Friday 19th July

Dear Parents/ Carers,

Before we reach the end of another academic year, one which appears to have passed in the blink of an eye, I wanted to write to share with you some of the fantastic achievements that have marked the final few weeks of term.

A few week ago, alongside the end of year reports, parents in Reception, Year 1, Year 2 and Year 6 received details of the children's attainment in the Early Learning Goals, Phonic Screening Check, Year 2 assessments and Year 6 National Curriculum Tests respectively. As in previous years our pupils have achieved exceptionally well in each of these national measures, attaining well above schools nationally and locally. An incredible 85% of our pupils in Reception this year have reached a 'Good Level of Development' across all of the areas of learning; a great achievement for our Reception children, parents and staff. In Year 1, 87% of children have passed the Phonic Screening Check; a very good result that reflects continuous high quality phonics teaching in our school and our children building upon very strong starts in Reception, when they move to KS1.

In Year 2, our children are assessed by their class teacher against National standards in Reading, Writing and Maths. Mrs Ram and Mr Molloy's classes, along with the support of Mrs Hehir and all the teaching assistants who have worked in year 2 this year, have achieved very well against this national measure as you can see in the table below:

	Reading	Writing	Maths
% of pupils working at the expected standard	88%	83%	84%

In Year 6, pupils sat externally marked test papers in Reading, Maths and Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling, as well as having their writing assessed by their class teacher. The results below demonstrate the exceptional outcomes by our year 6 children once again this year which I'm sure you'll agree are truly outstanding:

	% of children working at the expected standard	% of children working at 'greater depth'
Reading	89%	44%
Writing	92%	35%
Maths	95%	38%
Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling	94%	56%
Reading/Writing/Maths combined	86%	

My thanks to all of our pupils in school for their fantastic work across the year; to their teachers and teaching assistants for their dedicated service of the children and their families and to all of you for your continued support of our school and of your child(ren)'s education.

This being the final letter of the academic year, it is important to also note that today marks the final day at our school for our Year 6 pupils, some other pupils in other year groups and a small number of highly valued staff members. Yesterday we said goodbye to Mrs Galvin, who has now retired from her role as SENCO, after 10 years at Holy Rood. Today, we also say good-bye to Mrs Hodgkinson, who has been a highly respected and committed member of staff here at Holy Rood both as a teaching assistant and Senior MSA for over 15 years. Many children and older siblings have been taught by and cared for by Mrs Hodgkinson in her illustrious career here and she will be sorely missed by everyone! I am sure that you will join with me in wishing them both much happiness and success in their lives and careers moving forward.

The final day of any academic year also brings with it mixed emotions of sadness and pride as we say goodbye to our leaving Year 6 students, who depart from Holy Rood today to take up places at an array of prestigious secondary schools in and

around Watford. Our Year 6 pupils this year have been an absolute credit to themselves, their families and our school and whichever secondary school they begin in September, must count themselves very fortunate to welcome each and every one of them. It was lovely to end their time as pupils of Holy Rood with the Leavers' Mass yesterday and their performance of their Year 6 production earlier this week – 'Twin Town' – a hilarious and highly professional production on the theme of the twin town tradition, written and directed by Miss Sheridan and Miss Meehan, and supported by Mrs Smith. This production demonstrated the incredible gifts, talents and confidence of our year 6 children perfectly and everyone thoroughly enjoyed the spectacle! They have always been incredibly hard working, good humoured, well-mannered and enthusiastic young people, who have been exceptional role models this year and have achieved much success. Their amazing SATs results are a testament to their determined spirits and I have no doubt that they will continue to achieve great things after they leave us today. We also remember those Year 6 families who leave our school today with their child for the final time, some of them after a long association with Holy Rood over many years; I wish to thank them too for all that they have done to enrich our school community during their children's time with us and their trust and support of our school staff over the years. We also say a fond farewell to a small number of other children and families leaving our school today as they relocate to schools in and around the Watford area! We pray today for God's continued blessings upon them now and always. We never really say 'good-bye' to anyone as anyone who leaves, is always a part of our very special Holy Rood family and we would love to welcome you all back for a visit at some point in the near future.

Finally, on behalf of the school community, I would like to ask that you all keep Miss Sheridan in your prayers in the coming weeks as she prepares for her wedding next month. I know that she will have the most incredible day with her future husband, and her family and friends, and that they are all filled with God's love, hope and joy for their future together on this special day. We look forward to hearing all about her celebrations when she returns in September as Mrs Mac Labhraí.

As you may have noticed, Mr Wheatley has been absent from school this week due to illness; I ask that you keep him and his family in your prayers during the summer break as he recuperates in preparation for his return to Holy Rood in September. I ask that you also remember in your prayers all who are sick in our school community at this time and ask God for His love and healing to be shared amongst them all.

All that remains therefore is to remind all of you returning, that school will reopen for pupils, following the summer holiday, on Wednesday 4th September for the 2019/20 academic year, when I look forward to us enjoying another exciting and hopefully successful year together here at Holy Rood. Thank you to everyone for the gifts and kind words shared with all our staff to show your appreciation for their tireless hard work and commitment; these gestures are very special and meaningful to us all.

On behalf of all of the governors and staff, I wish you all a wonderful, safe and enjoyable summer break. I pray that you will be able to make the most of the precious time that it will afford each of us with family and friends. I look forward to seeing you all again on 4th September!

Best wishes for a wonderful summer together with your families.

Take care,

Mrs E. Braund
Head of School