



INVITATION TO DEIS PRIMARY SCHOOLS RUN A RECONNECTING WITH SCHOOLS SUMMER CAMP

12 June 2020

Dear Principal,

As announced today by the Minister for Education and Skills, Joe McHugh T.D., the Government is providing the opportunity for DEIS primary schools to run a Summer Camp for those students identified as most at risk of educational disadvantage.

As you may or may not be aware for a number of years the Teacher Education Section in the Department of Education and Skills has provided funding to approx. 70 DEIS band 1 primary schools to run a week long Literacy and Numeracy Summer Camp for up to 36 pupils. Schools are required to identify and prioritise those pupils most in need of additional support to participate in a summer camp.

It is accepted that the closure of schools due to the current public health pandemic has affected all pupils and in particular those pupils at the greatest risk of educational disadvantage. The Department is now inviting all Primary Urban band 1, Primary Urban band 2 and Primary Rural DEIS schools the opportunity to run a Summer camp this summer. Participation is voluntary for each school. Invitations are being issued to DEIS primary schools via the local network of Education Centres.

As always, the summer camps will have a strong emphasis on Mathematics and on language learning, either Irish or English, in a playful interactive way. It is accepted that significant focus will also be required in relation to wellbeing and reconnecting students with their school, peers and teachers. A module on wellbeing for teachers around reconnecting with pupils and teachers' own sense of wellbeing is being developed by NEPS and the PDST wellbeing team. A wellbeing CPD webinar will be available for all participating teachers in the summer camp programme in addition to a CPD webinar that will provide guidance on the administration of the camps, principles of the camps, learning environments and playful teaching methodologies.

The purpose of this communication is to formally invite your school to partake in this initiative and run a Summer Camp for those students most at risk of educational disadvantage this summer. If your school is interested in running a Camp please complete the 'Expression of Interest' Form attached and return it to campaisamhraidh@dwec.ie

Attached for your information please find:

- A 'Frequently Asked Questions' document setting out the summary details of the summer camp provision;
- A revised Teachers Handbook on running a Summer Camp and
- An 'Expression of Interest' form.

I want to thank you taking the time to read this letter and I hope that you take the opportunity to consider whether your school may wish to run a summer camp this year.

Le gach dea-ghuí,

Máirín Ní Chéileachair

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