



A personal message from Mrs Sharon Beattie Principal of Dromore Nursery School, marking the 20th Anniversary of the school opening.

It is with amazement, humility and awe that I reflect on 20 years of Dromore Nursery School. I was appointed as Principal on the 28th September 2001 and the school doors opened for the first time on 21st January 2002, the 'Official Opening' followed in December 2002. There are 3 original staff members remaining which include Miss Joanne Baxter, Mrs Allison Chambers and myself. There have been very few staff changes down through the years; Mrs Angela Knox (class teacher) moved to be the Principal of Downshire Nursery School in Banbridge and was replaced by the current class teacher Mrs Sharon Chambers. Mrs Jones, Mrs Russell and Mrs Ogle after many years' service retired from their posts in recent years. The Board of Governors change with each reconstitution period however, Mr L Haslem the current Chairperson has been on the Board of Governors from the beginning and sat on the committee which appointed myself as Principal.

From my appointment in September 2002, I have enjoyed the friendship and support of my fellow head teachers in St Colman's Primary School, Dromore Central Primary School and Dromore High School, both past and present. Working collaboratively as an educational community we endeavour to provide smooth transitions for the children as they move through the different stages of their education. The community of Dromore has much to be proud of in their local schools.

I arrived at Dromore Nursery School coming from the primary school sector where I had taught through all of the age groups for over 12 years. On reflection I had intended to stay as the principal for between 5-7 years but my heart was captivated by the children and the community of Dromore and especially by the pre-school environment and the lifelong impact this first journey into education can have on children. I am convinced that the pre-school stage in education has the most significant and lasting impact on a child's future achievements in education. Therefore, I encourage you all in the years to come to support and fight for teacher led pre-school education for the future generations of children in Dromore and the surrounding areas.

It has been a privilege and I am humbled by the many families I have had the opportunity to get to know down through the years. Many have welcomed me into their lives often at times that have been both challenging and difficult. Along the way I walked with families through bereavement, sadness, tragedy and celebrated with those experiencing joy and excitement. But I have also moved through days, weeks and months of normal school life and family life and I consider each one of them a privilege. Over 1,500 children have passed through the doors of Dromore Nursery School over the last 20 years. During these years I have been overwhelmed by the parent support the school as received, from practical involvement, financial involvement to those much appreciated words of thanks and encouragement, driving us forward to greater excellence.

Dromore Nursery School is built on the pillars of respect, acceptance, moral and spiritual development and educational excellence. Every child is welcomed as an equal and every child is offered the opportunity to fulfil their potential in all aspects of their life. From the beginning of the Dromore Nursery School, we have engaged in Shared Education programmes with our children, linked with Drumnacree Nursery School in North Lurgan. The school has been inspected on three occasions over the 20-year period and each time has been found to be outstanding in all areas of learning and management. Dromore Nursery School is now regarded as a flagship school and exemplar of good practice in all areas.

Through the 20 years the school has been involved in a number of awards schemes, accreditations and received a number of accolades some of which include:

Investors in People Silver Award

Boosts Better Breaks Gold Award

ECO schools Green Flag

Best Kept School in Northern Ireland

People First School Award for Best Nursery School

Action Cancer Prevention Programme Silver/ Gold Awards and Overall Winner

National Teaching Awards for Head teacher and Chair of Governors.

I have every confidence that Dromore Nursery School will continue to offer the future generations of children in the greater Dromore area the same outstanding experiences. Much of what has been achieved is a direct legacy of three local ladies who tirelessly pioneered for teacher-led Pre-school education from the early 1970's, Mrs Moira Alexander O.B.E, Mrs Elizabeth McDonald and Mrs Joan Black. This school was built as a result of their tireless campaigning and they all served as original governors of the school.

As we look forward to the future years of Dromore Nursery School the leadership and staff and children will come and go, but the ethos and belief in children and their ability, resilience and enthusiasm for learning will roll from year to year. Many will become

educationally excellent, some famous, some world renown but it is my desire that they will all have happy vibrant memories of enjoying learning and feeling safe during their first experiences of education at Dromore Nursery School.

We give thanks for the 20 years that have passed and look forward God Willing to the next 20 year and more to come.

Find enclosed a memory bear for each child enrolled at Dromore Nursery School in our 20th Anniversary year.

Sharon Beattie B.A. Hons M.ED. P.Q.H.

Founding Principal

