Dear Parents/Carers

I hope this finds you all well!

As previously shared in my Friday update 10th December 2021……**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 but will instead be closed on Thursday 2nd & Friday 3rd June.**  This change was also reflected in the ‘Dates for your Diary’ in my end of term April Newsletter.  School calendar dates are also readily available on our website.

**From End April - Transition to steady state - move from population symptomatic testing to testing for clinical care, surveillance and outbreak response**

* Move from population level symptomatic testing to targeted testing for clinical care.
* Groups eligible for testing to support clinical care will access tests through the home order channel.
* General public will no longer be advised to seek a test if symptomatic – at this stage we will move instead to general public health guidance to stay at home if unwell.
* Test sites will close at the end of April.
* Population level contact tracing, isolation and support will end and we will stop using the Protect Scotland proximity contact tracing app (but retain it for future use if required).
* Surveillance and contingency infrastructure for outbreak response will remain in place.
* Ongoing routine asymptomatic testing in health and social care workforces will continue – with this kept under regular clinical review.
* Anyone visiting a care home or hospital will still be advised to do a lateral flow test in advance - though this will be kept under regular clinical review.

Please also refer to the letter issued to Parents/Carers earlier today from Jason Leitch, National Clinical Director.

Unfortunately, diseases other than COVID are readily available, and we currently have a number of pupils absent with upset tummies, diarrhoea and vomiting.  **Norovirus**, sometimes referred to as the **winter vomiting bug**, is the most common cause of gastrointestinal outbreaks and can occur in the community-schools and nurseries in particular, especially at this time of year. Health Protection colleagues have asked us to highlight that cases of Norovirus are currently on the up!

**What are the symptoms?**

The symptoms caused by noroviruses are usually a sudden onset of non-bloody, watery **diarrhoea and/or vomiting** which can be projectile, usually lasting 1-2 days.  Other symptoms may include abdominal cramps, muscle aches, headache, a feeling of weakness and a slightly raised temperature.  Staff/pupils can become symptom free then relapse with more symptoms a few days later.  Norovirus infection can occur throughout the year but is **most common from mid-October to April. The virus is highly contagious;** therefore,isolation is key in stopping the spread of infection by limiting the contact between sick staff/pupils and those who could contract the illness.  Staff/pupils who are sick should stay home from school until they have recovered.

Further information regarding preventing the spread of infection can be found on our website under the tab InformationàHealthcare & Medical with a link to: <https://fishermoss.aberdeenshire.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Norovirus-Managing-Gastrointestinal-Infection-in-Schools.docx>

**As always……**the big message from our Health Protection colleagues is…**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.  For **vomiting and/or diarrhoea**, pupils should remain at home **for at least 48 hours after symptoms have passed.**

**Youth Music Initiative-Song Writing Club**

Musicians Adam Ross, Jenny Sturgeon and Grant Anderson are running a 4-day ‘Songwriting Club’ in the summer holidays for 9-13 year olds. Welcome to all levels of experience, you don’t need to play or bring an instrument but if you do please take it along. Spaces are limited to 8 participants each week.  Venues include Crathes Castle - 9th to 12th August and Aden Country Park - 15th to 18th August.  The workshops run 10.30 am - 2.30 pm each day (lunch is included) All **interest/queries to** [**Music.adamross@gmail.com**](mailto:Music.adamross@gmail.com)

**Newtonhill Pipe Band**

Newtonhill Pipe Band would welcome new members!  The pipe band meets in Portlethen Academy on Tuesdays during term time from 7pm! Timings are 7-7.30 for early beginners, and as folk progress they stay on – more experienced up to 9.30 pm.  They teach piping and drumming from ages 6/7 and have professional tutors as well as senior band members teaching. Anyone interested is encouraged to come along and meet/ see us and sit in for a few weeks/ try it out.  If you are interested, please contact Domhnull McLennan, Pipe Major Newtonhill Pipe Band on 07889 106527.  Newtonhill Pipe Band is a Scottish Charity SCO 41533

**Aberdeenshire Council Parent Survey - have your say in shaping Parental Engagement in Aberdeenshire**

Parents and carers are by far the most important inﬂuence on children’s lives. We would like you to share your views with us about your child's school, and to give you an opportunity to reﬂect on the last two years including the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic. We will use your responses to plan our next steps in improving our work with families and in developing our new strategy and action plan on Parental Engagement. The survey link is below. It will be open from 25 April - 20 May 2022.

<https://forms.office.com/r/P18tT5ga2G>.

If you would prefer to have a paper copy of the survey posted to you, please email [christine.mclennan@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:christine.mclennan@aberdeenshire.gov.uk).

Finally, **Portlethen Parish Church** are holding a ‘**Messy Church’** event Saturday 7th May 3-5pm in **Portlethen Church Hall**.  Advance notice of a fun afternoon with arts, crafts, music and storytelling followed by a yummy supper! They hope some families from Fishermoss School will be able to join.

Wishing you all a lovely weekend!

Kindest regards

**Margaret M. Ferguson**

**Head Teacher**

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Aberdeenshire Council Education and Children’s Services

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**‘Being the best we can be’**

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