

Dr Floella Benjamin, OBE DL

Floella Benjamin was born in Trinidad in 1949 and came to England as a child in 1960. She left school at 16 with the aim of becoming Britain's first ever black woman bank manager but changed direction and became an actress, presenter, writer, independent producer and an active advocate for the welfare, care and education of children throughout the world.

Today she runs a successful film and television production company and is a Vice-President of Barnardo's. She led a twenty-year campaign to create the role of Children's Minister, which achieved its goal in 2003. She is now leading a nation wide campaign to save UK made children's television programmes.

She was Chairman of the Women of the Year Lunch for five years, Chairman of BAFTA -Television, was a member of the OFCOM Content Board and a Millennium Commissioner. She is now President of the Ramblers' Association, the Elizabeth 'R' Commonwealth Broadcasting Fund, a Governor of Dulwich College and the National Film & Television School. She is the Chancellor of the University of Exeter and a Deputy Lieutenant for Greater London. She recently launched her own range of Caribbean ready meals.

Her broadcasting work has been recognised with a Special Lifetime Achievement BAFTA and an OBE. She has written over 20 books including *Skip Across the Ocean*, *My Two Grannies* and *Coming to England* which is used as a resource in schools in social and cross curricular areas. The book was adapted into an RTS award winning film by her company for BBC Education. She has just finished her new book *The Arms of Britannia* which is the follow up to *Coming to England*.

She created *Touching Success*, an initiative which aims to mentor and help young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to aspire.

Floella's latest hit children's programme is CBeebies *Mama Mirabelle's Home Movies* and she recently produced and presented *Hey Diddle Diddle* a 42 part children's comedy series and a 21 part storytelling series *Floella's Story Sack*, both for BBC7. She also plays the character of Professor Rivers in Dr Who spin off *Sarah Jane Adventures* and appeared in the feature film *'Run Fat Boy Run'*.

Last year she completed her 10th consecutive London Marathon and over the years has raised thousands of pounds for children's charity Barnardo's. She also actively supports SPARKS, NSPCC and The Sickle Cell Society.

She is married with two beautiful golden children and enjoys cooking, golf, photography and travelling.

**[www.floellabenjamin.com](http://www.floellabenjamin.com)**