



16 June 2020

Aberdeenshire Council
Pupil Support Staff

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Dear Colleague

Covid-19 Child Care Provision: Update

I write to update you regarding the Aberdeenshire Council response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Currently we are providing child care for over 400 children of key workers and vulnerable children across 17 Hubs, 4 special schools and a number of satellite Hub settings.

I wrote to you in April to acknowledge the vital role of pupil support staff in the operation of these critical activities in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. I also asked you to be as flexible as possible to allow the Council's response to Covid-19 to be as effective as possible. I also recognise many of you have continued to work from home supporting school pupils with their learning and continuing with your own personal professional development.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the work you have done during these difficult times ensuring the success of our response in Aberdeenshire.

As you will be aware the Scottish Government have announced that schools will re-open for pupils on 11 August 2020, and that pupils will be offered blended learning comprising of school-based learning and remote learning at home. We will continue to engage with you and provide relevant information on this return to school earlier than planned and what this means in practice as the situation becomes clearer.

You will also be aware that the Scottish Government requires the ongoing provision of child care for key workers over the summer holidays and into the new school session for as long as children are only attending school on a part-time basis.

You will appreciate the significant challenge this presents for the Council with a specific challenge in the staffing of both our schools and child care provisions.

Over the summer holidays the Hubs will be in a reduced number of settings across Aberdeenshire, which are to be confirmed, and operate during the hours of 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m., Monday to Friday from 29 June 2020 to 7 August 2020. Therefore, I am writing to you to ask of your availability to work at these times and where possible outside your contracted cluster. This is to ensure that we can continue to provide the critical services required of us.



As you are employed on a term time basis, any additional hours that you choose to work during the summer holiday period, i.e. from 6 July 2020 to 7 August 2020, should be claimed by timesheet which will attract holiday pay. In offering and agreeing any additional hours, your line manager will consider and ensure that you take the full holiday entitlement accrued in your term time hours. This may require re-allocating the designated holiday weeks to an alternative time during the summer holiday period.

We will be asking you if you can work over the summer period between 29 June 2020 and 7 August 2020:

- In the child care Hub provision or in the provision for vulnerable children (when this is outwith the Hub setting).
- Across the extended hours (9-hour shift (09.00-17.00) and across 5 days per week (Monday-Friday)

We will also be asking for your availability from 11 August 2020 to support either the school-based learning and/or the provision of child care for key workers.

If you are asked to work and are able to travel outside your cluster you may be entitled to claim excess travel expenses in line with the Council's Travel and Subsistence procedure.

The following link will take you to a Microsoft Form - <https://bit.ly/3qtUi5R>. We ask that you complete this regarding your availability to work during a 5-day week over the summer period, and your availability beyond, as a matter of priority to allow planning and confirmation of staffing arrangements. The Microsoft Form will ask you to share:

- Your personal details
- Your Covid-19 status
- Your availability to work (across a 5-day week)
- Your own child care requirements
- Your relevant skills and training
- Your skills/ resources for home-based working

I understand that we are all facing our own challenges in this difficult time and we will be sensitive to your personal and family circumstances.

However, I must ask for your ongoing support and cooperation as we need to ensure we mobilise our workforce to ensure we are keeping Aberdeenshire's children and young people at the heart of our response to the Covid-19 crisis.

I will also write to you again to provide further information and guidance about our planning for returning to school and the implications for you as valued colleagues.

Any queries regarding the content of this letter should be raised with your line manager in the first instance.

Kind regards



Vincent A Docherty
Head of Education