



for a bigger shell. For some of you it is simply a progression to the year group above you. Others have exchanged a smaller school for this much bigger school. In both cases, you needed to make the change in order to allow you to grow yet further. Nobody can grow to meet their full potential without moving on to a new shell – or in your case, new spaces and new challenges.

The second message of the hermit crabs is the exact opposite of their names. The word hermit applies to solitary people, who live alone and avoid the company of others. These crabs are called hermit crabs but they are far from solitary. In fact, they need to work as a team in order for each of them to thrive. Unless you have a brother in the room, each of us in this room goes home to a different house and a different family. Each of us lives a life that is, to a greater or lesser extent, different to the others. But that does not mean we are alone. We are always stronger as a team. There's a reason that we wear the same uniform. There's a reason we enjoy sport. There's a reason why we could not wait to get you back into school and did not wish to continue with online or remote learning. Just like the hermit crabs, we thrive best when we work together, each helping the other.

Those hermit crabs could only work together effectively if they understood each other well. They literally sized each other up in order to work out how to form their chain to exchange shells. Like them, our team will be so much stronger if we take the trouble to understand each other and learn about each other. I hope that you have spent the week making new friends, whether you are an old hand in the school, or a new arrival. Making friends is all about finding out about another person, and sharing what you have in common. There is no better thing in the world than making a new friend.

