

Dear Parents and Carers,

I have written a number of letters home to you all over the years but this is without doubt the most difficult of them all. It is with a very heavy heart that I have to inform you that after 25 years teaching at East Dene I have made the very difficult decision to move on at the end of this term. I am deeply saddened to be leaving as I have had the most amazing experience at our wonderful school, starting as a Newly Qualified Teacher in 1997, progressing on to be Deputy Headteacher and then finally becoming Headteacher. I am full of pride for what we have achieved at East Dene and I am confident that the school and our fantastic children will go on to have many, many more successes!

I can say with complete honesty that East Dene children are the best pupils I have ever met. We have children who are full of compassion, who care for one another and live our school values every single day. They make me extremely proud and I cannot wait to hear about all the great things they achieve in later life.

I have so many things to be grateful for, not many Headteachers have the experience of having an entire staff team that they love working with. They all work extremely hard to give the best they can to our pupils. They have made it a joy to come into work each day and I will greatly miss our extended 'East Dene Family'. I have also been surrounded by a leadership team who saw my vision and worked with me to make it happen.

To all of the East Dene parents I cannot thank you enough, without hesitation you took me in all those years ago and it has been an absolute delight to see many of our past pupils now at school as parents. You have engaged and voiced your opinions, shared your concerns and worries and I hope that you have found that I have taken the time to listen and take on board what you have said. I will never say I got everything right all of the time but I have striven to do my very best for you all.

Although I am sad to be leaving I know I will be leaving the school in very safe hands and due to the strengths of both the Governing Body and the Leadership Teams across the Hub, we are moving to an interim position of Executive oversight. Mr Tankard, who is currently Headteacher at Coleridge Primary will now have the responsibility for both East Dene and Coleridge, working with our deputy head teacher, Mrs Kay and the team at East Dene. I know that our children will continue to receive the highest quality education possible.

I truly wish the entire East Dene family all the very best for the future, I will miss you all.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Ridge'.

Mrs L Ridge