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Dear young person

The last 16 months have been an incredibly challenging time for everyone. We have all had to adapt to so many changes in our lives and it has impacted everyone in different ways. It has affected you as a young person and many others across the country.

Your response to the pandemic has been incredible. You understood that by following the guidance, you could help support and care for the health of your family, your school community and indeed all of our communities, even though the risk to yourself was generally lower than older adults. What you did was a selfless act and I want to thank you for all that you have given up and missed out on over this time.

It is also important to recognise how many of you contributed to and supported your own communities. From making donations of food and supporting foodbanks, to supporting elderly and vulnerable neighbours who were unable to leave their homes. You were also there to support your own family during this tough time and your help would have been invaluable. You should be incredibly proud of your contribution.

Being at school is not only about getting the right opportunities to learn and achieve qualifications, it should also give you great memories from extra-curricular activities, school trips, school shows, concerts, proms and other memorable events. I recognise that many of these activities have been severely restricted or were unable to take place at all, and this has been difficult for you and your peers.

Thank you for the sacrifices that you have made that helped us to keep our schools open and that supported your community. For those of you who will remain in school after the summer, I sincerely hope that we can see the restrictions continuing to ease and allow you to take part in many of these events in the future.

I would also like to pay tribute to your resilience and efforts during lockdown earlier this year. The move to remote learning came with very little notice yet you adapted once again. Having digital skills and self-motivation to learn are great skills to develop and you have done this with enthusiasm. While it has been challenging, I have no doubt that these new skills will be a great asset for your life after school, whether that be in further and higher education or going into the workplace.

Qualifications and assessments

To our senior phase pupils, this has been an exceptionally challenging time. You have faced a year of uncertainty, both with exams being cancelled and having to learn remotely during a second lockdown. Then you returned to school to prepare for assessments, which are draining both physically and emotionally in normal times and would have been more so this year. However, I hope your results are a clear indicator of all the effort and work you have continued to put into your studies and that they are a good reflection of the skills and knowledge that you have worked hard to achieve. I wish you every success in your results.

Please be assured that your school will continue to support you. We are all desperate to give you the support and help that you need now and that will support you in future years. We will do everything we can to give you the best possible chance when you leave school. For those of you who will be leaving school this year, we are still here to help. If there is something you need or something you feel the school can do, then please speak to them.

You can also call the dedicated helpline – 0800 917 8000 – that has been set up by Skills Development Scotland and is available Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, between now and Monday 9 August. On results day Tuesday 10 August, you can call their results helpline – 0800 100 8000 – from 8am that morning. The helpline will be open until Wednesday 18 August and you can find links to SQA and My World of Work websites on the council website (www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/results).

Thank you

I have worked with young people for 26 years and still almost every day I am amazed at what you accomplish, yet I am never surprised because I know what you are capable of. The last year has been different for so many reasons, yet you have all accomplished so much, and have demonstrated strengths and resilience that I have rarely seen before. I am incredibly proud of your efforts and you should also be proud of what you have achieved and your contributions to support the health and wellbeing of the entire population. You also continued to learn and mature during this entire period.

Many, many thanks for everything and I wish you the very best for what I hope is a great summer break.

For those returning in August, I look forward to welcoming you back into school. For those moving on, I give you my very best wishes in what I sincerely hope is a healthy, prosperous, and exciting future.

Yours sincerely



Steven Quinn
Director of Children's Services