



21 December 2020

Dear Principals and Staff Members,

As we reach the end of the school term, I am writing to say a sincere thank you for your outstanding work in 2020 and to wish you a happy Christmas and an enjoyable break over the holidays.

I know that you have all worked tirelessly in 2020 in unprecedented challenges. Never in the Education community has so much been asked of you. Your work has been vital to our children and young people and their families, and it is deeply appreciated.

The scale of what you have achieved is without parallel. Across our schools, the whole-hearted adoption of technology and outreach methods to support our children and young people from March onwards, during the period of building closure, was truly remarkable.

The impact of Covid-19 has been especially challenging for everyone in every corner of every classroom and I am fully aware of the vast effort that was out in by you all.

I know there have been many sleepless nights brought on by unimagined burdens of responsibility and seemingly endless challenges. I know that this has had an impact on each and every one of you and your families.

I am enormously grateful to you all for your personal commitment, and the sacrifices you have made to ensure that our schools are safe places for the whole community.

Schools continue to provide a safe place where children can work, learn but also grow as individuals and this environment has never been more important in the life of the student.

I will continue to work with education partners: staff unions, management bodies, parents and student representative bodies to anticipate and respond to the emerging challenges and to support our schools and you all.

Thank you again for all that you have done. To you and your families, I wish you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas and that we may all enjoy a return to more usual times in 2021.

Nollaig shona agus athbhliain faoi mhaise daoibh go léir.

Norma Foley TD
Minister for Education