

# Top head's warning to 'snowflake' generation



Mr Robb says youngsters lack grit

THE headteacher of a top boarding school sparked a backlash from ex-pupils by accusing young people of being "snowflakes" who had an "underlying sense of entitlement".

Douglas Robb made his remarks about the so-called "snowflake generation" on the website of his 1,000-year-old Cranleigh School.

Mr Robb, 51, said he worried that some young people lacked "grit" and looked down their noses at certain vocations while expecting to land "a six or a million job".

In a post "Developing grit, and a grateful attitude to work", he said: "A generation has come of age where many more individuals perceive themselves to be one in a million."

"I don't blame them. They have been advertised to since birth, they

By Geoff Maynard

have had credit and loans on a plate; they have been overly indulged; and have been overwhelmed by a strange combination of fictional sitcom characters, reality TV and social media stars, who paint a picture of perfection to be achieved."

He said that "people too often now look down their noses at, for a start, working unreasonable hours in fast food restaurants, or working in essential roles receiving abuse from members of the public, as a police officer, nurse, benefits assessor or parking attendant."

Mr Robb became head of Cranleigh in Holt, Norfolk, in 2014. Former pupils include vaccine pioneer Baroness Hilary Dutton,

actress Olivia Colman and composer Benjamin Britten.

Mr Robb wrote that he felt deflated when interviewing a newly qualified teacher who admitted: "The student I once and work for you!"

He said: "That some youngsters now approach job interviews in the same way as they might approach buying a luxury holiday concerto."

"I would encourage young people to be grateful for the work opportunities they are given and to throw themselves into each task."

Former Cranleigh pupil Rebecca Lawrence, 35, who now works for the civil service, said: "These comments set me feeling uncomfortable."

"It's disconcerting for anyone to hear. Maybe children at his school are more privileged and so are more

entitled, but he shouldn't generalise our generation from a few.

Defending his opinion, Mr Robb said: "Generalisation is a necessary part of life if we are to be able to discuss trends that seem to be more prevalent among a particular group."

"It is now well documented that employers have noticed a trend where young people seem ill-prepared for the requirements of the working day, despite possessing an impressive academic education."

Others joined in the debate on social media yesterday.

Phil Right said: "Snowflake generation thinks the next one is 'spik, milk-colded and entitled'. How worrying that a head teacher isn't sufficiently aware to realise that such comments are commonplace and worthless."

Daily Express  
February 2018