

Meadowpark staff and pupils were able to have a whole school photograph taken, and I was incredibly proud of how most of our young people coped with a stranger organising them in rows, sitting without their trusted member of staff beside them, and encouraging them to face forwards and smile. I then had to run round to Knox Academy for the whole school photograph and wondered whether I had made the right decision to have ours separately, but seeing 700+ pupils and staff gathered together, and having to follow very specific instructions I was reassured that the right decision had been made and that Meadowpark pupils would find this too overwhelming. I look forward to seeing the results and having our photo up for all to see.

We welcome Carol Purves, learning assistant, on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> April, who comes from The Royal Blind School and who I know will complement the support staff team with her wealth of experience in communication. Carol is replacing Elaine Smith and will join Class 3.

I was asked to facilitate at the Head Teacher and Depute Head Teacher conference on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> April at The Brunton and had the pleasure and privilege of working with colleagues from across East Lothian and Mid Lothian. We were informed and enlightened by David Watt

<https://twitter.com/dknwatt?lang=en>

and Mel Ainscow Emeritus Professor of education Manchester University

[https://twitter.com/MelAinscow?ref\\_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor](https://twitter.com/MelAinscow?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor)

in what proved to be a thought provoking session where we were asked to consider East Lothian's principles for Inclusion:

- Barriers to learning will be identified and removed
- Children and young people will be involved in planning to meet their needs
- The presence, participation and achievement of all learners will be maximised
- Diversity is acknowledged as a rich resource to support the learning and development of all
- Except in exceptional circumstances all children and young people will be educated within their own community.

David reminded us that while there is still much to be done to embed good practice and achieve consistency, Scotland has good examples of inclusion across the country where strengths outweigh weaknesses.

I joined my Knox Academy colleagues in the senior management team this afternoon to review the 4 Key Priorities for 2017/2018 and to begin work on the school improvement plan for 2018/2019. Inclusion was top of the agenda and Meadowpark is a vital part of this process as we continue to forge links with peers and pupils across the school community. Meadowpark will create an improvement plan with which I hope parents and stakeholders will engage in the process of. We will continue to make reference to HGIOS 4 <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/self-evaluation/HGIOS4> for self-evaluation and improvement.