



YORKE MEAD PRIMARY SCHOOL GOVERNOR NEWSLETTER

Autumn Term 2017

Letter from the new Chairs of Governors

Dear Parents, Carers and Staff of Yorke Mead

We would like to introduce ourselves as the new Co-Chairs of the Governing Body of Yorke Mead School, taking over from Will Connolly, who has done such an excellent job as Chair for the last six years. As we take up our role at the start of this new academic year, we felt it was important to tell you a little bit about ourselves and what Yorke Mead as a school means to us.



My name is Charlotte Gomes and I lived and grew up in Croxley Green. Back then my surname was Masters and I was a pupil at Yorke Mead School. I started Yorke Mead after the Easter holidays in the late 80s, when those who were summer born (I am at the end of August) were phased into the school year. From that moment on I loved every single day of my time at Yorke Mead (maybe apart from being sent out of the classroom for talking too much) – I have fond memories of playing in the old swimming pool (it was freezing but the best of fun), being in the choir and attempting to play the violin (I shudder now at the thought of the screeching sound I made) and the many wonderful staff and pupils at the school. It was for this very reason that back in 2010 I offered to join the Governing Body of Yorke Mead School. I have such fond memories of my time that I wanted to help the school create fond memories for the current and future family of Yorke Mead.

I now have a family of my own – my husband Chris and two daughters – Isabella (4) and Sophia (1) and live in Rickmansworth. I work for Three Rivers District Council managing the Leisure Development team and have been responsible for refurbishing the local play areas etc. and managing staff who deliver the Easter and summer play schemes, Play Rangers, youth projects, arts development and health and physical activity schemes across the district.

I am extremely passionate about play and outdoor learning and have been so excited by the developments at Yorke Mead over the past few years – it really is an amazing place for children to learn and engage in the outdoors. I also love the focus on the children and their health and wellbeing – being a child in the 21st century is extremely challenging with so much pressure and it so important that we nurture our children and give them the building blocks to be resilient in the society of today. Even the way in which the school introduced the breakfast club for those doing their SATs is testament to the way the children are put first at this school.



My name is Derek Marshall. I was born and bred in South London, educated there and at Reading University, and moved to Hertfordshire in 2009. In 2012 I retired from full-time work, after 41 years employed in the UK civil service and the aerospace industry, but decided it would be good to give something back to the community. So, I volunteered to become a school governor and was happily introduced to Yorke Mead, where I have been active as a governor ever since. I live in west Watford with my wife, Janet, and our two teenagers.

Although my schooldays are many years ago, I can remember them as times of struggle, being a slow learner and away from school a lot because of ill-health, especially in the early years. I therefore appreciate, perhaps more than most, the value to a child of a positive start in primary school, and support strongly the 'Yorke Mead way', with its emphasis on encouraging children to grow into happy, well-rounded individuals, becoming, as the school mission statement says, 'confident, resilient, healthy and life-long learners', ready for the challenges of later life. As a co-chair of the governors I want to do everything possible to help the school maintain the high standards that have been set in recent years in implementing these values.

Moving forwards, we wish to continue to support the family of Yorke Mead - including all the children, parents, carers and staff. We aspire to be "outstanding" through the way in which the children are put at the heart of the school – whether this be through the Mind Up curriculum, Forest Schools or Philosophy for Children - we want to continue to see Yorke Mead as the best place for children to grow and learn. We also want to ensure Yorke Mead continues to attract and retain the best teaching and support staff available, it must be a great place to work as well as to learn.

A great deal has been achieved at Yorke Mead over the last few years and our aim must be to continue the process of improvement. There will undoubtedly be challenges ahead: the tightening of school budgets may well require some difficult decisions, and we are aware that many schools in Hertfordshire are considering becoming academies, so we need to review the best way forward for our school as the situation develops and be prepared to embrace change if it appears the best option. We are fortunate in having a strong set of governors, with a wide range of skills, to help us take decisions affecting the school, and a very good working relationship with our exceptional school leadership team. It is the high quality of the people we have in the staff and governors at the school that gives us confidence that the year ahead will be another positive one for Yorke Mead.

We look forward to working with Mrs Pollard and her excellent team of staff and all of you over the coming year.

With kindest Regards

Charlotte Gomes and Derek Marshall

You can email us at: governors@yorkemead.herts.sch.uk
Or leave a message at the school office and we will contact you.