

## *Marsh Mail*

Widespread coverage of institutionalised sexism continues in the media spotlight. Amongst the stories of sexual abuse and harassment, the coverage has also highlighted inequalities in the treatment of women and gender stereotypes that persist, despite significant societal progress to tackle them.

Everyday sexism in schools has been the focus of recent research by the government, revealing some shocking findings. A report, published last year by Parliament's Women and Equalities Select Committee, outlined evidence that nearly 60 per cent of girls and young women aged 13-21 said that they had faced some form of sexual harassment at school or college within the previous year. It is disturbing that there were so many victims of unpleasant and unwanted language and behaviour, and that this kind of conduct continues in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

At LVC we continue to address these issues through our PSHE curriculum and seek to tackle and address casual sexism that can be perceived by students as 'a joke'. We also continue to work on perceptions of careers aspirations through our information, advice and guidance and opportunities. Our March science week programme at LVC features talks from female STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) leaders, amongst other engaging events to showcase the subject.

Delivering a curriculum that reflects women's achievements starts in our partner primary schools with the study of influential figures, such as Mary Seacole, and exploring parents' careers in non-gender-stereotyped professions, such as female surgeons.

It has been great to see children of both sexes flourishing in our inaugural dance production, 'Ignite', last month, and smashing gender stereotypes. Solo performances by males and females and an all boy dance troupe were fabulous. Meanwhile, our Under 16 girls' basketball team celebrated the title of district champions.

The introduction of an LGBT+ group at LVC for students to openly discuss issues relating to gender is an example of the safe and accepting environment that we seek to foster and support.

It is essential that all children, regardless of sex and gender, are able to thrive, flourish and achieve their potential at school and in life, without fear of harassment or limitation.