*23rd July 2021*

*Dear Parents and Carers,*

*When you say you are going to retire and then hand in your ‘Notice to Governors’, it actually feels like a lifetime away and very unreal. You know your last day will arrive but that is sometime in the future and there’s loads of time yet to run a school, nurture and educate children and to guide staff as well as endless Teams meetings to a host of different people about so many things never mentioned in a Job Description that you just crack on.*

*And then it arrives. That dreaded final week.*

*My last week at school has been magical. Monday was daunting because I knew it all still had to happen and reality hit me as I was given the first of so many gifts but I survived and then on Tuesday I was banished from school and told I must not go in under any circumstances. At this point I started to worry because I wasn’t in control and someone else was doing all the organising – not an easy thing for me!*

*Wednesday dawned – my ‘Official’ celebration day. I had so many surprises from the start to the end of the day but the highlight was all the children and staff being on the field together for the first time since March 2020. I cried, and I haven’t stopped since. Just to see all the children’s smiley faces as they sang their hearts out was pure magic and is what teaching has always been about for me. That sheer, innocent joy that children get and display so openly was the best send off anyone could ask for.*

*For all the hundreds of children that have been through and still journeying through Hill Top in the last 12 years, I thank you from the bottom of my heart, because you have made each and every day so special for me.*

*All of this doesn’t happen though without all the amazing staff, past and present, that I have been honoured to work with – I salute each and every one of you because you were and are, “Simply the best; better than all the rest.”*

*I would also like to say a huge ‘Thank you’ to all those folk over the years that have been part of Friends of Hill Top and more especially the present dozen or so that have worked tirelessly for all the children for a good few years now and throughout the pandemic which was no mean feat. You have been brilliant and provided school with so much.*

*There are also a group of people whom you don’t see very often in school but who have helped me through some very tough times, as well as some great ones and they are the Governors of Hill Top. I have received huge support and I know they will continue this for Mrs Lancaster in the years to come. Thank you so much.*

*That brings me to you as Parents. You have been so supportive over the 12 years and this week I have been so totally overwhelmed by all your generous, lovely gifts and kind words in your cards. I have received so many heartfelt emails – I have been very touched and shed many a tear.*

*This brings me to my last Thank you and that is to Mrs Lancaster. Thank you for making my last week so amazing and for organising such a wonderful send off.*

*Parents and children, you are so lucky because I know I am leaving you with a fantastic Principal, amazing Teachers, Teaching Assistants, Office and Lunchtime staff and I know that Hill Top will continue to be the best school in West Ardsley because it has the most amazing children that attend it and I am so proud to have been a part of the big family of Hill Top.*

*I do hope I haven’t missed anyone out above and I do hope I didn’t forget anybody with a Thank you card for your gift but if I did please accept my sincere apologies and Thank you.*

*Have a lovely summer, please stay safe and return to school on Monday 6th September. I shall be thinking of you all... on a beach in the South of France.*

*Take care.*

*This is me, the former Principal of Hill Top Primary Academy, signing out for the very last time.*

*Mrs Karen Hyams*

*Retired Principal*

*Hill Top Primary Academy*