



28 August 2020

Dear Epworth families

The Board of Governors is delighted to welcome the introduction of level two of the national lockdown. We commend our pupils, parents and staff for their conscientious adherence to, and support of, the government and school Covid-19 procedures and protocols over the past few months. While there is now a greater sense of freedom and the promise of new beginnings, it is still imperative that our community continues to diligently follow the necessary protocols and remains vigilant about hygiene and social distancing.

Even as we feel hopeful, we are still reminded that hard lockdown continues for many families. The elderly, vulnerable and those with pre-existing health conditions are still self-isolating for the foreseeable future. Being without family or friends in a time of crisis is truly difficult and our prayers are with those who are alone. Compassion is one of the school's cornerstone values which we strive to uphold. However, being sympathetic is only the start; true compassion requires action. We hope the Epworth community will rise to the challenge of proactively and selflessly supporting those in need.

At this time, the Board would like to acknowledge Ms Bekker. No one could have imagined that the final months of her 39 years in education and 20 as a head of school would play out amidst a worldwide pandemic. Despite her eagerness to return to school, she remains, at the request of the Board, at her home on campus in order to safeguard her health.

Ms Bekker and her management team have courageously led the school through not only a national state of disaster, but also through the impact of the global #BlackLivesMatter movement, which has prompted us to introspect and seriously consider transformation and racism at Epworth. A year ago, many challenges such as social distancing and remote learning did not play a role in the life of the school, yet we have embraced them. We are grateful to Ms Bekker and her dedicated team for their commitment to Epworth and for the endless hours of work, both seen and unseen, over the last few months.

Looking ahead to 2021, we are in the final stages of negotiating the future leadership of Epworth. The Board of Governors will announce its decision after the next Trust meeting, which is to be held on the 15th of September 2020. We look forward to sharing the good news and thank you wholeheartedly for your patience in these extraordinary circumstances.

Until then, keep safe and stay positive.

Kind regards

Lisa Robertson

Chair of the Epworth Board of Governors



Embracing the new normal in Ms Bekker’s “garden office”

Members of Epworth’s leadership team (left to right), Sue Keyworth, Chair of Trust; Lisa Robertson, Chair of Board; Laura Bekker, Head of School and the Head of Human Resources, Vahini Murugen (right), discussing 2021 plans for Epworth.