

## *Marsh Mail*

Healthy competition has an important role in education. Having recently witnessed great sporting achievements and house spirits at our sports day, I am proud to recognise and reward the successes of students at LVC.

Competition doesn't only take place on the sports field, though. This summer our Year 11s vied for their places on the bell curve of exam results to govern their academic outcomes. Students' relative performance, compared with all other entrants, determined the letters and numbers that they will have received in brown envelopes on 24th August. The same is true of schools.

Education itself is not a competitive sport yet as I write this, awaiting the publication of GCSE results, I am acutely aware of how the school is judged against other institutions on the basis of a few select headline measures.

School league tables were introduced in 1992. The stated aim by the government at the time was to give parents the consumer information they needed to create a free market in school choice. This 'Compare the Market' style approach offers a very narrow and reductive assessment of schooling and creates a false sense of commercial competition. Furthermore, when the stakes are high, they can encourage immoral or divisive practices.

At LVC we believe that collaboration is more fruitful than competition. Our involvement in a number of educational networks, including our Teaching School status and our role as founding school in the Chilford Hundred Education Trust, reflects our commitment to reciprocal relationships that work in the best interests of all children. CHET's opening of a new primary school in Red Lodge and exploration of partnership with Long Road Sixth Form College are indicative of the Trust's ambition to sustain and grow educational excellence in the region.

An important vacancy of Clerk has arisen at CHET. This part-time, flexible role plays a significant function in supporting the Board of Directors to ensure the effective running of the organisation for the benefit of local education and students. Further details about the post and how to apply can be found in the vacancy section of the LVC website. We look forward to applications from those that share our commitment to securing exceptional education for all.

Helena Marsh

Executive Principal