

July 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I wanted to write to you all, on behalf of the Governing Body, as we near the end of a very different school year. We have all had to make huge adjustments:

- you have had to take on the role of educators (and I am sure that you will appreciate even more the work that our teachers and Teaching Assistants do);
- staff have had to look at preparing online work and printed home learning packs, to try to ensure that our children keep learning as much as possible during their time out of school;
- Governors had had to carry out their duties in a totally different way – we have continued to meet throughout the lockdown period via “Zoom”, to check that everything possible is being done for your children and for staff at the school, to ensure that the school is getting value for money in all the extra things that they have had to do, and to support the Headteacher and her team as they have reviewed all the Government guidance as it has been issued and worked out how to put that guidance into practice;
- Ms McKay, Mrs Hilton and Mrs Tomlin have had to complete frequent returns to both the Local Authority and Department for Education; they have worked tirelessly since 20 March 2020 to keep up to date with all the changes.

Governors have received weekly updates from Ms McKay, and I just want to let you know that all staff at Ivybridge have been absolutely fantastic throughout the whole of the past four months – they have worked flexibly to provide support to the children of Key Workers and the most vulnerable children in our school community, whilst at the same time producing good quality work and activities for all those children remaining at home. When the Government announced that some children should return to school from 1 June 2020, our staff immediately started working to make sure that this would be possible. Unlike many other schools, Ivybridge welcomed children back on 1 June 2020, and more have been added since then. We now have more than 100 children in school.....and are looking forward to all our children being back in September 2020.

I am sure that you will wish to join the whole Governing Body in recording our thanks to every member of staff – the Headteacher, Senior Leaders, teachers, Teaching Assistants, office staff, SMSAs, kitchen staff, cleaning staff and the Site Manager – for all their hard work and commitment to our children over a very difficult period.

Governors are encouraging all our staff to have a well-deserved break over the Summer Holiday time, to spend time with their families and come back to school in September refreshed and ready for the challenges that will come in the Autumn Term. We know that it will take time to get back to “normal” education; teachers will have an enormous task in helping children to adjust to being back in class, checking on what they have remembered and learned since March 2020, and moving them

forward. Please bear with staff as they do this; I can assure you that they will be continuing to do the very best for your children.

The Headteacher will update you nearer the time about anything that you and your children need to do at the start of term – please check the website. There will still be restrictions in place and, with all children back in school, it will be important that we all follow these to keep us all safe.

I am looking forward to the time when I can visit the school again, and see children and staff enjoying being together. In the meantime, on behalf of the Governing Body, may I take this opportunity to wish you and your families a peaceful and restful summer, without the pressure of home-schooling every day.

Best wishes

Irene Bowles
Chair of the Governing Body