Dear Parents/Carers

Firstly, sincere apologies for the soggy jackets coming home today!  Morning playtimes were indoors but there was a window of opportunity in the weather for P4-P7 pupils to get out after lunch, and then unfortunately the heavens opened!  It is not so easy these days for all to run indoors and take cover. They all remain in good spirits this afternoon.  Thank you for your support and understanding.

I have always described my career in teaching as a calling.  I thankfully, along with many Fishermoss colleagues, have many moments when we say, ‘This is why we do this job’. This helps amongst the many challenges we meet daily.  I love my ‘blethers’ with your darlings every morning out in the playground.  I hear of pretty much every tooth that has fallen out overnight and what the going rate is in Portlethen with the Tooth Fairy!  I have been known to say that I might start pulling out my own teeth and popping them under my pillow to boost my piggy bank funds!

I have this week been presented with a flower from a boy in Primary 2.  I have heard of a Roman God designed by a P3/4 who is called ‘Pastivius the Great’.  He is the Roman God of Pasta, who holds a sceptre with twists of spaghetti down it topped with a giant meatball!  A Primary 7 told me today at lunchtime that he had tried gravy for the first time ever and really enjoyed it!  It is your darling children and my amazing staff that I want to keep safe amongst all that is happening just now.  Thank you to all who have been so accepting of my Fishermoss Family Friday updates!  Not many left to go!

We remain grateful to parents who continue to err on the side of caution and are not sending their children to school if they are in the least bit unwell.  We are also grateful to parents who are having their children tested to be sure that sore throats and coughs are not COVID related.  In this regard, please be aware that the asymptomatic testing programme does not replace the current testing policy for those with symptoms. School/setting staff and pupils who experience symptoms of coronavirus must self-isolate immediately and arrange a PCR test at [www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test](http://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test). **People with symptoms must not rely on a negative LFD result as a reason to continue to attend school or their setting.**

We are all required to continue to remember to exercise good sense and caution:

* Continue to work from home where possible
* Be cautious about international travel
* Wear face coverings
* Avoid places that are busy
* Clean hands and clean surfaces that we or others are touching
* Maintain two metre distancing outside our home or garden
* Self-isolate and get tested if we have symptoms

**Finally, EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS)…..The deadline for applications to the EU Settlement Scheme is 30 June 2021** and we have been asked to issue the following information to all parents/carers to help ensure that all children and families who should be applying for the scheme, do so before it’s too late.  The scheme applies to people from the European Union, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein who arrived in the UK before 31 December 2020, and do not have British Citizenship.

There are two different levels of applications dependent on the time that the individual has lived in the UK;

* Pre-settled Status - for those individuals who have resided in the UK for under 5 years.
* Settled Status – for anyone who has lived in the UK for 5 years or more.

Failure to apply for the scheme, can result in individuals not being able to access services such as housing, health and benefits, or even the potential of deportation back to their country of origin.

Local authorities have specific duties to ensure that applications are made on behalf of children for whom they hold Parental Rights and Responsibilities, and that they provide practical support to ensure that applications are made for Looked After Children and Care Leavers.

In addition to the above, local authorities are required to raise awareness of the EUSS with other vulnerable groups eligible for the scheme, and to ensure that they are signposted to appropriate sources of advice and support to help them make their applications.

In view of this, we are urging parents and carers to actively consider if they, or the children in their care, meet the criteria for the EUSS with a view to ensuring they know about the scheme and how to apply for themselves and the children. Of particular note are the following factors;

* Each family member needs to have an application lodged in their own right.  If a parent has been granted settled or pre-settled status, this does not transfer to their children.
* If the child of EU nationals was born in the UK, this does not guarantee that they have British Citizenship.

There are a number of government funded agencies who provide advice and support on the EUSS, and below you will find contact details for two of them.  Should you become aware of a family who have not yet lodged their application please signpost them to one of these services and urge them to get their application lodged without delay.

Citizen’s Rights Project Tel: 07803 102173 (English and Polish) or 07518 926137 (English or Spanish).  Email: info@citizensrightsproject.org

Text message or WhatsApp: 07803 102173 or 07518 926137 (in English or other European Language). Citizen’s Advice Scotland Tel: 0800 916 9847.

Wishing you all a lovely weekend!

Thank you for your continued support.

Kindest regards

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Aberdeenshire Council Education and Children’s Services



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