Dear Parents/Carers

Thinking especially of so many of our families just now who are suffering with all sorts of illnesses and the wider impact this can have on family life.  We are also mindful of the implications of having to suddenly isolate as a family so please do not hesitate to get in touch if there is anything practical we can help with e.g. getting you bread and milk!

Our First Minister shared this afternoon some hard-hitting messages in relation to the Omicron variant of COVID.  From tomorrow, all household contacts of any Covid cases should isolate for 10 days, regardless of vaccination status, and even if they initially get a negative PCR test.  Non-household contacts can leave isolation if they have had a negative PCR test and have had two vaccine doses.

**The Larder**……Tomorrow ‘The Larder’ in Portlethen will be running a Santa food drive where children can come and donate an item to the food larder and see Santa.  Please see the attached poster for further information.

**Class Parties……**these will be held on the afternoon of the dates below and are being held as individual class parties as last year. Pupils are welcome to wear ‘Party Clothes’ on the day of their party and they should come to school ready dressed!  Pupils who normally go home for lunch can choose to get changed then if they so wish.  Please be aware that party clothing and footwear should be suitable for playing outside at morning break and lunchtime. Best to be dressed for the weather, warm and casual rather than black tie and fancy frocks! As previously shared, Party Bags are kindly being provided by the PSC.

Party Dates are as follows:

* Tue 14th         P4 & P5
* Wed 15th       P3
* Thu 16th         P4/5 & P6
* Fri 17th          P2B/C & P2S
* Mon 20th        P1M & P1S
* Tue 21st         P7 & P6/7

This Monday’s on-line weekly school assembly will be our **Primary 1 Nativity**! The Nativity performance will be made available to parents of our Primary 1 pupils on Google Classroom also on Monday.  Primary 1 parents can enjoy viewing this in the evening from the comfort of their own home, as many times as they wish!

**Changes to Public Holiday Dates……Queen’s Platinum Jubilee**……In recognition of the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee in 2022, the May Day holiday will be moved from Monday 2nd May to Thursday 2nd June 2022 while Friday 3rd June 2022 will be designated as an additional public holiday.  This means a change to the holiday dates for school previously issued.  Therefore we will not be closed on Monday 2nd May as previously intimated but will instead be closed on Thursday 2nd & Friday 3rd June.

**Scottish Government Free Bus Travel for Under 22s – Survey……**Scottish Government Transport Analytical Services Division have asked for our support in circulating the following survey for completion by parents/carers:

[**online1.snapsurveys.com/under22travelsurvey**](https://online1.snapsurveys.com/under22travelsurvey)

The closing date for all responses is **24th January 2022**.

**About the Survey**……Do you have a child aged 5-16, or are you a young person aged 12-21? If so, please complete our short travel survey for a chance to win up to £250 in Love2Shop vouchers.

The Scottish Government will soon be launching the Free Bus Travel Scheme for young people between the ages of 5 and 21. This aims to encourage greener travel patterns, and increase opportunities for young people to engage in employment, education and social activities and not be excluded due to travel costs. Transport Scotland will monitor the scheme as it progresses to check on use and impact. The first step is to try and understand current travel patterns so that any changes after the scheme is introduced can be identified.

They would be grateful if parents/carers of younger children (i.e. those aged 5-16), or young people aged 12-21 themselves, could complete this short travel survey. The questionnaire asks about current travel behaviour, and your thoughts about bus travel generally and the free bus travel. This should take no more than 10 minutes to do.

If you have any questions about the work or problems completing the questionnaire, please contact our Project Manager, Elaine Wilson-Smith, at [elaine@wellsideresearch.co.uk](mailto:elaine@wellsideresearch.co.uk) or on 0131 677 5522.

**As always……**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. Please do not send unwell children to school to see how they cope.  Do keep them at home until you are sure they are fit and well. Please continue to err on the side of caution. **We really appreciate all you are doing here!**

**Face coverings should be worn by parents and other visitors to the school site,** whether entering the building or otherwise, **including parents at drop-off and pick-up.**

For vomiting and/or diarrhoea, as per normal circumstances, pupils 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.

**To help reduce the risk to your family and to help reduce the likelihood of spread of coronavirus in school and the community, please:**

* Undertake the recommended twice weekly lateral flow testing as this can catching infections early.
  + Free at-home LFD test kits are available for you and your primary-school aged children by collection from COVID test centres or pharmacies, or delivery by ordering online. More information can be found at: [www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested/pages/no-covid-symptoms](http://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested/pages/no-covid-symptoms).
  + Please ensure that all test results, whether positive, negative or void, are recorded on the online portal at: [www.covidtest.scot](http://www.covidtest.scot) OR by phoning 119.
  + Lateral flow tests should not be undertaken if an individual has tested positive for coronavirus in the last 90 days.
* Arrange vaccination as soon as possible, if you or anyone eligible in your family have not yet been vaccinated. Information can be found at [www.nhsinform.scot/covid-19-vaccine](http://www.nhsinform.scot/covid-19-vaccine). Vaccination is our best defence against COVID-19 causing anyone to become seriously unwell.
* Wear a face covering in line with guidance, keep your distance, keep rooms ventilated, and wash your hands with soap and water regularly.

**What to do if you or your child develop symptoms**

If you or your child develop a new continuous cough, or high temperature, or a loss of/ change in sense of taste or smell, your child must not come to school. The symptomatic person should arrange a PCR test as soon as possible, and the whole household should stay at home until the test result comes back.

PCR tests can be arranged at [**www.nhsinform.scot**](http://www.nhsinform.scot)at your nearest COVID-19 test site. There are drive-through, walk-through and mobile testing units across Scotland which are open from 8-am until 8pm, 7 days a week. A full list of sites can be found at [**Gov.Scot**](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested/pages/covid-symptoms/) or go to [**COVID Testing (nhsgrampian.org)**](https://www.nhsgrampian.org/covid-19/covid-testing/)

Further information on testing and self-isolation can be found at [**www.nhsinform.scot**](http://www.nhsinform.scot)

Please continue to take care.

Kindest regards

**Margaret M. Ferguson**

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Aberdeenshire Council Education and Children’s Services



**‘Being the best we can be’**

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