

PRESS RELEASE

'Opening of newly refurbished science 'Wonder Lab' at St Catherine's Prep School



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On Tuesday 19th September, space scientist Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock MBE officially opened a completely refurbished science laboratory at St Catherine's Prep School in Bramley. Her passion is making science accessible to a general audience, and she is currently presenter of BBC 4's 'The Sky at Night.' Her BBC 2 programme 'Do We Really Need the Moon?' earned Maggie the Talkback Thames New Talent Award. Her hope is that this new science facility at the school will inspire young minds. As she said on opening the new 'Wonder Lab' at the school, 'It's wonderful to see this new science laboratory at St Catherine's, aptly named the 'Wonder Lab.' Hopefully it will inspire the next generation of girls to consider careers in STEM.'

St Catherine's Prep School was keen to develop its science, which was already an existing strength, to make the school stand out head and shoulders above other prep schools in the South of England. St Catherine's Senior School prides itself on the strength of their science and maths A-Level results and the number of students who choose to pursue careers in STEM. Back in June, Naomi Bartholomew, Headteacher of the Prep School, asked the girls for their suggestions for the name of the new laboratory. Out of the many ideas, the school selected one that reflected the girls' enthusiasm for the subject. It is a room where discoveries are made, hence the title of the 'Wonder Lab'. She expressed the hope that, 'the new facility will inspire the girls, enable their curiosity to flourish and ensure that they can work collaboratively as they investigate and explore. As the plaque says, 'Let curiosity lead the way.'

With its state of the art digital technology, the Wonder Lab will transform the already first-class science education at St Catherine's. The Lab has four colourful learning 'pods', thereby facilitating increased collaborative and exploratory investigation. Girls from the whole of the Prep School will benefit from this wonderful facility, and will be able to share their findings more readily with their peers, either face-to-face or as they gather round an iPad or two to research and discuss a topic. Mrs M Kelly, Head of Science, is confident that, 'the new science lab will revolutionise the girls' learning experience. The space is bright and vibrant, which will revitalise the image and perception of science in the school. I can't wait to use this space with all age groups in the Prep School.'

Carina, Year 6, science monitor, said, 'The UK government is very keen for us to focus more on maths and science. St Catherine's is doing exactly that with our new state of the art science lab. Its new layout with round tables and comfortable chairs will encourage the girls to work as a team and its improved facilities and equipment will create a much better place for us to learn. It will also hopefully encourage greater excitement for science and inspire some of us girls to follow a career in science - boys shouldn't have all the fun!'

Ella, Year 6, science monitor, added, 'The new lab has taken science learning at St Catherine's to a whole new level, with newer equipment such as the huge touch screen interactive TV and a HoverCam which will make learning much more interesting and exciting. The layout of the lab is very spacious and will help with the teaching of this subject. Now the sky's the limit!'

**For more information, please contact Mrs Sally Manhire, Marketing at
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