

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope that you and your children have enjoyed the year that is ending at Cleves. As trustees we have seen a continued drive to make Cleves even better, and we hope that you have appreciated these efforts too – for example in the increased sports opportunities, new free clubs or new strategies in literacy and maths.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank every single member of staff for all their contributions to the Cleves' community this year. Whether they are on the front desk, in the offices, taking care of the grounds or in the classroom, each person has worked hard to ensure all Cleves' children make as much progress as possible and are supported to thrive in every way. I also want to thank all of you for the many ways in which you support the school and your children. Many of the school's enrichment activities could not take place without your involvement; and at a time when school budgets are worryingly under pressure your support for the PTA is more essential than ever before. Last but certainly not least your support your children's learning and the school ethos are intrinsic to the school's success. Thank you!

As you know, after ten years with us this was Mr Hodges' last year with us as headteacher, and at the end of August he will leave us for new adventures in retirement. He has been consistently (and indeed fiercely) adamant about not wanting any big event to mark his departure, and as a Board we agreed, reluctantly, to respect his wishes. However, I would be remiss to stay silent about him in this letter. The Board believes that Cleves has been extraordinarily fortunate to have had such an exceptional headteacher, who has led by example and created a framework within which so many children have flourished. The school's "Outstanding" Ofsted award two years ago was a fitting recognition of his tireless attention to researching and providing the best possible broad and balanced education; his relentless monitoring of every aspect of the school and his nurturing of an excellent team of staff.

Mr Hodges has also led on increasing the school's wider support to families. And while you will have seen Mr Hodges in action, you may not be aware of the extensive work he has always done behind the scenes, from ensuring an individual child's safety to forensic attention to maximising the impact of the ever-dwindling sums of money the government provides and acquiring alternative sources of income. He has also put significant time and energy into strengthening ties with Manby Lodge and Otlands schools and working collaboratively to address shared challenges and to provide the best possible primary education for all our shared children.

I believe Mr Hodges leaves us with a junior school provision that few state – and not that many private – schools can match. The whole school community will miss him enormously, and the Board cannot thank him enough for his leadership, ceaseless drive to improve on our broad and balanced education and the workplace; his tremendous work ethic and inspirational presence.

Looking forward to the next academic year, we will welcome a new headteacher, Mr Usher, and a new deputy headteacher, Mrs Green. The Board put each of them through a rigorous assessment process and has confidence in their ability to maintain and further move Cleves forward. However, I am sure that neither of them will mind me saying that they will have a steep learning curve. Cleves is an unusually large, multi-faceted and very busy school with the additional complexities and responsibilities of being a stand-alone academy with a large community to get to know inside and outside the school buildings. We have arranged for Mr Usher and Mrs Green to spend some days in

Cleves this term as part of their induction, which they have thoroughly enjoyed, but being in charge will be a very different experience. I know that many of you will have gone through the experience of starting a brand-new job and will understand how that feels, so I am sure you will support them as they settle in and get to know the school and our community.

Finally, for those of you with Year 6 children, some of you will not be part of the next stage of Cleves' journey. We hope you and your children feel proud of all they have achieved and how they have developed during their time at Cleves, and we wish you and your child a very successful transition to secondary school, taking many positive memories with you. If you have children returning, we hope you have a restful holiday and an excellent start in September.

With very best wishes

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan Foster". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a thin horizontal line.

Susan Foster, Chair of Trustees (on behalf of the Board of Trustees)