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*Be strong and
courageous.....for
the Lord your God is
with you*

Wednesday 22 July 2026

Final Headteacher's Newsletter from Mrs Hawkins

Dear Parents, Staff, Governors and Friends of HWCE,

After 22 wonderful years at HWCE, the time has come to say goodbye. This is without doubt the hardest letter I have written in all that time. How do you find the words to say farewell to a place that has shaped so much of who you are?

As I retire, I simply want to say thank you.

Over the past few weeks, you have overwhelmed me with your kindness, generosity and love. Every card, every message, every hug, every gift, every surprise, every song, every memory and every kind word has meant more than I can ever express. You have given me a farewell beyond anything I could ever have imagined, and I will treasure these memories forever.

To our wonderful parents, thank you for your extraordinary generosity. The retirement collection was completely overwhelming, and I feel incredibly humbled by your kindness. Knowing that you wanted to contribute towards something I will enjoy during my retirement is so thoughtful. Every time I sit in my garden on the furniture that your generosity has helped to provide, I will think of this incredible school community and smile.

A very special thank you must go to Pam Friel, whose tireless work in organising both the retirement collection and the wonderful street party made everything possible. Pam gave so much of her time and energy to ensure it was a celebration to remember, and I am deeply grateful.

To our governors, I am profoundly grateful for the support, encouragement and friendship you have shown me throughout my time as Headteacher. Your willingness to challenge, encourage and believe in both me and our school has been invaluable. The farewell church service was such a beautiful and fitting way to celebrate my time here, and I will always treasure the memories of that evening.

To my incredible staff, thank you. Schools are extraordinary because of the people who work within them. I have been privileged to work alongside the most dedicated, compassionate and hardworking team imaginable. Together we have celebrated successes, faced challenges, supported one another through difficult times and shared so much laughter along the way. Thank you for every assembly, every play, every



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school trip, every lunchtime conversation, every moment of teamwork and every act of kindness. Most of all, thank you for giving our children the very best of yourselves every single day.

To our pupils, past and present, thank you for reminding me every day why this job is so special. Watching children grow in confidence, discover their talents, overcome obstacles and become the amazing young people they are has been the greatest privilege of my career. You have made me laugh, made me proud and, on many occasions, moved me deeply. It has been an honour to be part of your journey, and I cannot wait to see all that you will achieve in the years ahead.

In our final Achievement Assembly together, I shared a prayer that expressed everything in my heart - gratitude for all we have celebrated together, hope for the future, and trust that God will continue to watch over this wonderful school community. The prayer speaks of courage in the face of new beginnings, of showing hope, peace, respect, thankfulness, compassion and forgiveness, and of my deepest wishes for every child as they continue their journey. I have included it with this letter, and I pray it will be a blessing to you all in the years to come.

HWCE has never simply been where I worked. It has been my second home. It has been a place where friendships have been formed, memories have been made and lives have been changed - mine included.

I leave, I do so with complete confidence in the future of our school. I know that the staff, governors and wider community will continue to put children at the heart of everything they do and ensure that HWCE remains the very special place it has always been.

Our school vision has always been to "Be strong and courageous" (Joshua 1:9). Those words have guided countless children, staff and families over the years, and they will continue to guide me as I begin this next chapter of my own life. Although I leave with sadness, I also leave with immense gratitude, countless happy memories and a heart that will always belong, in part, to this wonderful school.

Thank you for allowing me the privilege of serving this incredible community. It has been the greatest honour of my career.

May God bless you all, and may He continue to bless HWCE and all who learn and work here for many years to come.

With my heartfelt thanks and every good wish,



Celine Hawkins
Headteacher

