

School Restart

The following was shared with media outlets earlier this week.

This week has seen a full return to school with a difference and there is no doubt it presents a challenging time for all staff, pupils, families and indeed for the wider community.

As controlled schools navigate this extraordinary time, please be assured that the health and wellbeing of pupils and staff will continue to be at the centre of everything controlled schools do and the focus of senior leaders and staff will, without fail, be on the creation of safe learning and teaching environments.

Each individual school will have had a different experience as a result of the pandemic. It's in this context that the ethos and values of the school ensures a much needed nurturing approach as the learning community recovers together.

The current pandemic has contributed to a growing understanding among wider society of the importance of supporting the mental health and wellbeing of pupils and that children learn best when their emotional needs are also met. I'm confident that all who work in the controlled sector will continue to prioritise and support this approach.

COVID-19 is still with us and the science indicates it's going to be here for the foreseeable future. Leaders in education are aware that the collective vision for the new academic year has to be one that is responsive to this extraordinary situation, focused on safe and effective learning and the wellbeing of everyone in schools.

Finally I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the commitment of Principals, teachers and staff and wish them well throughout what is going to be a very complex and challenging year.

Barry Mulholland
Chief Executive

Helpful video

The Belfast Health and Social Care Trust has created a short video which provides important advice for children who may be nervous or unsure about school restarting. It explains the new measures in place. It also offers reassurance that school will still be fun. [Watch video here.](#)



Abbey Students achieve their best results ever!

Abbey Community College students excelled once again on GCSE results Day. They were the founding Year 8's when Abbey Community College opened in September 2015. The upward trend in overall results has continued again this year, with an amazing 98% of the Year 12 students achieving 5 or more A*- C grades. [Read news story here.](#)



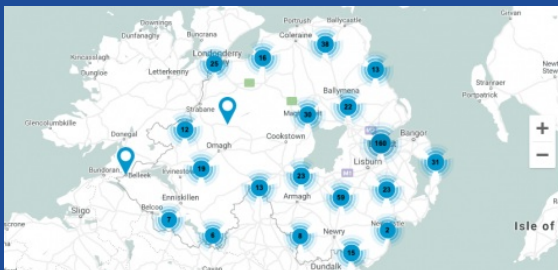
Portadown College congratulate GCSE students

Portadown College students have secured a superb set of results at GCSE. Across an outstanding GCSE profile, an impressive 51% of all grades awarded were at A*- A, with 82% of grades at A*- B. [To read full story click here.](#)



GCSE success for pupils at Ballyclare High School

Ballyclare High School pupils have been awarded GCSE results to be proud of once again. The school is celebrating 99% of pupils achieving 5 or more A*- C grades, including English and Maths and 96% achieving 7 or more A*- C grades, including English and Maths. [Read more here.](#)



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