People  Cumbria House  117 Botchergate  Carlisle  CA1 1RD

Date: 23 October 2020

Dear Colleague

When we talked about re-opening schools for the new term in September, we were very worried about how this might work, and what the challenges would be. Even with all of the work from colleagues across the system over the summer preparing for re-opening, we all knew that things would be very difficult.

Whilst we should not and must not paint a picture of an education system which has functioned as normal, and without incident since September, it is incredibly important for us to recognise what has been a phenomenal effort, delivering really important outcomes for Cumbrian families and young people. Schools in Cumbria have consistently had 4 or 5% greater pupil attendance, and Cumbria as a local authority area has continued to buck the national and regional trend in new infections.

We’ve also seen, through the #backtoschoolcumbria campaign, some of the lovely experiences that our children and young people have had since then. We know that this has been incredibly difficult for you all, and that the remainder of the Autumn Term will be similarly challenging. To this end, work with the Children’s Trust Board, and our other partners will continue, helping to support schools, staff and pupils with some of these challenges.

We are so grateful to you and all of your staff.

We hope that you will all manage to find some time for some genuine time off over the half term break.

Yours sincerely,

Dan Barton

Assistant Director – Education and Skills

Cllr Sue Sanderson

Cabinet Member - Schools and Learning Cumbria County Council

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