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Dear Head Teacher

As we come to the end of another extremely turbulent and challenging year for schools, we just wanted to say a huge “thank you” to you and all your staff for everything you’ve done this year to support the Covid-19 response. Being at the front line of a public health response is not the reason any of you came into teaching, and particularly in recent weeks we know that this will have been a year of many stresses and even more work than usual. Your support for our local response to Covid-19 has been phenomenal, including of course helping to manage the consequences of individual cases, through managing outbreaks, to running both routine and surge testing in secondaries – and all while maintaining your absolute focus on what is right for the pupils in your school. We’ve been very moved by many examples of you and staff going above and beyond the call of duty to give your pupils the best and most positive experience they can in near-impossible circumstances.

Of course while difficult circumstances can bring out the best in some people, they can bring out the worst in others, and we know that many of you have been on the receiving end of some pretty unpleasant stuff in recent weeks as some families have started to rail against the isolation of contacts. It goes without saying that you shouldn’t have to put up with that – especially when what you’ve been doing is implementing national policy. With any luck people will have the chance to calm down over the summer and changes to guidance will help keep a lid on that next year.

We don’t fully know what guidance we’ll get about managing Covid-19 in schools next year; what we’re seeing so far suggests that Government is aiming to make life much easier for schools than it has been this year, in particular by ending the requirement for younger people to self-isolate as contacts. Whether it works out that way in practice remains to be seen. What we can be certain of is that the Public Health Team will be there to support you as we all continue to manage a pandemic that is not over yet.

Until then, we hope that you manage to get a decent break over the summer, even as you plan for next year. You and all your staff have been magnificent this year – again! – and you’ve certainly earned a holiday. Have a good one.

Yours faithfully



Colin Cox  
Director – Public Health



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