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HEADTEACHER: Mrs Gemma Martin

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Wednesday 15th July 2020

### Annual Governor Update

Dear all,

We write to share with you details of the Governing Body's activities over the past year.

As this school year draws to a close, Governors begin to reflect on the past school year. July is traditionally a time for progress reports and data collation. We consider what we have done to fulfill the primary responsibilities of Governors and look forward to the future and our plans for the coming year. We also take this time to thank the fantastic staff, PTA, parents and everyone who has contributed to the wellbeing of the school throughout the year.

This year has been a year like no other and we are so thankful to each and every one of you for your support as part of the School family and our wider community.

From the moment the rumours of the pandemic began to circulate the staff, children and local community have come together to support each other and to adapt to a new way of living.

Although school 'closed' back in March it has never been completely closed with provision being made initially for our most vulnerable and the children of keyworkers and the staff have been working tirelessly since then supporting the children, parents and families. They have been the central point between Government's rapidly changing guidance and advice and families who have been overwhelmed by the changes in society in such a short period of time.

We would like to extend sincere thanks to the teachers and staff at Himbleton who have been absolutely amazing in their dedication and commitment to the children and the school.

There are so many other people to thank for their support:-

- the keyworker parents who sent their children to school so that they were able to support the country when it was in need;
- the keyworker parents who were able to work from home and kept their children home so that school would not be overwhelmed;
- all the parents who have had more time alone with their children since they were babies and have tried to support their education as best they could – and can now appreciate even more how hard our teachers and staff work during the year!
- to the grandparents and wider families who have had the painful task of not being able to meet together and have made do with contact by phone and Zoom

And most of all to our children who have had all of their routine taken away from them and their friendship circles distanced through necessity. Thank you all.

A special thank you must also go to the Friends of Himbleton First School who (prior to lockdown!)

have continued to put on fun activities and fundraising events for children and School which amongst other things, has enabled School to purchase new Chrome books for the children's use and holding the most successful Christmas Fete to date in December 2019!

We, as Governors, have had to adapt quickly to new ways of Governance and have worked to support the School where necessary. Much of the work of the Board of Governors is behind the scenes – which is as it should be, given that our brief is not to get involved in the daily running of the school but to oversee the strategic direction of the school, to provide challenge and also support to the Head, Assistant Head and the staff team. Despite being 'closed' since March, we have had a very busy year with the following being key areas of our strategic work this year:-

1. New Head Teacher appointment

It seems like an awfully long time ago that we welcomed Mrs Martin as our Head Teacher at Himbleton. So much has happened since September but we hope you will agree that the positive changes she has implemented within school in such a short space of time are nothing short of miraculous and she has very quickly become an integral part of the Himbleton family. We would very much like to personally thank Mrs Martin for all the long hours and hard work she has put in during this particularly challenging year.

2. Ofsted Inspection

In January we were inspected by Ofsted and were very pleased to remain a 'Good' School. Governors will be prioritising Ofsted's key recommendations in our Monitoring Plan for next year.

3. Change of Age Consultation

We have continued to work on our plan to enable more choice for parents and convert Himbleton School from a First School to a Primary School. Thank you to everyone who responded to the Change of Age consultation. The responses have now been submitted to the Local Authority with our application and we will keep you updated in this regard.

4. Monitoring of attainment, progress, attendance and pupil groups

With the cancellation of statutory assessment as a result of the pandemic, the school has provided internal assessment data up to the point of closure in March. We will be looking at progress data in the Autumn Term once children are back at school and data is more meaningful. Attendance has not been compulsory since March.

5. Support for School and approval of Risk Assessments following Covid19

It has been an extremely challenging year for Schools who have had to take into account ever changing guidance from the Government, assess and mitigate risk and work to ensure our children and staff are as safe as can be.

Moving into the new school year we will continue to support the school in adapting to the guidance issued by the Government and ensuring that we fulfill our duties as Governors with an emphasis on supporting the physical and mental wellbeing of the children, families and staff.

We hope you all have a very happy summer and we look forward to having a School full of children again in September.

With best wishes,

The Governors at Himbleton School

Claire Johnston  
**Chair of Governors**

Geoff Hedges  
**Vice Chair**

Mike Gee

Mark Roberts

Sue Plummer

Gemma Martin

Eric Jenkinson

Helen Swift

Hannah Snell

Suzie Wallis