

## An introduction...

**I**t's that's time of year. End of term, Christmas holidays, hello 2012, new term again... We, at Laidlaw Education, share the hectic build up of the season - with our own children and with the many children and families with which we work! We are particularly delighted to begin our association with School Report at this time of the year, alongside other new beginnings.



2012 begins with an important new appointment in the world of education: Sir Michael Wilshaw takes up his post as Chief Inspector of Schools. Sir Michael is the inspirational head of the former Hackney Downs School - now Mossbourne Academy - which is rated as both "outstanding" and "exceptional". The school is under a mile away from this summer's riot-stricken Pembury Estate.

There is no magic formula to this success story. Discipline, respect, high expectations of each child, regardless of ability or background, underpinned by strong leadership, hard work and teachers who are passionate about their work are all key ingredients. The pupils not only accept, but learn to relish the structure and discipline of their school - they discover that this allows them to learn and, in turn, achieve beyond expectation.

David Cameron sparked much conversation recently when he asked: "What makes a great school?" Whatever our political persuasion, few of us would deny that "hard work, committed teachers, an inspiring head and parents who don't think that education stops at the school gate" are all vital factors in success.

If you are taking time to read School Report, you will, no doubt, share our passion in the pursuit of excellence in education. So whatever our role - Chief Inspector of Schools, teacher or parent - we will all be playing our part by continuing to support our children to aspire to be the best that they can be, in every sense and regardless of which school they attend. There is room for optimism. Enjoy the season - and preparing for the new term ahead.

**Sue Laidlaw**

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