

One Hundred Years of Votes for Women!

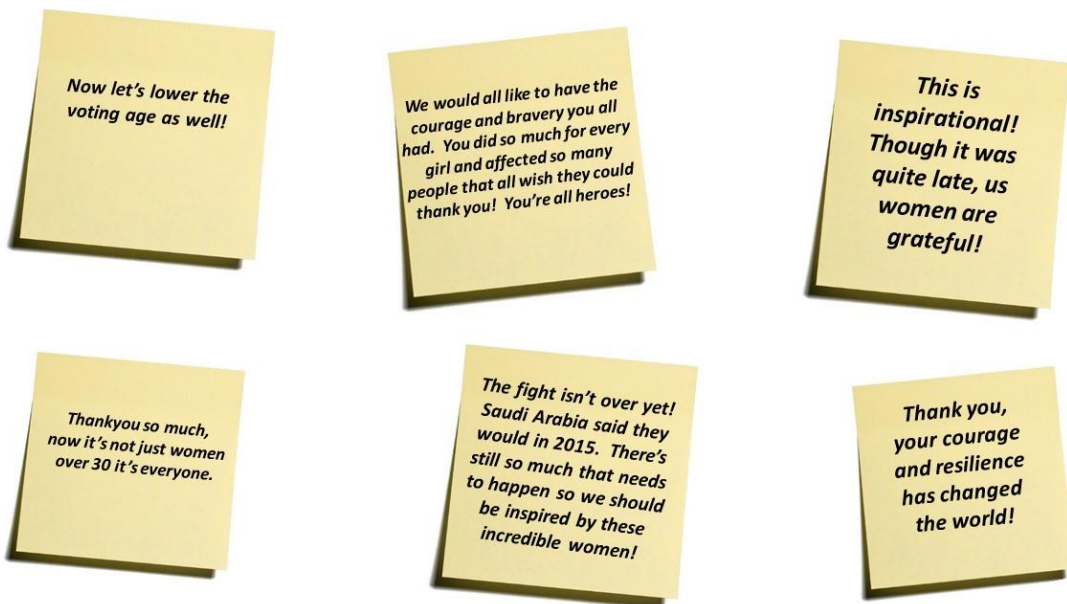


"I should like to revisit the earth at the end of the twentieth century to see the result of the great revolution of the nineteenth – the women's rights movement"

Words spoken by our school's founder **Frances Mary Buss** towards the end of her life. She died in 1894 and had founded the first school to offer girls an education in 1850, the North London Collegiate School, and later in 1871 The Camden School for Girls. By 1900 schools for girls were being established in towns across the country. She was also one of 1,500 signatories of the 1866 women's suffrage petition, which was the first mass petition for Votes for Women presented to Parliament by John Stuart Mill MP.

On Tuesday this week, we marked the centenary since Parliament passed a law, which allowed some women, and all men, to vote for the first time - the **1918 Representation of the People Act**. Women would still have to wait another decade before all women (aged 21) could vote but it was a step in the right direction.

A **'Vote 100'** display in the school foyer has drawn lots of interest from our students. They have been encouraged all week to share their thoughts and write messages to the people that made this possible. Some of the thoughtful comments are as follows:



Comments:

- ***Thank you, your courage and resilience has changed the world!***
- ***We would all like to have the courage and bravery you all had. You did so much for every girl and affected so many people that all wish they could thank you! You're all heroes!***
- ***This is inspirational! Though it was quite late, us women are grateful!***
- ***Thankyou so much, now it's not just women over 30 it's everyone.***
- ***The fight isn't over yet! Saudi Arabia said they would in 2015. There's still so much that needs to happen so we should be inspired by these incredible women!***
- ***Now let's lower the voting age as well!***

Also in 1918, a separate law was passed, allowing women to stand for Parliament with Nancy Astor becoming the first female MP to take a seat in 1919.

There is sadly still a huge way to go with only 489 women having been elected since 1919, a number lower than the current number of MPs (650)! Let's hope the current generation of CSG girls can change that. CSG alumni and leader of Camden Council Georgia Gould has recently said that her leadership is very much influenced by our founder who was such a brave pioneer,

"Whenever I'm feeling timid about something, I think: 'What would Frances Mary Buss do?'"

Surely if the Suffragettes were alive today, they would be campaigning for 50/50 representation in Parliament?

There are numerous events taking place across the country to mark this important centenary.

Why not visit the free [Votes for Women](#) and [Rebel Women](#) display at the National Portrait Gallery this half term?

