others, that they can make progress in life only if they abandon their native dialect.

We're doing our best to stamp out the scourge of sexism – we don't tell women it's their fault if they're discriminated against. Equally, if people with truly local accents are dismissed as not being worthy, we shouldn't say it's their fault, but do our

best to stamp out this linguisticism – which is even now often overtly and shamelessly expressed.

People are at their most relaxed and articulate and expressive when they're speaking in their own natural accent. In creating his paintings, Dad felt free to express himself as he wished, in spite of the prejudice that existed against modern art in the 1940s. It's a pity he couldn't do the same when he was speaking.

At the Bridewell exhibition, I shall have two reasons for thinking about combatting prejudice.