Dear Fishermoss Family

We hope you enjoyed some quality family time over the Easter Holidays. The combination of snowy and sunny days created lots of opportunities for enjoying the great outdoors! We are delighted that the lovely sunshine has continued for our return to school this week!

**Home Lunches**……**a gentle reminder!**

We would be most grateful if parents would contact the school office if their child is going to be late returning from a home lunch.  This will avoid panic and an unnecessary search party!  Several parents have understandably been caught up in work calls, whilst working from home, and therefore have not realised the time.  When the office is alerted by the class teacher that a child has failed to return, we immediately try to contact parents.  Of course, when parents are on work calls, they don’t tend to pick up the call from the school office and we are then required to start trying to contact other emergency contacts. Many of our pupils who are home lunches are older pupils who walk to school themselves so there is always the concern that something may have happened.  I have given a few virtual hugs at the relief of seeing a pupil walk in the door safe and well!  I have also been known to go round to properties to knock on doors as a last resort, before alerting Police, so if you want to avoid a visit from the Head Teacher then perhaps setting an alarm might help!

**Safe return to schools……**we are still required to ensure that we avoid mixing pupils as much as possible.  I completely understand the challenges here for pupils where they have friends in other classes they like to play with and equally may play with these friends after school.  Decisions regarding what happens after school is for parents to decide.  During the school day schools are required to follow the guidance which continues to state to keep minimising the mixing of pupil groups.

I have been challenged by a few parents where they feel the control measures in place at Fishermoss School are too tight and more stringent than those in some other schools.  Whilst I am genuinely sorry that children can’t move around the school and playground freely, I make no apology for ensuring we have the best possible systems in place to prevent the spread of infection and to ensure our school is as safe as it can be for pupils, and as a place of work for all our staff.  We shall continue to maintain these tight, stringent control measures until we are advised differently.  Not all schools have the space, staffing or capacity to enable them to ensure classes are always kept separate.  Our pupils have been amazing at showing resilience and coping, difficult as it is. Perhaps the following information regarding ‘close contacts’ will help outline the importance of avoiding unnecessary mixing of pupils, especially in a large school. We will continue to be the best we can possibly be!

**Definition of a ‘close contact’**

A close contact is defined as a person who during the infective period (even if they were wearing a face covering at the time) has:

**1. *Direct contact:***

Had face to face contact with a case within 1 metre for any length of time, including:

* being coughed on
* having a face-to-face conversation
* having skin-to-skin physical contact

Any contact within 1 metre for one minute or longer without face-to-face contact

Travelled in a small vehicle with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) or in a large vehicle near someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19).

2. ***Proximity contact:***

A person who has been between 1 and 2 metres of someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), for more than 15 minutes cumulatively during the period 48 hours prior to and 10 days after the case’s symptom onset.

Those meeting any of these criteria will be considered as close contacts, their details obtained, traced and communicated with and asked to self-isolate for 10 days since their last contact with the case.

**As our First Minister shared this week……**Covid is at much lower levels than it has been in a long time in Scotland but as we can see from the figures it is still there, it is still circulating.  We must remember that the virus we are dealing with now, is much more infectious than it was when bars and cafés were last open.  When we are out and about, we are to continue to remember the FACTS as the most important advice to help protect ourselves and others.

* wear face coverings;
* avoid places that are busy;
* clean our hands, clean surfaces that we or others are touching;
* two metre distancing remains really important
* and self-isolate and get tested if we develop symptoms.

These measures have become important all along but as we ease up and start to go about more of our normal business the FACTS advice becomes ever more important.

**And finally……**

**School Meals**……A new online resource has been launched by Aberdeenshire Council’s School Meals Service, which will help with making healthy meal choices displaying allergen and nutritional content of primary school meals.  The portal is linked to a nutritional analysis programme which ensures meals meet statutory nutritional standards, meaning they are nutritious as well as delicious. It is particularly helpful for pupils with special dietary needs including allergies and Type-1 Diabetes.

To use the portal please visit <http://ourshiremenus.mysaffronportal.com/>

**Young People and Parent Consultation on Holiday Programmes**……I have been asked to remind families about this consultation.  Please see links below to two surveys, from the Community Learning and Development team, for young people and parents to complete to help inform the **school holiday programmes**.  The views of young people and parents are critical in ensuring that programmes are created to meet the social and wellbeing needs of children, young people and families during the school holidays. **Please note the closing date of the survey is Sunday 25th April.**

[Young People Survey Holiday Activities – Engage Aberdeenshire](https://engage.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/holiday-programmes/survey_tools/young-people-survey-holiday-activities)

[Parent Survey Holiday Activities – Engage Aberdeenshire](https://engage.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/holiday-programmes/survey_tools/parent-holiday-programme)

Wishing you all a lovely weekend.  The sun is set to shine!

Please continue to stay safe.

Kindest regards

**Margaret M. Ferguson**

**Head Teacher**

Fishermoss School

Berrymuir Road

Portlethen

Aberdeenshire

AB12 4UF

Tel:  01224 472875

Aberdeenshire Council Education and Children’s Services



**‘Being the best we can be’**

**Respect-Honesty-Responsibility-Kindness-Hardworking**