

Woman's place is at work

By Tony Collins

THE modern day workplace is in desperate need of a 'woman's touch'.

Despite major advancements over the years, the current marketplace remains very much a 'man's world'.

The need for a 'feminine principle' to be applied to today's workplace was given during a sermon by Sarah Evans, head teacher of King Edward VI High School for Girls in Edgbaston, to mark their 125th anniversary.

She was speaking at Birmingham Cathedral in front of an audience which included current pupils and staff as well as Old Edwardians, past teachers and governors.

Miss Evans said the 'feminine principle'

was needed to guide the developed world through the 21st century.

Although great steps have been made since the school began in 1883, she acknowledged that successful women had done so by applying 'men's rules' and the commonly held conception that women have to compete in a man's world to do well.

She also argued that the women's role of 'gatherer', as opposed to the male job of 'hunter', was now more important than ever as the country moves towards a more inclusive way of working and maintaining a sustainable society.

Miss Evans recited a Victorian saying commonly quoted by the school's first head which implied that women influenced national affairs through their role in the home.

"In our school we are saying this role, hugely important though it is, is no longer enough.

"The values women have stood for down the centuries have not extended into the public sphere.

"Cooperation, selflessness, empathy are needed by the nation, by the world, not just in the sphere of domestic relationships.

"The increasing influence of women in public spheres has not brought about the much-needed change.

"The future is going to ask more of us. The girls sitting here are going to have to literally change that world if there is to be any world left for anyone."

Among the school's 125th anniversary celebrations will be an 1883 day and a community arts project.



■ FEMININE PRINCIPLE... Sarah Evans, head teacher of King Edward VI High School for Girls.