



Dear Families, Colleagues and Friends,

Retirement Thank You

After over a month of retirement and reflection, I'd like to say a very warm thank you.

I'm quite sure that the circumstances of my retirement helped tremendously. It's been a privilege to work in education in such a special community and to choose when to leave. The focus of work at Hipsburn has changed many times, first making sure that the village school survived, then involvement in fascinating national research projects and more recently consulting and preparing for future growth and development. I have absolute confidence that the Primary School will thrive. This confidence has allowed me to relax and 'let go' and I have governors, an outstanding staff team, volunteers and particularly Amelia, Kevin and Amanda to thank for that.

My retirement celebration could not have been better and I'd like to thank everyone who helped to make it such a very special occasion. Of course, the children were central and their poems, songs and presentations demonstrated their kindness, creativity and fun. They are a credit to you and I was very touched. Teaching staff who supported and guided the children to prepare such a thoughtful event did a wonderful job.

I don't quite know who to thank for organising the event, though I'm quite sure that Amanda, staff, governors and many parents contributed a great deal – and managed to keep it all a surprise. Thank you, it was a very special, happy day.

Similarly, I'm not quite sure who to thank for contributions to the fund but I understand that there is a pot of about £800 for the school to use as they wish. All of your gifts and tokens are greatly appreciated, and I'm delighted that the school will benefit.

So, how is retirement so far?

I'm really enjoying time with family and friends, time to catch up at home and in the garden, exploring new places and visiting old favourites, reading for hours and planning visits to jazz and arts festivals. Our most exotic travelling so far has been to North Wales and on the way back, we were served in a restaurant by a pupil from my first class at Hipsburn in 1995. He was later taught by my husband at The Duchess' High School and it was just lovely to see how well he's doing. Life is full of surprises and opportunities.

In due course we may be more organised, but at the moment, were enjoying flexibility, fun and lack of pressure. Our biggest commitment at the moment is to spend time with toddler grandchildren and that's a joy.

I'm aware that everyone at school will be working extremely hard and looking forward to an exciting future and you have my very best wishes.

Kindest regards,

Dot Charlton