Dear Parents/Carers

We are experiencing a spike in COVID cases in our school community this week, amongst other illnesses. We have a significant number of pupils and staff currently absent.  Given the high number of staff absent across Aberdeenshire, finding supply teachers and Pupil Support Assistants is extremely challenging.  Please be advised we may find ourselves in the position of remote learning for some classes going forward.  March 21st might herald the end of Legal Restrictions in Scotland but unfortunately this date does not mark the end of COVID.

**As always……**If your child is unwell, 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.

Please refer to the **NHS Self-Isolation Flowchart** previously shared.  Thank you for regularly testing your children to detect asymptomatic cases and for keeping a close eye on any changes in your child’s health and testing accordingly. Please remember for symptomatic cases please arrange a PCR and isolate pending results.  LFD is for asymptomatic testing.

**Red Nose Day**……On Friday 18th March we are taking part in Red Nose Day. This year we are supporting Comic Relief and The Larder & Covid Support Portlethen & Surrounding Areas. This date will be a ‘Dress as you please’ day and pupils are invited to donate what they can and/or to donate an item of food for The Larder. In the past we have suggested a £1 donation however we are aware that everyone has been affected by recent events in one way or another and we genuinely do not want to add to anyone’s financial pressures, so ***please*** only give what, and if, you can.

At this point, The Larder are most in need of the following items although any food and/or toiletries are appreciated. (Dried or tinned foods ideally please for handling and transportation reasons.)

* Tins of soup – particularly tomato and chicken noodle
* Jars of pasta sauce and curry sauce
* Tinned vegetables
* Tinned meat – such as hot dogs and meatballs
* Pot noodles and other pasta/noodle packets
* Tinned puddings
* Biscuits/crisps
* Cleaning products
* Deodorant

**Dec Ukrainian Appeal**……The recent events in Ukraine have rightly seen many people here want to help those who need assistance in the ever-worsening humanitarian crisis.  In order to speed up the emergency response, schools and communities across Aberdeenshire can contribute by raising funds for the DEC Ukrainian appealAs previously shared, please find link below to the DEC website: <https://donation.dec.org.uk/ukraine-humanitarian-appeal>

Also previously shared, please find below a link to resources which have been uploaded to the Educational Psychology Service website to support discussions with children and young people who may have **questions or anxieties about the ongoing situation in Ukraine:**

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/as/aberdeenshireeps/resources-to-support-discussions-about-events-in-ukraine/>

Thank you for your continued support.

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

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**‘Being the best we can be’**

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