How we chose our Values

An organisation's values only help drive the organisation forward if everyone involved understands and believes in those values.

At The North School we set out to make our values relevant by involving the whole school community, not just in approving them but in creating them.

Parents, students, staff and governors all played their part in coming up with the four key words that they felt best summed up the ethos of the school. Those words – *respect, achievement, resilience* and *community* – now provide a focus for both teachers and pupils and a framework for life at The North.

When the senior leadership team and the governing body decided it was time to clarify the school's values, they knew that "ownership" would be key to their success.

As a result, the Parents' Forum, the Students' Parliament and the staff were all asked to discuss the words they felt best represented The North and put forward their favourite five.

With the Governors doing the same exercise, it was then a simple matter of seeing which words came up most often across the different groups and then adopting the top four.

Fran Bryan, a former cover supervisor who is now a graphic designer, then created three different graphical images to represent the values and the staff team was invited to choose their favourite.

"Because everyone was involved in the process from the start, the whole school community has been quick to adopt the new values," explained Headteacher Anna Lawrence. "People are much happier sharing and promoting something they helped to create than something they feel has been imposed from above."

The North's Parents' Forum meets once a term and is a great opportunity for parents to get more involved in the way the school works, discuss teaching and learning and put forward suggestions. Everyone is invited to attend.

The Students' Parliament is made up of pupils who are elected by the members of their form and who also contribute to the way the school operates in both practical and strategic ways.