

# FTSE Board Stories



## A Senior Independent Director's Perspective

Vivienne Cox CBE



Collaborating with the board to develop talent and a leadership pipeline. Pearson has a proud and strong history of women serving on its board for the past two decades. Indeed when I joined the board in 2011 Dame Marjorie Scardino was the CEO.

She was of course, the first woman to be the Chief Executive of a FTSE100 company, and it was a powerful reason for me to join the company. From my experience on other boards I knew that there was a real tipping point when there are three or more women so I was delighted to join a board where that was the case.

Today 30% of the Pearson Board members are women. What has really changed over the last seven years though, is the diversity of thinking, of experience and of backgrounds represented around the boardroom table. We have ethnic as well as gender diversity and a range of skills well suited to the challenges and opportunities the company faces.

In May 2017, Pearson introduced a board diversity and inclusion policy, which incorporated a strong commitment to board gender balance and diversity, and established measurable objectives, monitoring and reporting. Additionally, the board agreed to assist with the development and support of initiatives to promote all forms of diversity in the Pearson executive and the senior leadership. For example, the board recently agreed to participate in a newly designed mentoring program which will pair board members directly in one-to-one relationships with senior female leaders.

Pearson CEO John Fallon, a relentless advocate for diversity and inclusion, has made it a key priority for his executive management team. John is championing a number of initiatives designed to support talent progression, leadership development and succession planning, and he will chair the company's new Global Diversity and Inclusion Council.

Pearson has a clear mission: to help people globally make progress in their lives through learning. Every dimension of diversity will be represented in the teachers and learners we serve, and the Pearson Board is clear that to fulfill our task of oversight and governance we too have to be diverse.