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19 March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

### **COVID-19**

I appreciate that this is a challenging and unsettling time for our children, young people and families across Aberdeenshire and indeed beyond. I would like to take this opportunity to reassure you that we are following the latest advice and guidance from our colleagues in Scottish Government, Public Health Scotland and NHS Grampian in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic. I would also like to thank my colleagues in schools across Aberdeenshire for how they have responded in recent days and to parents and carers for their understanding.

On Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March the First Minister announced that schools across Scotland will close from Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March. Clearly, this will raise many questions which we will be working through in the coming days and weeks as the situation is constantly evolving.

I wish to highlight the following points in particular:

- Regular updates in relation to Covid-19 and guidance can be accessed here:

<https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/featured-items/coronavirus-covid-19/>

<https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/>

<http://www.nhsinform.scot/coronavirus>

<https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/93577.html>

- The service will be working with schools to ensure relevant learning activities and online learning resources can be accessed by learners over the coming days and weeks, with priority being given to SQA candidates. I am aware that some schools have already issued specific information and resources to support home learning.
- We will assess the current situation on a daily basis over the coming weeks and months to consider how, when and where we can best support this dynamic situation in our diverse communities across Aberdeenshire.
- We will work to look at how we continue to provide free school meals to eligible young people at this time.
- We will provide regular updates to parents/carers via our usual communication channels, including social media and through our schools to keep parents aware of what is happening and next steps.

Clearly, all of this will take time, but we will update you as regularly as we can. These are exceptional and very challenging and rapidly changing, circumstances and I would like to thank all Aberdeenshire parents for your ongoing support and patience in this matter.

Yours sincerely



**Laurence Findlay**  
**Director of Education & Children's Services**