

To the Families of Beacon High, Copenhagen, EGA and Vittoria Schools

Thank you. This past year has been like no other that any of us have experienced, and I hope that we will not again. On behalf of all the Governors, thank you for the support that you have given to your children and young people, and to the staff in the schools that they attend. Thank you for coping with the hugely disruptive impact of our schools having to send our young people home to self-isolate for days on end. Whilst we may have worked out how to continue providing them with learning opportunities, this is nowhere near as good as being in school and we know only too well the disruption it brings.

The last few days have been particularly difficult. They have highlighted the challenge of considering many different factors: the importance of all young people attending school, how to best provide education for our young people when many are not able to attend school, and when teachers and other staff are not able to attend school, where there is increasing incidence of infection in the community and recognising the impact on parents and families, when young people are not able to attend school, especially at short notice. Thank you for your patience and be assured that the arrangements in place in our schools, continue to be as safe as they can be. It is for this reason that we have had very little, if any, transmission of infection taking place within our schools.

The school day, school life is far from easy. Everyone will, I'm pretty sure, be glad to see the end of "bubbles", will joyously discard masks and will, for those dropping off and collecting the younger children, enjoy meeting up for a chat with other children. At Copenhagen and Vittoria Schools we look forward to the time of in person coffee mornings and even a resumption in Zumba classes. We have another term to carry on in this way, but with the start of vaccination happening, the end is in sight. Keep going!

Next term will bring more of the same, especially at the beginning, but hopefully as the days lengthen, they will become easier. We need to think about what we want to keep of the new, and what we want to leave behind us. Our young people all now have much better access to modern technology, remote learning and virtual events have their benefits and their place. Of course, change is constant in our world, it is just the pace that varies. This time last year I wrote to tell you that our Executive Head, Jo Dibb would be leaving us this Christmas. This was delayed until next summer so that she could support the schools through these times. We do though need to start the hard task of finding a new Executive Headteacher. The recruitment process runs between 14th December and the 11th January, and all the details can be found on the Islington Futures website.

Finally, on behalf of the Governors and Associates I would like to wish you, your families and friends a happy festive break. I hope you find time for rest and relaxation, for some safe social time and for laughter. Stay safe. Let's all hope that everyone plays their part in reducing the spread of this virus so that, whilst for some it will not be easy, we can start to look forward to 2021 and a more normal life.

Kind regards
Jill McLaughlin
Chair of Governors.