



Dr Helen Wright

September 2011

Dr Helen Wright is Head of one of the leading independent girls' schools in the UK - St Mary's School in Calne, Wiltshire and is currently the President of the UK Girls' Schools Association.

Scottish-born Dr Wright, 41, an Oxford modern and medieval languages graduate, is a well-known figure in the education world and a leading proponent of single sex education.

She is President for 2011 of the professional association representing the heads of leading girls' schools in the UK – the Girls' Schools Association (GSA). She was also awarded the prestigious Tatler School Awards' 'Best Head of a Public School' for 2010-2011. The 2011 Tatler Schools Guide says of her: 'You won't find a more impressive role model for your teenage daughter than Dr Helen Wright'.

She also regularly writes and advises on education and parenting issues in the media and beyond and is an adviser for the GSA's website aimed at parents - mydaughter.co.uk.

Dr Wright experienced a rapid rise in the education world and was appointed to the Headship of her first girls' school Heathfield in Ascot at the age of just 30, making her one of the youngest ever appointed independent school heads.

She has also worked at co-educational and boys' schools and was herself educated in the state sector. In 2003, she joined St Mary's as Head, determined to do her utmost to prepare the school's young women for the rigours of the 21st Century.

She has been instrumental in developing the school's enviable reputation not only for its exemplary academic standards, but for the all-round quality of its education and its excellent pastoral care. She is passionate about developing individual young women and is deeply committed to a learner-focused approach to education.

Under her leadership, St Mary's Calne has grown and now attracts a record number of girls with admissions regularly oversubscribed.

Dr Wright, who has three young children aged 8, 5, and 2 is famed for her energy and enthusiasm.

She is a Board Member of the Oxford University Society Board and sits on the Board of the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL Council). She is the Vice-Chair of the Independent Schools Council (ISC). She also retains her interest in language learning nationally and is a patron of ISMLA (Independent Schools Modern Languages Association).

Dr Wright is the author of language books 'Learning Through Listening' and a translation of Elisabeth Behr-Sigel's 'A Monk of the Eastern Church', and has had numerous articles, chapters and reviews published. She has worked for the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and the International Baccalaureate (IB) as an examiner. She is also a school inspector for the Independent Schools' Inspectorate (ISI).

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Education

1983 – 1988	James Gillespie’s High School, Edinburgh
1988 – 1993	Lincoln College, University of Oxford
	BA (Hons) Modern Languages (French & German) 2:1
	PGCE and QTS in French and German 1993
	MA (Oxon) 1995
(Further degrees completed part-time whilst working)	
1998	MA (University of Leicester), Applied Linguistics
2004	EdD (University of Exeter), Understanding Moral Leadership in Schools

Schools

1993 – 1995	Teacher of French and German at Reed’s School, Cobham
1995 – 1997	Head of German at Bishop’s Stortford College, Herts
1997 – 2000	Head of German at St Edward’s School, Oxford
2000 – 2003	Deputy Head, then Acting Head, then Headmistress at Heathfield, Ascot (Head from 2001 – 2003)
2003 onwards	Headmistress of St Mary’s Calne