

Thu 20/08/2020 17:11

Dear Colleagues

School Trip Guidance for the Autumn Term

Last week saw more updated guidance published for schools as they reopen. Northern Ireland has provided no specific advice, but in England, Wales and Scotland the advice is identical: non-residential trips are allowed but residential are still advised against. Whilst this was expected, a concern for the sector is that there is no sign as to when this might change and not even a date has been published for when the guidance will be reviewed. Therefore we have no indication as to whether there are plans to look at changing the advice after half term or whether the restrictions are likely to continue until at least the spring term. This uncertainty may well impact on bookings. Therefore we will be going all out with our day, blended and digital learning offer to schools, focussing on what we can do, rather than what we can't. As I said last week this is consistent with the planning assumptions we made.

Future FSC

We are putting together a comprehensive consultation pack that will set out the rationale behind the proposals along with some more background information. In putting this together we are trying to anticipate the questions that staff are likely to ask and provide the kind of information that we hope you will find helpful. The aim is to provide a transparent "go to" document with all the information in one place for everyone across FSC to see at the same time.

When the document is available, the Q&As can be quickly updated as and when further questions arise. You will be able to send your questions in, but I'd ask that you hold off from emailing HR until after the document is published and you have had a chance to read it and discuss it with your staff reps.

Updated Holiday and Travel Advice for Staff

If, like me, your holiday and travel plans have been caught up in the rapidly changing [quarantine rules](#), HR have updated the [Coronavirus FAQs](#) for staff and page 5 has guidance for those of you planning to travel abroad and also for those who need to self-isolate on return.

Talking of sticking to the rules, I've mentioned in my [previous emails](#) the importance of everyone doing the Covid Secure Training so if you haven't got round to it yet, please do so as soon as possible.

COVID-19 Vaccine Trials

I know that many staff have been involved in all sorts of aspects of the national effort to combat Covid-19 from testing apps to donating blood so I thought I would flag up this opportunity for those that might be interested and able to join the 100,000 people who have already volunteered to take part in trials to speed up a safe and effective vaccine. Information can be found on the NHS website [here](#).

News from across FSC

The Certified Location inspector for Castle Head's caravan site not only approved the works, but he liked it so much that he stayed for 4 days. Don't forget to send me your good news and nominations for a special mention because so much good work goes on unnoticed.

This week we say au revoir to Janine Maddison who is leaving to take up a PhD that seems to have been designed for her. The focus is on evaluating benefits of virtual fieldwork experiences for enhancing fieldwork in the biosciences. The position combines research and teaching in both the lab and field so she will still get the face to face contact with students that she so enjoys. This also means that she will be popping up as a customer in at least one FSC centre. Janine will be much closer to her family in Newcastle, but her many friends and colleagues at FSC will miss her.

Keep well and stay safe

Mark