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18th May 2020

Dear Families,

It is with the saddest and deepest heart that I have to inform you that our beautiful friend and colleague Mrs Hearne has passed away yesterday. She was not in any pain and had her children at her side. To say how upset the team are at this time, I just do not have the words to express it.

I wish I could sit with you all sharing the pain and sadness together, but these times do not allow us to do this yet. We are here for you and with you all the way through this.

Nita was an absolute inspiration and put her heart and soul into doing her utmost for the children at Shirley. I feel extremely privileged to have worked with her and to have been touched by her joy for life, enthusiasm and tremendous sense of humour. I know you all feel this too and that we will miss her dearly. She has touched so many hearts in our community.

When someone dies, their family and friends have lots of feelings - sadness, anger, and confusion - which are all normal. However, in this time this just makes everything worse as we cannot be together to share our wonderful stories of this beautiful lady.

This will be such a difficult conversation to have with your children. I have some support guidance which may help you to answer your child's questions as they arise. You can obtain this from contacting Simon Says a Hampshire based child bereavement support charity. Their contact details are 02380 647550, email info@simonsays.org.uk or visit their website www.simonsays.org.uk. I hope this helps just a little in this difficult time.

I know you will join me in sending our thoughts and love to her family and will respect their wishes to grieve in private. We need to put their wishes first at this time.

I need you all to stick together as you always do and share in this pain together as a community.

With the biggest hug,

Yours sincerely,

Cate Gregory
Headteacher

