

16 June 2020

Aberdeenshire Council
Teachers

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Dear Colleague

Covid-19 Child Care Provision: Update

I write to update you regarding the Aberdeenshire Council/Education and Children's response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Currently we are providing access for Aberdeenshire's children and young people to a quality remote learning offer. We are also 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 2020 to acknowledge the vital role of the teaching professional 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 all of 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. We fully recognise the implication for the teaching profession in the provision of blended learning and teachers will be deployed in providing this.

In order to plan ahead we need to understand the availability of our teaching staff to deliver the blended learning from August 2020 and also to capture any interest in teaching staff volunteering in the child care hubs over the summer period.

The following link will take you to a Microsoft Form - <https://bit.ly/3gtUi5R>. We ask you complete this as a matter of priority to allow planning and confirmation of staffing arrangements for blended learning from August 2020.

If you wish to volunteer to work over the summer period between 6 July 2020 and 7 August 2020 you can use the same Microsoft Form to share any availability.

The Microsoft Form asks you to share:

- Your personal details
- Your Covid-19 status
- Your availability to work
- 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