

PRESS RELEASE

New Year's Honour for CEO of The Howard Partnership Trust

The Howard Partnership Trust is delighted to learn that CEO Rhona Barnfield has been appointed to the title of Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) for services to education in the New Year's Honours list published on 31 December 2015.

Driven by her passion for improving the life-chances of young people, since taking up her first headship at Hillview School for Girls in 1994, Rhona has led schools to achieve Ofsted outstanding status and worked with schools in challenging circumstances to rapidly raise outcomes for pupils. At Thomas Knyvett College, a secondary school in Surrey which in 2007 had been in Special Measures the longest in the country, just two terms of Rhona's involvement whilst Head at the outstanding Howard of Effingham School saw the College removed from this category. Following this, at the request of the Department for Education and the Local Authority, The Howard Partnership was established as the first federated partnership in the county. Now a steadily growing multi-academy chain based in Surrey, The Howard Partnership Trust (THPT), formed in 2013, currently comprises five schools – Howard of Effingham, Thomas Knyvett College, Oxted School, Kenyngton Manor Primary School and St Lawrence Primary School.

Alongside her pioneering work in the development of successful partnership working between schools, Rhona is well-known and respected both in Surrey and the wider community for her strategic insight and extensive contribution across both secondary and primary phases of education. Currently Chair of the Surrey Schools' Forum, a post she has held since 2009, she is also a member of the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Partnership Board. Rhona chaired the Secondary Heads' Phase Council from 2012-2015, and the Surrey Academies Group from 2011-2012, and contributed to many initiatives through membership of the Surrey Safeguarding and Children's Board and the Surrey Educational Trust. In her capacity as a designated National Leader of Education, Rhona has acted as a School Improvement Partner for a number of schools. In September 2014, Rhona was elected to membership of the Headteacher Board supporting the work of the Regional Schools Commissioner for South East and South London, in approving and monitoring academies and free schools in this area on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education.

Chair of THPT Chris Williamson comments: "This recognition for Rhona in the New Year Honours List is a well-deserved reflection of her truly inspirational leadership approach that so successfully results in bringing out the best possible outcomes for young people in today's ever-changing educational landscape".

Mrs Barnfield says: "I feel very humbled by this honour, as I believe the achievements of The Howard Partnership Trust are the result of quality teamwork where all colleagues work together with the common goal of improving young people's life-chances".

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