



21st October 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

LEADERSHIP UPDATE

For some time now you will have noticed that Mrs Galling has not had a physical presence on the school site. For many it may be most noticeable that she hasn't been stood at the gate or in the Hub when children have been arriving at school, for others you may have noticed her absence from assemblies or school events. While this has been the case you may have also noticed that Mrs Galling has continued to write to parents, provide key messages on the newsletter and some of you may have had telephone calls or virtual meetings with Mrs Galling. As a result you may be left pondering 'so where is Mrs Galling?'

Some parents may remember that several years ago we wrote to the school community informing you that Mrs Galling was experiencing some health issues, which would see her presence reduced at school for a period of time whilst she received hospital treatment for a medical condition. Following this initial treatment, Mrs Galling has worked with school staff, school leaders, Governors, the Local Authority and the hospital consultants who take care of her, to continue to manage her health condition, whilst continuing to enjoy leading the school and driving it forward, managing periods of necessary absence where required. This has seen the school continuing to be successful in its delivering quality provision for children and families, most recently recognised by Ofsted in 2017.

You will know that the current COVID circumstances the country is faced with holds a heightened risk for particular groups of people with underlying medical conditions and that some were given specific instructions from the Government regarding arrangements during lockdown. As a result this saw Mrs Galling being required to shield during the Summer. Mrs Galling's condition continues to see her identified as being in the 'very high risk category' of coronavirus and categorised as clinically extremely vulnerable. The guidance from the Government and NHS England is for people in this category to 'work from home wherever possible.'

Throughout the summer term, and indeed for periods prior to the recent pandemic, Mrs Galling was in discussion with hospital consultants, Mr Hampton and the Chair of Governors regarding arrangements for maintaining her presence at school in a consistent and safe way. This needed careful planning due to the complexity of working in a busy environment with several hundred people each day, whilst managing a serious medical condition. Sadly Mrs Galling has not yet been able to return to school, as the consultants continue to be concerned as to the significant medical vulnerability Mrs Galling would face in coming into contact with a high volume of people, general viruses as well as the coronavirus. Therefore she has been advised to continue to work from home, in order to avoid any complications which would see hospital admission, as a result of becoming ill.

Understandably this has been a significant disappointment to Mrs Galling, however her commitment to all things Haytor View is undeterred!

So 'what does this mean?' you may be asking. In the current circumstances, at home, this has seen Mrs Galling shielding with her husband Richard and her dog Brodie. She is continuing to visit the hospital for regular treatment and has recently started to have socially distanced contact with her parents. Over recent years for specific periods, and particularly throughout the Summer and Autumn terms 2020 she continued to work at home each day, working with Mr Hampton and Governors to plan each step of the school's journey through lockdown and the children's return to school. She continues to have meetings with Governors, school leaders, staff and other agencies. This is all managed virtually via Microsoft TEAMS. Mrs Galling and Mr Hampton continue to work together as

closely as ever, talking daily as they continue to deliver provision for the children and families of Haytor View.

Moving forward, Mrs Galling is keen to ensure her presence is not only felt by children and families in their day to day contact with the provision, but that it is also seen. Last Saturday saw her spend the morning in school with Mr Hampton, where she spent several hours having a socially distanced walk around the school, looking at all aspects of provision as Mr Hampton referenced decisions and discussions held in recent times. She is hopeful that such visits might become more frequent, and is looking to explore arrangements for this. Mrs Galling and Mr Hampton are also starting to introduce Mrs Galling into school virtually, which has seen her start to have discussions with children via a laptop, therefore don't be surprised if your child comes home and says they have spoken to Mrs Galling on a computer!

Governors continue to work with Mr Hampton and Mrs Galling to lead the school during the extraordinary times we are living in at present, as with all challenges there are also opportunities. At the start of lockdown we couldn't have envisaged the benefits that having Mrs Galling, consistently and safely, working from home would bring (of course it is quieter!). However, what we quickly established was that Mrs Galling could focus on the enormous amount of Government and Local Authority information which has been and continues to be delivered to school daily. She was and continues to be in a position to be able to focus on the strategic planning of the school, which enables us to be responsive to both the current situation, local context and needs of individual children during this time. This enables both Mrs Galling and Mr Hampton to work together to ensure every step of the school's work is carefully planned and considered, in order that the school maintains its core ethos and aims. Consequently this enables Mr Hampton and school staff to ensure that the needs of children and families are met in school on a day to day basis, having a clear and insightful overview of what is happening within the school. This has seen Mrs Galling focus on the role of Head Teacher in having a strategic oversight of arrangements, while Mr Hampton and the school team focus on their facilitation roles in leading on the day to day implementation. We recognise that this style of leadership brings both strength and capacity to the school, at what is the most challenging period of our lifetimes.

Together Mrs Galling and Mr Hampton continue to work with school staff and governors to provide strong leadership for the school to secure its success and continuous improvement, ensuring high quality provision to support children's learning and development. In doing so they work with Governors to draw on their individual areas of responsibility to secure the best outcomes for children. They continue to be available using the usual communication means via the Gateway, email (admin@haytorview.devon.sch.uk) or telephone (01626 203040). You will also be familiar with seeing a member of the school leadership team on the gate each morning and after school which will continue after half term. The Chair of Governors can be contacted in writing via the school office.

Be assured that our motivation for getting in touch, is to provide you with transparency over the current arrangements in school, as we seek to support the effective service delivery for both children and families. We are committed to providing the very best support for your child, and are confident that the current arrangements are facilitating this. Of course we will always seek to keep you up to date with arrangements as we move forward. If you wish to discuss any aspects raised, then feel free to get in touch with us.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Niema Bohrayba
Chair of Governing Board

Katy Galling
Head of Learning & Development