

19-21 Broad Street | St Helier
Jersey | JE2 3RR

Friday, 12 February 2021

Dear Colleague,

As we finish the first half-term of 2021 and meet the mid-point of the academic year, we want to express our profound appreciation to each and every one of you for all you are doing.

Your direct work with Jersey's children and young people at the frontline is at the heart of all our efforts to combat the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Jersey is unique across the British Isles in keeping all our nurseries, schools, and colleges open. This has only been possible thanks to your patience, endeavour, commitment, and hard work.

Whatever the age range of your school, college or setting, working with children and young people is both rewarding and challenging in normal times. The added layers of work and, at times, anxiety, is significant and recognised. Working for hours in a mask or through a visor is tough. Maintaining and encouraging regular handwashing and cleanliness in the children, wiping down surfaces, keeping social distancing as well as you can, managing staggered starts, one way systems, rotas and all of the minute-by-minute, day to day precautions are invaluable in helping keep us all safe. You have shown remarkable flexibility to respond to these challenges, and, at times, to shift at short notice to remote teaching and home learning when that was required in the Island-wide lockdown, as well as in times that individual 'bubbles' had to isolate to stop the spread of the virus. This is new to us all; we haven't got everything right, but thanks to you we are in a better position than before, and stronger than many other places. Jersey's children are benefitting daily from the routines, care, learning and the many protective factors that being present each day provides.

We know that everyone worries for the children in their charge, that a positive case may make one of your children ill and disrupt the other children and families. You worry for your colleagues and your own health and that of your families, especially those who are vulnerable. We talk daily with health authorities and policy leaders, as well as regularly with the unions and professional associations on these concerns, and how best to manage. We update headteachers daily. The delayed start of term to allow for our much-valued workforce to avail of the offer of the PCR test was vindicated by the incredibly high numbers who took this up, and the positive feedback from staff.

We thank you for your patience as we roll out the Lateral Flow Test devices. PCR tests are available again next week, and the LFT set up should be much smoother next half-term once the app is rolled out across all schools.

Together, we have got so much better at working with colleagues in Contact Tracing; on the increasingly rare times positive cases have appeared in the school age population or the workforce, we have seen dramatically fewer individuals and families affected. Indeed, in the past two weeks no one has had to isolate from school or nursery. Long may this continue.

Dealing with Covid-19 is hard. You have been dealing with all of this for a year now, so we sincerely thank you for your mighty endeavours to date, and for your continued efforts for the

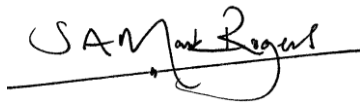
good of us all. The Island relies on us to care for and educate our children. The respect afforded to all who work in nurseries, schools and colleges should always be high; during Covid-19 we have had so much positive praise for your efforts from parents, our political leaders and the wider public.

We hope you are able to have a proper and most well-earned break this half-term.

With best wishes

Mark Rogers

Director General, CYPES

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Rogers', written over a horizontal line.

Seán O'Regan

Group Director of Education

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Seán O'Regan', written over a horizontal line.