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| Dear Parents/CarersThank you for all you are doing to stay at home and save lives.  You are all doing a great job amongst it all!  We will get through this together!Since Schools returned in August, I have been attending weekly meetings with the NHS Health Protection Team and the key messages from these have been included within my weekly Fishermoss Family Friday updates!  I wanted to share with you all the message I shared yesterday with parents of children who are currently attending school so you know what to look out for at home! **The strong message** at this week’s NHS meeting was in relation to symptoms of the new variant not being the classic symptoms.  Symptoms can include extreme tiredness, sore throat, headache, bit of a cough, even diarrhoea. The message is if there are symptoms of any sort, however mild, anything at all making your child feel ‘under the weather’ then **do not send them to school!** The scots words used were if your child presents as being ‘peely wally’ i.e. off colour, then do not send them to school.  Such is the concern about the new variant and the rate at which it is continuing to spread.For all of us who may be required as key workers to attend places of work, please continue to take care and follow the FACTS:* face coverings
* avoid crowded areas
* clean hands and surfaces
* two metre distancing
* and self-isolate and book a test if you have symptoms of the virus

**Health warning…….**These are indeed stressful and challenging times so forgive me for repeating my Health Warning from last week but, the most important thing just now is everyone’s **health and wellbeing**!  We all have very genuine concerns in relation to the virus, the health of family members and friends, pressures of working from home and child care, jobs loses and the associated financial implications of all that is happening.  Please do not add to these pressures by stressing about remote learning. Everyone has very individual circumstances so try not to compare yourselves with others.  It will be our job to fill in the gaps when we return to school! As I have said before, it may be that after your working day is the best time to support your children with online learning or indeed the weekend.  Teachers are not expecting that pupils will have the work completed on a daily basis even though they are issuing it daily.  Teachers know to expect work being submitted at different times of the day, and week, to fit in with family routines.  You will find a model that works best for you and your work pattern. You will also have days when you can’t face any of it!  Teachers will equally understand that there will be times when tasks just have to be left! **A wee request from teachers……**On Google Classroom, through ‘Private Comments’, it would be really helpful if pupils could pop a little message or just a smiley face to alert the teacher to them having handed in work. Teachers are always delighted to hear how pupils got on with the task.  Teachers with a class of 30 pupils could potentially be looking out for a minimum of up to 90 pieces of work coming in daily. Given many will be coming in at different times of the day and the week, a wee signal by way of a private message to the teacher would be fantastic!   From Monday 18th January there will be a weekly opportunity for each class to meet together virtually for a whole class activity through **Google Meet**.  This could be for a discussion on a piece of work they have had to prepare, a quiz on a topic or for a catch up together as a class.  Guidance on how to access this facility and protocols was attached to last week’s Friday update, as was the request for permission from parents to authorise their attendance/participation in a class live Google Meet. If you are in agreement then please e mail Fishermoss.sch@aberdeenshire.gov.uk giving your child’s/children’s names and classes and state ‘I give permission’ or ‘I do not give permission’ for my child to participate.  There is no need to return the actual form.  Thank you to all who have already made contact with the school office.  Teachers have been informed of pupils who have given permission to join their class Google Meet.**Active Schools Supporting Schools to keep children and adults active during lockdown…………..**With all sport and physical activity sessions run through Active Schools being suspended currently, they want to provide you with information on some of the fantastic resources and online content they have created that you could use to support your children with keeping physically active during their time away from attending school.  During the summer they set a variety of challenges each week for pupils to participate in their series of Mindfulness Videos.  There are approximately 20 videos that have now been added to a YouTube playlist on the Live Life Aberdeenshire YouTube channel and can be viewed and tried at any point.**Active Schools Join in Playlist**[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLf9SJJOIgiNL5zD4xvzj9nYXJkTvqOuE6](https://aberdeenshirecouncil.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=a2c7db1bfe78825cafcf85cb8&id=827c8e8e3d&e=706de12f65)Outwith the video content, the team have designed a fantastic Stay Active at Home set of online resource cards that can be downloaded from the Live Life at Home page of the LLA website with some simple games and ideas to help keep children active at home.Finally, they are also working on a plan to create some brand new online activity sessions that pupils can take part in from the comfort of their own home. The first of these takes the form a dance session lead by the Alford Coordinator **Let's Dance with Fiona – Video 1 Move Your Body**  - [https://youtu.be/AkJAXLR6GI4](https://aberdeenshirecouncil.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=a2c7db1bfe78825cafcf85cb8&id=fc4af832d4&e=706de12f65)They will provide more details of further sessions created in due course.   |

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Please continue to stay safe!  Take care.Kindest regards |

**Margaret M. Ferguson**

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Aberdeenshire Council Education and Children’s Services



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