STOCKPORT
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Dear Parents / Carers

As we come to the end of the school year, we wanted to take the opportunity to write to you all to express our heartfelt thanks for everything you have done as parents / carers / guardians to support your children during these extraordinary and unparalleled times. Each one of you will have had a different experience of the pandemic and this will probably have taken its toll on you, your families and the communities you live in over the last few months. We have never known anything like it in our careers.

Keeping children safe and happy has been the most important thing and we really understand how difficult this has been and continues to be as your routines and relationships have been disrupted by the pandemic. We don't underestimate the impact of this or the worries and concerns it will have caused. We want to reassure you we have been working hard with early years settings, schools, colleges and our partners to meticulously plan every step of the response to the pandemic in Stockport. This includes support to transition back into settings, schools and colleges. We have heard positive feedback from many of those who have gone back to school and education environments already.

As we look towards the new school year and the Autumn term in September 2020, which may seem a long time away, it is important that we have a renewed focus on school attendance. The Covid-19 guidance over the last few months has prioritised settings and schools being open to children of key workers or vulnerable children with a social worker or an Education, Health and Care plan. This changed to wider re-opening from June, with many more children having some face-to-face contact. It is however recognised that this does not apply to all children, which can cause frustration and anxiety for some families.

From September 2020, the Government guidance is clear that all children in all year groups will return to school. This will be an important move back towards a more normal life for many children and families and we want to support you in any way we can to assist all children and young people to be ready to start school or return to school at the beginning of term.

There may be different arrangements for the start of term at each school and you will have had a communication directly from schools to tell you what the plan is. Please contact your child's school to find out what will happen in September if you have any further questions. Schools will also be able to offer support for your child if you are concerned about their needs for returning to school. We all want to make sure it is made as easy as possible for everyone. Please also continue to be understanding with schools who have had to work really hard to interpret and implement guidance throughout the last few months and raise any concerns you have directly with schools so that these can be addressed in partnership.

As described above, transitioning back to school has been a key focus for us and over 50 people, including partners from schools, education services, Stockport Family, health services and parent/carers have been working hard behind the scenes to co-produce a set of transition guidance papers and resources. We hope that this guidance will help provide a

meaningful and smooth transition for all children and young people across Stockport. This information has also been shared with schools and settings to provide support and a guide in relation to good practice. You can access the guidance online at the following location: https://stockport.fsd.org.uk/kb5/stockport/fsd/advice.page?id=GSSR5lIIAbw

We really hope that you can get some time over the summer holidays to rest and recharge with your families.

Kind Regards

Chris McLoughlin
Director Children's Services

Cllr Colin Foster
Lead Member for Children and Education Services