

Thu 27/08/2020 14:46

Dear Colleagues

### **Covid-19 Staff Health, Safety and Wellbeing Survey**

As I am now quarantined and in the midst of 14 days of self-isolation in Market Drayton, I'm very conscious that the "temporary" changes to work and life are highly likely to go on for some time in various forms. With this in mind and given that it is many months since the start of lockdown I want to find out how staff are feeling and what else can be done to make sure that you feel safe and supported as business starts to return in its various forms. Whether you are still on furlough or back at work, your response to the pandemic has been incredible, but I do not want to take that for granted. This situation is a long haul and it can take its toll on all of us. I regularly receive feedback from staff but please take a few moments to [fill in this survey](#) which I hope will give us a much more comprehensive picture of how everyone is feeling. The deadline is Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September 5pm and the results will be discussed at the following Wednesday C-OPT meeting.

### **Face coverings**

As the C-OPT group anticipated, the government advice on face coverings has changed and it is becoming normalised for people to wear them in more places. As with most Covid-19 guidance there are differences across the UK. However it is likely that these separate strands will come together resulting in a growing expectation that face masks will be worn in indoor communal areas. Whilst social distancing, hand and respiratory hygiene are still regarded as the most important actions we can take to prevent the spread of infection, face coverings can help and they also seem to offer a degree of reassurance. Therefore we are updating our OCOP and our advice on face coverings for staff and for our customers and will be asking you and our customers to wear them in certain situations. So please expect to see some changes in the next few days as the [new guidance](#) gets uploaded and managers and hostel team leaders have a chance to implement it.

The variations of the national guidance did provide one of the week's lighter moments with the Scottish government's helpful advice that a home-made face covering should be one through which you can breathe!

Also uploaded this week is the operating guidance for dealing with [local lockdown](#). You can find this and the other useful documents relating to FSC's response to Covid [here](#).

### **Sources of reliable science**

FSC works in partnership with a number of organisations, one of which is the [Royal Society of Biology](#). I receive a regular bulletin from them and there are some good, science based articles on Covid-19 among other areas of interest including policy, research and the teaching of biology and schools and universities. You can subscribe yourself, but if staff wanted to have more of this type of information on the staff website, I would be interested to hear your views.

### **Farewell to Maggie Furmanek**

FSC's Financial controller leaves today. She and her laugh will be missed by her many friends and colleagues. Maggie's work has played a vital role in keeping FSC afloat in recent months. Sorting out FSC's complex Terms and Conditions just before Covid-19 hit put us in a much better position to weather the storm. She has been an outstanding member of the C-OPT group offering calm, wise advice and dealing with our insurance company. As one member of the team put it "Maggie always got things right". Her farewell do is being postponed until such time as people can meet up.

### **Special mentions this week**

Over the past few weeks education colleagues from across FSC have been working exceptionally hard on the Digital and Outreach education resources. Their hard work and dedication to this project has been incredible. As a team many new skills have been learned from script/storyboard writing, filming, presenting to camera, video editing and building these into VLE courses alongside the existing skills of resource development and lesson plan writing. As we draw to a close on the project and complete the final tweaks and amendments to these new products, I would like to say a huge thank you for this high-quality work, which will help FSC retain customers over the coming months and broaden our reach to a larger and wider audience.

Yesterday was pay day and I want to thank the payroll staff for the extra work and hours that have been put in to get it right each month. With frequent changes to staff working hours it has become a very complex operation.

### **Customer comments**

“Catriona, housekeeper at Millport, gave a great welcome last week as she did to the other guests. With limited staff she keeps the centre immaculately clean, very COVID secure, responds to small issues so quickly, and is so passionate about the centre and its community links too. In fact the whole centre deserve special mention because they are hosting the care home residents after the electrical fault. Residents have been warmly welcomed and Alex and Co have created an ideal bubble arrangement for day and night.”

“We have had such an amazing week. I was genuinely sorry to leave. I’ve stayed in a lot of hotels, b&bs and hostels and there is always something wrong whether it be the room, facilities or the staff there is always something you can pick fault at if you want to but everything about Juniper Hall was amazing. You guys are all so friendly and I loved that the most... thank you so much for making this week so special. After everything with covid 19 this was the break we needed, and you really made it special”

### **Curious about Nature**

FSC President Tim Burt has given a [short interview](#) about the book Curious about Nature, a passion for fieldwork that he co-authored with previous FSC Chair Des Thompson. As Tim’s first memory of fieldwork was being told to measure the width of a main road outside the school, he was fortunate that it wasn’t his last!

Keep well and stay safe

Mark