

Vicky Ford MP visit to Barnes Farm Junior School

We were delighted to welcome Vicky Ford (Member of Parliament for Chelmsford) to school today to mark International Women's Day, part of our commemoration of the centenary of women in the UK winning the right to vote.

Mrs Ford met the school in assembly and was pleased to answer some questions from pupils about her role as an MP, her thoughts about Chelmsford and today's focus on women, such as:

- Why did you want to be an MP? (Tyler in Year 4)
Vicky explained that she wanted to get involved in trying to make local communities and the country a better place and be part of the solutions rather than just complain about the problems.
- What do you think needs improving in Chelmsford? (Sonny in Year 4)
Mrs Ford focused on the rail service, highlighting the little-known fact that Chelmsford is the busiest two-platform rail station in the UK and that our trains are forty years old.
- Which woman in history do you most admire? (Ada in Year 3)
Three women were mentioned by Vicky; Queen Elizabeth I for her bravery in leading the country against the Spanish Armada, Queen Victoria for her ability to manage a busy home and work life and Margaret Thatcher for being the first female Prime Minister and for her previous career as a scientist.



Vicky emphasised the importance of gender equality and the fact that more needs to be done to achieve this in our country. She used some pupils to show how parliament is currently under-represented by women (about 30%) and the same illustration to show how women in one career, engineering, are in a particular minority (about 10%). Mrs Ford explained why anyone, including girls, should consider this as a future profession.



Following the assembly, Vicky spent a few moments with the school council, encouraging them in their important role in influencing school improvement. She also took the opportunity to have a tour of the school before leaving to attend parliament in London.



Thank you to all the children who proposed questions to be asked, even though there wasn't time for many of them. We are also grateful to have had the support of two of our governors, Mr Steve Andrews and Mrs Carol Mason, who came along to our assembly this morning.