

December 2020.

Dear parents/carers,

We are delighted to have been re-elected as Co-Chairs of the Governor Board of Howitt Primary Community School as we both remain very committed to the school and its community. Our new vice chair is one of our parent governors, Joe Harvey. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, this has been a very different and, at times, difficult time. However, under the strong leadership and high expectations of our headteacher, Mrs. Lynn Pilling, the school has re-established itself as a safe and exciting place to learn.

It was lovely to be able to welcome your children back into school at the start of September and they were clearly very pleased to be back too. This return was supported by the hard work and careful planning of the senior leaders and staff in ensuring that the school was a safe environment in which to continue their learning. A number of strategies, including the employment of additional teaching staff, have been put in place to support pupils to catch up on lost learning. We are very grateful to parents/carers for your support with all the new systems that have been introduced.

We are very proud of the fact that our Forest Schools provision has been expanded during the COVID-19 restrictions and now provides exciting and worthwhile activities for all pupils in school. This was something that our pupils requested when we were able to consult with them prior to the pandemic.

Our school has been fortunate to be part of a mutual support network due to our involvement in the Embark Trust. The Embark Award has now been officially launched in school and every child has been issued with an Embark folder in which to store evidence of their achievements. We are looking forward to hearing of their successes. It is no surprise to us that two more primary schools have joined the thriving Embark Trust and there are three more under consultation. The Trust is planning further enrichment activities for this term e.g. gardening at Chatsworth and a family virtual musical evening. See the website for further updates: <http://www.embarkfederation.com>

Although our school's use of curriculum enrichment, e.g. visitors and visits, has been somewhat restricted, we are proud of the way that the school leaders and staff have been creative in offering alternative exciting events for your children. Examples include when an artist produced a video for the Y5 and Y6 pupils with instructions on how to paint poppies as part of Remembrance Day activities. The Y6 science topic on light was linked to the historic Dam Busters mission with reference to our local hero (Sir Barnes Wallis) and this made the learning more exciting.

Our school vision is secure as we continue to be an ACE school (Achieving, Caring, Enjoying) school. If anyone wishes to contact us, we can be contacted via the school office.

Jane Bowley & Carolyn Wood  
Co-Chairs of Governors