

10th November 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

INSET DAY- Friday 27th November 2020

So here we are again... back in another lockdown. However, this time, it's a very different experience for many reasons. The main difference for schools being that all the children are back in the building. Previously, schools were open, but only to small groups of children. This expanded to around half of pupils when we progressed to accommodate additional children in June. At each stage, the Department for Education issued guidance to schools, detailing the way in which we should operate. We are now under a very tight regime, as you will no doubt have witnessed, when dropping off and collecting your children.

There seems to be some light at the end of the tunnel with news this week of a potential vaccine. I really do hope that schools become part of the first wave to receive the vaccine, so we can begin to consider easing some of the challenges of school life in bubbles and, in time, return to normal. 'Bubble life' is very challenging and allowing the mixing of children and staff will be hugely beneficial for everyone's mental health and well-being.

In the event of children having to isolate, either individually or in bubbles, schools have plans in place to provide work and learning opportunities linked to their curriculum. Having experienced the closure of a bubble in one of our schools, they received very positive feedback from parents and children about the quality of the work provided and the engagement children had in their learning. Wherever possible, should children have to stay at home, we will strive to make that experience as engaging as possible and would appreciate your support in the process too.

In recent conversation with Directors and other CCE stakeholders and, after deep thought and discussion, we have agreed to bring forward the planned INSET day from Thursday 1st April 2021 to **Friday 27th November 2020**; note that this day is at the end of this month. We wanted to give you as much notice as possible as we are aware that you may need to make arrangements for childcare.

Celtic Cross Education is built on three key values: **nurture, learn, achieve**. We hope that you see these values run throughout the Trust, extending to our practice in schools and the care of all staff and pupils. I like to refer to the theory as a stick of rock; wherever you break the rock, the characteristics and sentiments of the words never change. **Nurturing** our children and staff through use of a Recovery Curriculum, based on health and well-being, has enabled us to **learn** lessons about every aspect of school life under Covid-19. We have reflected on the demands that this term has brought and hope you support us in recognising the relentless contribution staff have made to keeping schools running under tremendous pressure, in keeping with ongoing restrictions and with limited resources due to isolation

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guidelines and the strict use of bubbles. Despite these hurdles, we commend our pupils who continue to **achieve** and engage with learning enthusiastically.

Lastly, can I take this opportunity to thank you for your support for our schools. You have fully engaged with some very different approaches and supported some very tough decisions made by our school leaders. We are not out of the woods yet and we must not get complacent; staying socially distanced is still very important and reducing contact with other people is a high priority. We thank you for your help in maintaining this.

Stay safe, stay well.

My very best wishes,

Stuart Renshaw
Chief Executive Officer

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