Latest Information

01.04.2020

Dear Parents

It has been a very unusual and challenging time in all our lives. I hope that you and your family are well, safe and managing to adjust to the current situation with everything that this brings. If you do need support and think that Rhynie School may be able to help, please do get in touch with us.

E-mail is the best way at present, but you can also leave a voicemail message on the school answerphone which is being monitored remotely.

rhynie.sch@aberdeenshire.gov.uk / 01464 635105

Based around the on-going local and national advice and updates, please see below the latest arrangements being put in place following the lock-down announcement. The information and procedures below are to ensure that the children of key workers have continued access to all-age childcare to allow you, their parents, to participate in the national response to the Covid-19 virus outbreak.

**Arrangements below will be in place from Monday 30th March 2020**

In Aberdeenshire, only designated Hub schools (see the end of this letter for the list) will remain partially open for this purpose. Advice from the Scottish Government is to keep the openings of establishments and the number of people in them to an absolute minimum required in order to support virus control. These are the current arrangements; however, you will understand that this could be subject to change as the COVID-19 situation progresses.

During the Easter Break, Aberdeenshire is planning to offer a combination of school Hubs together with private and third sector providers of childcare, including childminders, to deliver childcare to key workers.

**This plan is for the following children and young people in communities only:**

**Therefore, all other children should not attend.**

This coming week, children of **Category 1** key workers will be able to attend Insch School for all aged childcare between 9am – 3pm.

It should be viewed as a last resort, however, in order to restrict travel and social interaction in society.

Aberdeenshire Council has now set up a website page for families to use to register their requirements. Please find below a link to the Aberdeenshire Council website for key workers to complete a request form to register the need for childcare. This form will help the Council assess the need of provision in this area. It is to be completed by any parents and carers who consider themselves to be Category 1, 2 or 3 key workers who would have difficulties with sourcing childcare elsewhere.

<https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/schools/schools-covid-19/keyworkers-form-covid-19/>

All information regarding this childcare provision is explained here. It will take your through the definition of the three keyworker categories. A useful flowchart that clearly shows who is eligible and who is not can be viewed using the link below:

<https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/media/25155/key-worker-childcare-flowchart.pdf>

This is an information gathering exercise in the first instance and that parents/carers will be notified by the central Council team if places are to be granted and to which hub school facility.

This may be expanded into other Key Worker categories after this coming week. More information will be provided on this following the review of numbers and operational capacity over the coming days and further national advice.

**The list of schools that are open for Keyworker 1 childcare**

**from Monday 30 March 2020 is:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Cluster** | **Academies:****all closed** | **Primary: Childcare** |
| Aboyne |  | Aboyne Primary School |
| Alford |  | Alford Primary School |
| Banchory |  | Hill of Banchory School |
| Banff |  | Banff Primary School |
| Ellon |  | Balmedie School |
| Fraserburgh |  | St Andrews School |
| Huntly |  | Insch Primary School |
| Inverurie |  | Uryside School |
| Kemnay |  | Kintore School |
| Laurencekirk |  | Laurencekirk Primary School |
| Meldrum |  | Meldrum Primary School |
| Mintlaw |  | Mintlaw School |
| Peterhead |  | Dales Park School |
| Portlethen |  | HIllside School |
| Stonehaven |  | Mill O’ Forrest School |
| Turriff |  | Turriff Primary School |
| Westhill  |  | Westhill Primary School |

Any queries should be directed to Insch school. Many thanks for your understanding at this time.

**Free School Meal Entitlement**

All families eligible to receive statutory free school meals will now receive a payment to cover the cost of these (£12.50 per child, per week). Payments will be sent in four-weekly instalments and the first is planned to reach families this coming week beginning 30th March.

All eligible families should have received an initial communication from the Council regarding this. Please contact Aberdeenshire Council’s Free School Meals and School Clothing Grants Team if you would like support or any further information around this or if you feel that due to a change in your circumstances you are now eligible.

**Home Learning:**

We do understand that it is very challenging to maintain learning in the traditional sense that we are used to during a time of school closure. There will be great variations from household to household in the availability of technology and devices. There is a huge international and national demand on Microsoft, Glow and other platforms. This has led to delays and time lags from teachers uploading materials to you being able to see and access them at home. We are working as fast the technology allows us to! We must also have a healthy balance between screen time and physical exercise as well as making time for our emotional health and wellbeing.

Simply do the best you can with what you have available 😊. If learning and/or trying to complete school activities becomes an issue, then please stop and reset.

Remember, there are other life skills that can be taught at this time too: cooking and baking; how to load the dishwasher; gardening; keeping the house clean; and any other imaginative ways you can make use of your home setting!