Dear Parents/Carers

It was both a privilege and a joy to personally be able to welcome back our Nursery, Primary 1, Primary 2 and Primary 3 pupils to school this week! There was plenty enthusiasm and excitement in the playground on Monday morning which was special to see.

May I take this opportunity to thank every one of you for making such an effort to follow all the guidance provided to support our safe return to school! You have been **truly amazing**! We have felt supported and encouraged as a school this week at the efforts of our families to do the right thing. We are so grateful to you for getting your **children to school on time** with hands washed, having **one adult** at drop off and pick up, keeping to **2m distancing** outside school, wearing **face masks**, **discouraging playing on the embankment** and **going home, protecting the NHS and saving lives!**

I do hope the First Minister’s announcement on Tuesday provides further hope of us being able to welcome back our Primary 4 to 7 pupils, and their teachers, soon.  For those of you still facing the challenges of remote learning please see light at the end of the tunnel.  If you can, keep your foot on the pedal as every little bit your child does at home will support their return to school.  Perhaps looking out school shoes, school bags and uniform at this stage might help you all feel a little excitement!  **That said, virus levels still need to continue to go down to allow for a return of other age groups.**

As I previously shared, since Schools returned last August, I have been attending weekly meetings with the NHS Health Protection Team and the key messages from these are regularly included within my weekly Fishermoss Family Friday updates.  The news this week was one of encouragement but with a strong message of **no room for complacency**!  We know through comments in social media that many people think the virus levels in Aberdeenshire are negligible. Whilst figures are going in the right direction, data provided by the NHS this week indicated 29.1 cases per 100,000. This figure was 5 last September so we are not there yet.  **The plea for continued compliance with the lockdown restrictions, to reduce any risk of coronavirus cases increasing, remains in place.**

**Please remember information previously shared** 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!**  Schools have been advised to have a ‘low threshold’ and are required to send pupils home immediately for anything that indicates they are feeling unwell. Such is the concern about the new variant and the rate at which it is continuing to spread.

**What should I do if my child is unwell?** If your child is unwell, please do not send them to school.  If your child is unwell but they are not displaying symptoms of coronavirus, please keep them at home until they are back in good health. For vomiting and/or diarrhoea, as per normal circumstances, they should remain at home for at least 48 hours after symptoms have passed. This now also relates to a fever or high temperature (alongside a negative coronavirus result) and they should not return to school for at least 48 hours after symptoms have passed.

**On a lighter note**……today, or on Monday, children in our Nursery and in Primary 1 to 3 will be bringing home a ‘World Book Day Voucher’ which they can either put towards the cost of a book or exchange for a ‘World Book Day’ book.  More information can be found on the voucher.  All classes will be making reference to World Book Day as part of their literacy work this coming week.  Pupils in Primary 4 to Primary 7 will receive their vouchers on return to school.  Vouchers are valid until 28th March.  The following links have further information and links to a range of books that cost just £1 so perfect for making maximum use of the voucher!

[https://www.worldbookday.com/2020/09/world-book-day-2021-announcements/.](https://www.worldbookday.com/2020/09/world-book-day-2021-announcements/)

[https://www.book2look.com/bookwall/ylhf9cz7qj(worldbookday.com).com)](https://www.book2look.com/bookwall/ylhf9cz7qj(worldbookday.com))

Thank you again for all your support.

I do hope the sun shines for us all this weekend but continue to stay safe!

Kindest regards

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Aberdeenshire Council Education and Children’s Services



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