

# Chrissie Barrington

Principal, Kingswood Primary Academy, Corby, Northants

## Can you tell us a little bit about your school? What is your approach to career related learning?

Kingswood Primary Academy caters for pupils from the Corby (largely from the Kingswood estate) and for pupils between the ages of 3 and 11. There are a high proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for support from the pupil premium. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average. We have over 240 pupils in the school.

Kingswood Primary Academy plans careers and employability related activities across the school year. Desired outcomes are agreed and disseminated at staff meeting these are linked to learning outcomes from the CDI framework for key stage two. A formal Careers, Enterprise and Employability Education Strategy is in place indicating the importance of employability, careers and enterprise education as part of overall academy policy and there is a clear understanding of the national and regional drivers.

## What inspired your school to sign up to Primary Futures?

Back in 2015 the Greenwood Academies Trust launched a Careers and Employability strategy to support the work around challenging stereotypes, raising aspiration etc. in all of its academies. As part of the annual Careers and Employability Conference we were introduced to Primary Futures and the platform to recruit volunteers in local area. Since then we have held two Careers Fairs (one being an Inspiring Corby event and part of the published case study), two 'What's my Line?' events and a Redraw the Balance activity in school with volunteer supplied by Primary Futures. Without their support, the events would not have been successful.

## How would you describe the children's aspirations at your school before and after the Primary Futures event/activities?

The majority of children (and families) lack aspiration primarily because of limited life experience, knowledge and skills. Most members of our community have or have had limited interactions with employers and the wider world. Many of our families (parents and grandparents) were born on the estate and have never moved away.

Our links with Primary Futures have enabled us to enable our pupils to meet a wider range of people with interesting careers. This I believe has helped raise aspiration in our pupils. Each year we complete a very basic survey with pupils about 'what they want to be'. Comparisons between two years show that pupils' range of aspirations has increased in that time.

## What did you want to be when you grew up and why?

A nurse because I wanted to help and care for people. Various life events and pressures mean that I was never able to fulfil this ambition. I have worked as a Home Carer for the elderly/palliative care, which I thoroughly enjoyed. I became a teacher because someone recognised an ability in me and supported me to achieve. In a way, I am fulfilling my ambition to care and support others but just not in the way I expected.

## How long has your school been using Primary Futures?

Two years.

## Describe Primary Futures in five words

Aspirational, educational, interactive, fun, exploratory.

## Was there an especially inspiring moment that happened at one of the events?

During the Redraw the Balance workshop for Y2, there was a moment when a number of boys realised women earn less than men and they were horrified. Great to see in children so young! During the same event (which included an accountant, an oncology scientist a logistics manager, an aerospace battle manager, a lorry driver and a nurse) the children were surprised and pleased that anyone can do any job doesn't matter if you are boy or girl.

## What has been the best thing about being part of Primary Futures?

Access to wide range of volunteers and ideas for activities.

## Has a Primary Futures volunteer come in that has a job you hadn't heard of before or had access to? If so, please can you give us an example?

Before working with Primary Futures, as an adult I thought I knew about most jobs however, for example, we didn't have access to:

- A train conductor
- Female Strategic Battle Command Officer
- Facilities Manager at Houses of Parliament
- Female Scientist, Female Lorry Driver.

## When is your next Primary Futures activity?

March 2020 and July 2020. Careers runs through curriculum and we are always open to new ideas.

## What difference has Primary Futures made to the school and your pupils?

I believe that links with Primary Futures have helped us raise the aspiration and increase the knowledge of our pupils. We have been able to introduce our children to a variety of, and increase exposure to, a wider range of roles and careers than if we had tried to do this by ourselves.

## Would you recommend Primary Futures to other schools? What would you say to encourage them to sign up?

Yes. The platform is a great way to find and invite people from the world of work into school that we would not be able to reach on our own.

## What would you say to volunteers thinking of signing up to Primary Futures?

If you have an interest in sharing your expertise with the workforce of tomorrow and supporting children to raise their aspirations then signing up to Primary Futures is a positive thing. I hope that they would feel they were able to give something back to communities (many of which are very impoverished) and if they inspire one child to fulfil their potential, they have had an impact.

## Do you have any other comments you'd like to add?

Without a doubt, Primary Futures have supported our journey to achieving Careers Mark in November 2018 and continues to enable us to develop our careers provision going forward.

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