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Head Teacher: Neil Hendry B.Ed (Hons)

NH/AJ

20<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

### **School building closure and education continuity in response to COVID-19 as of Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

As you will be aware, the Scottish Government announced this week that all school buildings, including Lochside Academy, will close for normal school business at the end of the school day on **Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020** as part of the Scottish Government's response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The health and wellbeing of our young people, staff, parents/carers and the wider community requires this action and I am fully aware of the anxiety, uncertainty and questions that many of you have because of the Government's announcement. As a consequence, I am writing to answer many of these questions and inform you about how teaching, learning, assessment and support for Lochside Academy pupils will continue in the weeks and possibly months ahead.

#### **1. Communication**

- Further communication from Lochside Academy will be sent only by email, group-call text messages and postings on school website. Our social media platforms will not be used as a tool for communication.
- Parents/Carers requiring communicating with the school must only email [LochsideAcademy@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:LochsideAcademy@aberdeencity.gov.uk) Our social media platforms will not be monitored therefore do not ask any questions via Facebook or Twitter as these will not be responded to.

#### **2. Home Learning, Teaching and Assessment for senior phase pupils (S1, S2 & S3)**

- Our school staff will provide educational continuity in a variety of ways for pupils by:
  - a. Distance learning
  - b. Setting weekly learning tasks
  - c. Using Google Classroom (see separate letter)
  - d. Directing pupils to using other online learning platforms
- For some pupils, accessing learning electronically is not possible and we have created paper learning packs that have been handed to pupils where requested or can be collected from school at appropriate times.
- At the start of each week, you will be sent a communication that indicates the learning tasks that should be undertaken by your child. Please ensure that your child is keeping up to date with learning provided via these distance learning approaches.
- The time your child spends on each subject should be equivalent to their current timetable.
- There will be no access to the school building for S1, S2 or S3 pupils in line with public health advice.

### **Support for young people requiring free school meals**

The need to continue to support young people who rely on school for meals continues. Parents/carers requiring free school meals for their child have been sent a communication from Aberdeen City Council which requires the parent/carer to complete a Google Form to access their entitlement. The Google Form should be completed as soon as possible.

On completion and acceptance of this Google Form, free school meals will be available for collection as follows:

- Children staying in Cove and Kincorth: collect free school meal from Abbotswell School.
- Children staying in Torry: collect free school meal from Tullos School.

### **Support for young people requiring additional support**

If a pupil has a school concern that in a normal school day they would require visiting their Guidance Teacher, they are welcome to use their school email address in Google during school hours and contact their Guidance Teacher by email. Their Guidance Teacher will reply to their email as soon as possible.

### **The weeks and months ahead**

For the avoidance of any doubt, **term dates have not changed** and for the majority of young people **learning and teaching will continue remotely**, supported by school staff who are well and able to continue working.

I would like to place on record my sincere appreciation for the extraordinary work that Lochside Academy staff have demonstrated in these unprecedented times to support school pupils with their learning and health and wellbeing. I would also like to place on record my sincere gratitude for the messages of encouragement and understanding from parents/carers who have supported the school as we have prepared in this changing situation – thank you!

In the weeks and months ahead, supporting and educating our young people continues, albeit in different ways for different groups of children. I understand that this, for some, will be an unsettling time, therefore please do not hesitate to contact the school using the email address provided if you have a question specific to Lochside Academy.

In the interim period until the school opens again for normal business can I, on behalf of the school staff, wish that you and your family keep well and continue to be guided by public health advice for your health and wellbeing

Yours sincerely



N Hendry  
Head Teacher