

Friday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2017

Dear Parents,

I wanted to write and thank you for everything that you have done for me, not just in this year but in all the time I have been at St Mary's. This is a very special community to be a part of. For me it has always been like a web where each one of us is a strand. Some of the fibres are brightly coloured, others more subtle, some fine yarns and others made of plaited threads but none is more or less important than the others and each one is essential to the whole. We all bring our own gifts and talents and the wonderful thing about this School is everyone contributes. We are all bound together by our common goal to help our children become confident, happy and secure adults who, at the end of their time here, can move on through life knowing how amazing they are.

Each child is such a gift. They all have so many talents and can do and be anything if they have belief in themselves and if we believe in them. It has been a huge honour to be able to spend my days in the company of such incredible young people. To be able to watch children grow through the primary years and on, in many cases now into adults with their own families (yes, I really have been teaching that long!). I look forward to seeing you all in the coming years as, although we have a house in Wales, we still have family and many, many friends here so will be regular visitors.

The last month has just been full of smiles. I really enjoyed the Cheese & Wine Evening where families past and present came and we had time to chat. It was so kind of you to give me the beautiful flowers, the Champagne Tea at the Ritz, the John Lewis vouchers and gorgeous, scented candle. I shall buy something for my new house and garden and think of you all so often and with love. I have been overwhelmed by the generosity of your love in words, cards and so many beautiful gifts. Mass at St Joseph's, the party afterwards, dinner with the Governors, a barn dance, assembly from the children and shared lunch with staff – so many wonderful kinds of love, thank you. I know that a great many people spent a huge amount of time planning and executing the events and celebrations and I am very grateful especially knowing just how busy you all are already.

St Mary's is a place full of people who care for and respect each other, a place where our mission statement is lived. The staff here, all of them, are the very best. Each one cares for and knows children and families and each other. Our Governors, Fr John and our Parish all give so much to us, we are so fortunate. This is the best place to be in good times and in those which are more difficult, everyone stays here because where else could you possibly go that would be better? St Mary's is in safe and loving hands.

Thank you again for all the blessings I have received in the last twelve years. St Mary's is as much a part of me as it is of every child and adults who spends any time here. You can leave but you can never take what this School stands for out of us. To love and be loved is the greatest gift of all, you will be in my thought and my prayers.

With love,

*Jamie M Laycock* X



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