Dear Everyone,

Just in case you haven’t received enough emails from me over the past two years, here is one more.

I have rather blurred, slightly fragmented memories of you as Key Stage 3 pupils. Probably my age, but I am blaming covid. One Friday, there I was with some of you reading ‘An Inspector Calls’ in the Garden Building and bang, on the Monday I am sat online in my kitchen as Megan Goode reads out Mrs Birling’s lines over Teams.

Things get much clearer once you enter Year 10. Clearly I am biased, but our English class really was the most brilliant group. Up we would climb to room 10, someone would cry over Mr Darcy’s second proposal, you tried to persuade me that “fish fingers” really could be counted as a quotation in our study of ‘Anita and Me’ and everyone (I think this was not just in my class) did an awful lot of praying that ‘Tissue’ would not be the named poem in Literature Paper 2.

I remember vividly the trip to St Ives, where Mrs Mannix once again let me tag along and pretend I was an art teacher. Seagulls stealing chips meant most of that meal was eaten under an umbrella, some of you experienced your first paddle in English waters and quite miraculously it stayed pretty much dry all week. It was the week of the Queen’s Golden Jubilee, St Ives was covered with bunting and I remember the other much older guests in the “youth” hostel not being impressed by all the teenagers getting on brilliantly with their artwork whilst they were trying to watch the celebrations in London on the tiny television in the ‘lounge’ area.

We had more glorious weather and paddling when we visited Brighton. I think that was the year when some of the staff got sunburnt on the beach. I certainly remember some of you hiding in the stacks in the library at Sussex University while I tried to get some shots for Instagram and queuing for ages to get an ice cream on Hove Lawns.

It seems that food has featured a lot in your Sixth Form lives too. Many many snacks and birthday cakes, picnics in the Suffolk House garden, the excitement when Pret first opened and the stashes you have gleefully brought back with you when Nero does its’ give aways at the end of the day. Having seen you all cook, Ms Norman and I know that it really will be ok next year. So long as you follow the instructions and actually read the recipe before you start. And if that doesn’t work, recalling Mr Unwin and Mr Chadwick’s first aid lessons will get you out of trouble.

There has been lots of fun too. All of it immortalised on Instagram and TikTok. You’ve completed army problem solving, London treasure hunts, Pilates at your Desk, ice skating and self defence. For some of you, I know that the Royal Russell Model UN was the absolute highlight; the excitement you showed throughout that weekend made the crazily long days very well worth it for me, Miss Hatchwell and Miss Abbott.

I think, perhaps, that the thing which most stands out for me of you as a year group though, is you contribution to the creative life of the school, particularly in Drama and in Music. As glamourous nuns, cabaret stars, musicians of both the classical and rock variety you have shone. It feels fitting that your Leavers’ Event will celebrate so much of that talent.

All of you have sparkled in your own way over the past two years. Now that the exams are over, I hope that you can celebrate those achievements, both academic and personal and I know that you are all set for a glittering future.

Mrs Harvey