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September 21, 2018

An Interview with Amanda Douglas – Head of Windrush Valley School.

Question “What are your thoughts on becoming Head of Windrush?”

Becoming the Head teacher of Windrush Valley School is an honour and a privilege that brings responsibility and opportunity: The responsibility to ensure that the ethos and community spirit in the school continues and the opportunity to provide the pupils with enthusiasm, enjoyment and wide ranging activities that meet the requirements of an increasingly demanding curriculum. As a school we pride ourselves on achieving excellent SATs results, without a selective entry process. We strive to enter **The Times Top 100 Prep Schools League**, which is based on our end of key stage results.



Q “Are there any curriculum developments that you want to introduce?”

Our extensive curriculum will continue along with the strong emphasis we place on sports and the performing arts. In the immediate future ‘**Our World Programme**’ will have to be taught on the school site and using public land in the village to extend the pupil’s learning. Legal compliance issues at Manor Farm prevents its current use so the planned curriculum will continue to be covered with the focus on outdoors practical work as before. In the longer term, I would like to introduce broader project based learning into Key Stage 2. Following the national curriculum topics children will be able to ‘choose’ which specific aspect of a topic they would like to focus on and explore. They can develop their research and presentation skills and then host presentation events to parents and fellow pupils.



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Q “What new developments are you planning for the School?”

We are actively looking at ways of improving the school facilities, aside from the curriculum a comprehensive marketing strategy designed to recruit pupils will be started straight away specifically targeting children for our Foundation Unit. Whilst vitally important this is not a visible development that current families will see. Upgrading the playground will give the school a much needed facelift and new playground equipment will be an immediate improvement the children can enjoy.

In the short term there will be a parent survey sent out via ParentMail in order to research both the need for and viability of offering a **home – school transport** service using the school minibus.

In the medium to longer term we are also exploring the feasibility of building extra classrooms on the current school site. This would allow us to use the current reception classroom as a dining room, an assembly hall and PE space during inclement weather.

Q “Will there be any additional staff employed and what are the roles of the existing staff?”

Although there has been a change of Proprietor and Head, there are no other planned departures from the current team. We are a cohesive unit, supportive of each other and collaborative in order that our expertise in different areas is shared so the children benefit from it. In addition to being class teachers there are also specific roles that are held within the school; **Miss Shirley** continues with her role of overseeing the phonics and reading scheme from Nursery through to the end of Year 2. **Mrs McGurk** is our Designated Safeguarding Lead and following the required training **Mrs Maudsley** will take over as Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. **Mr Hone** is Head of Studies and **Mrs Taylor** is PE Co-ordinator and SENCo.

Mr and Mrs Wood will no longer have a visible role in the running of Windrush Valley School. They are however working in the background to ensure a smooth handover to our new parent company, Ingenio Education. In order for them to withdraw from the school entirely and for the aforementioned developments to take place there is a need for additional staff. Therefore the school is currently advertising for **another class teacher** to join our existing team and a **bursar**. In the future there is likely to be a **maintenance person / minibus driver** especially if **home to school transport** becomes a viable option.

Q “Have you any plans to involve parents more in the School?”

Parent ideas and input have always been welcomed via the Parent Consultative Group (PCG) and all parents are invited to attend the termly meetings to share their thoughts. A new initiative is that we will ask for parental involvement and expertise in our marketing campaign.



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1. Q “What do you hope to achieve this year?”

Finally, my hopes for this year are to ensure that the ethos and community spirit found in Windrush Valley School remains with the change of ownership to Ingenio Education. To spend investments wisely so the benefits are noticed by all pupils. To ensure that our high levels of academic excellence continue with another year of fantastic SATs results to earn us a place in **The Times Top 100**.

