

Hawthorn Community Primary School

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Headteachers' Review – Summer 2020

As I sit down to write this year's Headteacher's review of the year, I am finding it difficult to know where to begin, as the last twelve months have certainly not been anything like anyone would have anticipated. In all of my long association with the school, I can honestly say that I have never experienced another year quite like this one!

I would like to begin this review by saying thank you. Thank you to all of the children who make Hawthorn such a special place. Thank you for your enthusiasm for learning; for the wonderful support and care that you display, both towards the members of our school but also across the wider community; and for your friendship, fun and positivity in the face of adversity. We have missed you all over the last few months and are really looking forward to welcoming most of you back to school in September.

Thank you also to all of the parents and carers for all that you do to support the school. Good education should be a partnership between the home and school, and this year, more than any other in my recollection has demonstrated how effective this is at Hawthorn. The difficulties that we have all had to face because of the COVID-19 pandemic have been immense, but we have all managed to get through them by working together. The support and care that you have offered your children during the period of school closure is very much appreciated by everyone in school. The children have continued with their learning – either working through some of the activities provided by school, or through the wonderful opportunities that you have been able to provide. And all of this has had to be balanced with ensuring that their mental health and well-being has not suffered and often completing your own work from home.

I also need to send my heartfelt thanks to all of the wonderful staff of the school who have kept things 'ticking over' during the period of lockdown. They have all had to take on so many new roles, but because of their support and enthusiasm, the school has continued to function and flourish. Without their dedication we would not have been able to provide the teaching that we have been able to offer to those children who have been able to return to school, whilst also providing home learning activities, answering queries from parents on Class Dojo and providing feedback to the children who have posted some of the learning that they have undertaken on their Dojo portfolios. You have all worked so hard and I hope that you are able to enjoy a well-deserved rest over the summer to recharge your batteries!

Since September 2019, so much has happened. The school year began on Wednesday 4th September promising so much! A new chapter in Hawthorn's history had been written with the reorganisation of the school to offer 3 mixed age classes across key stage 1, lower key stage 2 and upper key stage 2, and we have been so pleased with how this has worked.



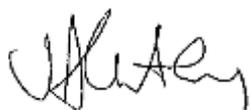
The staff within each phase have been able to work more successfully as a team, sharing expertise and targeting support for individual children more effectively; and the children have been able to learn from each other and develop their reasoning skills. It has certainly allowed the community-minded approach to education across the whole school to grow. This year we have also been working on a new curriculum, which best meets the specific needs of the children who attend the school. We are looking forward to introducing this new curriculum next year, knowing that it keeps so many of the good things about Hawthorn, whilst also introducing many new exciting learning opportunities.

Primary education is about so much more than lessons and learning skills and knowledge, and unfortunately many of the 'special' events that we hold each year have had to be cancelled because of the epidemic. However, we held another wonderful harvest festival in the autumn term and were able to make a generous donation of food to the Kettering Food Bank (something which we were very pleased to repeat shortly before the school closed at the end of March) and held all of the usual Christmas festivities. Sadly, many of our other traditional events had to be cancelled, including our 125th birthday celebrations. We are hopeful that these celebrations have simply been postponed and that we will be able to reschedule them for the new academic year. Fingers crossed!

One of the saddest things about how this year has ended is the fact that we have been unable to say a proper goodbye to our departing year 6 children. The pandemic has cheated them out of so many of the milestones of their final year in primary education including the year 6 SATs and all of the joy of the last week – shirt signing, autograph books, the leaver's party and the end of year performance. Although some of the children will be pleased about not sitting SATs, I know many others were disappointed because they had worked so hard and wanted to be rewarded with good grades. I would just like to remind them that school is about so much more than grades and they should all be very proud of what well-rounded, enthusiastic learners and super role models they have been to the other children in the school. We know that all of our year 6 children are more than ready for the next phase of their education and the challenges that it will bring, but we hope that they all have some very happy memories of the time that they have spent at Hawthorn. We will miss you all.

The end of an academic year also gives us the opportunity to remember staff who in September will no longer be a part of the Hawthorn family. During this year we have said temporary goodbyes to Miss York and Mrs Corney who we are happy to report both have new additions to their own families and we hope to see them returning to work at some point in the new academic year. Our site supervisor, Mr Gilbert, sadly retired at Christmas and is enjoying a well-deserved rest; Miss Bellamy and Mrs Singodia have left their roles as teaching assistants and Mrs Downton, Mrs Gilbert, Mrs Knight and Mrs Lomath have all sadly hung up their lunchtime supervisor overalls. We wish all of our leaving staff good luck in their future endeavours.

As I complete this review, I am still uncertain of what the new academic year will bring. We know that there will be new challenges to face – but I am sure that everyone associated with Hawthorn will rise to these challenges and the school will continue to move forwards. Please watch out for e-mail updates about our plans for September over the summer break, we will try to keep you as informed as we can as soon as more information becomes available. I hope that you all have a lovely summer and look forward to welcoming you back in September.



Julie Clubley Headteacher

