15th December 2020

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

As you all know, Ms Davies will be retiring at the end of this term, after nine years as Headteacher at Walthamstow School for Girls. Before Ms Davies leaves the school at the end of this month, I wanted to communicate publicly the governing body’s sincere appreciation of all that she has done for WSfG over almost a decade.

Over the past nine years, the school has continued to develop and educate the girls so that they leave WSfG having achieved their very best at GCSE level and having developed into young women and global citizens of whom we can all be very proud. Their time at WSfG enables the girls to go on and study further, or to follow other paths best suited to them, having had access to as many enriching experiences, far beyond the national curriculum, as the school can possibly offer. This is due to the vision of Ms Davies, and the tireless commitment of her leadership team and the entire staff of the school, who all want the best for our students.

During her time as Headteacher, the school has been recognised as ‘Outstanding’ in the Ofsted inspection judgment of 2018, when her leadership was described by inspectors as ‘exceptional’. Ms Davies also led the school’s bid to become a Teaching and National Support School, which was granted in summer 2017. At the same time, she became a National Leader of Education and has been supporting other schools’ improvement in our region by sharing her extensive knowledge and expertise when asked to do so. Every year since 2014, the school has won SSAT awards for progress and achievement, as well as a national award from the DfE/TES for pupil premium students’ progress and achievement. There have been many other awards too for a wide range of school initiatives as you will have seen on the walls of the school entrance lobby and the foyer beyond it, as well as on the school website!

Under Ms Davies’ leadership, the school committed to being a pathfinder school for the national ethical framework for leadership and also gained accreditation for ethical leadership as part of the SSAT’s framework for exceptional education. Something of which I know Ms Davies is rightly proud. Governors know from working with Ms Davies that an ethical approach to leadership has been a defining characteristic of her leadership of the school for which she has gained our absolute respect.

As I’m sure you will remember, governors had to pause the recruitment of a new headteacher earlier this year due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Ms Davies agreed to stay on in this unprecedented situation until we were able to complete the process and appoint her successor. This is just one recent example of her dedication to always doing her best for WSfG, something that has been evident many times over her years here as headteacher. Another has been her clear-sightedness and commitment to keeping the girls and the staff safe during the current pandemic, whilst doing her utmost to ensure that the girls’ education has remained a priority.

I think I am right in saying that Ms Davies’s career as a teacher has lasted 40 years, during which time she has helped to improve the lives of very many young people, including a period of time earlier in her career as headteacher of a small establishment for schoolchildren who refused to attend regular schools, located on a barge in Southwark. This is a perfect illustration of a career which has in truth been a vocation. We applaud her for all her many achievements throughout her long career in education.

On behalf of the Governing Body, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ms Davies from the bottom of our hearts for her outstanding service as Headteacher of Walthamstow School for Girls. We all wish her a very happy retirement, full of new adventures and exciting experiences and look forward to welcoming her back to the school as an honoured guest sometime in the future!

Yours faithfully,

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Gillian Barker

Chair of Governors