

21 December 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

Scottish Government Announcement Saturday 19 December 2020 – Implications for School

As you will be aware the First Minister has announced various new measures to suppress the spread of COVID-19. The basics of this for schools are:

- for the majority of pupils, the holiday period is being extended until 11th January. Starting on that date, learning will be online until at least 18th January
- from 5 January 2021 school will be open for a limited number of children of key workers – such as nurses in our hospitals. Schools will also open for the most vulnerable children
- Portlethen Academy currently intends using 5 January to establish how many young people fall into these groups so that we can communicate with parents and plan provision from 6 January. We will issue further detail as it is available
- all teachers will also return to work as scheduled and as planned. This may be on site or online and will be agreed with staff
- after 18 January, assuming the virus is under control, the aim is to reopen schools fully.

In all the above we do not yet have the fine detail and we are working with the Director of Education and his team to get clarity and to establish how all of this will work in practice. Much of this detail will emerge in the next few days and I know the Director aims to communicate with parents, young people and staff later this week. Further details will also be worked on by the central Aberdeenshire team over the holiday period and these will be communicated to all when available.

Senior Phase pupils and SQA Assessment Diet

As you may be aware our January assessment diet was scheduled to begin on Monday 11 January, and this will not now be possible. Our senior leadership team met today and are considering options; however, we will need to wait for advice from Aberdeenshire and the Scottish Qualifications Authority prior to deciding on the most suitable approach. We know young people have been focused on the Assessment Diet and will be anxious and concerned. We will provide detail as soon as we can, in the interim, we would encourage all young people to continue preparing for assessment of the work they have completed in their courses to date.

Health and Wellbeing

We are conscious that the ongoing certainty and lack of clarity is very unsettling for all. The resilience and attitude of our young people has been quite remarkable; however, we are aware that the latest announcement creates significant further pressures. As we are

not in school, and able to provide support in person, we refer you to the following links on our website that signpost support options.

[Portlethen-Academy-Resilience-Support-Information-1.pdf](#)

[Health-Well-being-Re-connect.pdf \(portlethenacademy.aberdeenshire.sch.uk\)](#)

In conclusion, we are aware that you will have many questions that we cannot currently answer. We wish to assure you we will provide as much clarity as we can when detail emerges. In the meantime, we wish to thank you for your ongoing support and understanding.

Please have a happy and safe festive season.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Neil Morrison', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Neil Morrison

Head Teacher