

**Dear Parent/Carer**

**Information Update – 24 June 2020**

Normally the last day of the summer term is a time when parents, carers and families are able to reflect and to celebrate the progress and achievements their children have made during the school year.

There is no doubt this year has been one of significant change for all of us. However, it has not been one without hope and inspiration and I have witnessed the way in which families and young people have supported each other, as well as some of the outstanding work that that has taken place between schools and families.

Yesterday's announcement by the Deputy First Minister outlining the ambition for a full return to schools for pupils in August, if it is safe to do so, is something that we would all welcome. He said: *'If we stay on track, if we all continue to do what is right, and if we can further suppress this terrible virus, the Government believes that we should prepare for children to be able to return to school full time in August.'*

It is very important that we support our children and young people following on from what I am sure will have been one of the most significant periods in their lifetime. I delighted to have seen how excited our P1 and P7 pupils have been when we have had some of them in our schools during the past week or so. Of course, there are considerable logistical issues that we will need to address, such as what does getting back to normal look like, issues around transport and, of course, how we welcome our children and young people back. I would wish to reassure you that this will be the focus for our team during the summer period.

I am now waiting on further national advice and guidance that will help guide us in our preparations. I will be back in contact over the summer when we have some specific information about the restart in August. I am acutely aware that you only have a note of our blended learning plans, which if deemed safe to do so, will need to be changed for a full return of all pupils in August.

We will continue to work closely with our council colleagues, professional associations and trade union partners and keep you updated. Schools close today for their summer break, and staff have been working extremely hard in setting up classrooms, preparing resources and arrangements, much of which we will build on for August.

Once again, thank you for your ongoing support.

*Take care and stay safe.*

**Tony McDaid**  
Executive Director of Education Resources