

Thu 17/09/2020 11:17

Dear Colleagues,

### **Ending of Furlough**

The UK government's insistence that it will not extend the furlough scheme has put the issue firmly in the news. I know that it will be preying on the minds of many of you, and that the uncertainty is very stressful. We will be discussing it again in the next SLT meeting although, as I am sure you recognise, the situation is still very uncertain. The 'rule of six', Stay with Us, our new education offer and even any changes in the guidance for schools are just some of the factors impacting on this fast changing situation, but we will let you know as soon as we have something to report on.

### **Getting the Guidance Changed**

Telling the chancellor of the Exchequer and the Education Ministers for Wales and Scotland that changing the guidance on residentials was a "no brainer" wasn't a phrase that I ever expected to use in my professional career but we live in strange times, the matter is urgent and I felt the need to be blunt. The sector continues its campaign to get the increasingly daft looking guidance changed. In Scotland, the petition mentioned last week has already met its target and Liz Smith MSP has secured a debate in the Scottish Parliament. Having worked in outdoor education for many years, it will be a debate led by someone who really knows her subject. You can see more about Liz Smith, the campaign and the upcoming debate on 22<sup>nd</sup> September [here](#).

### **Infrastructure Team Update**

SLT responsibilities for FSC infrastructure has been divided between Simon Ward who will be looking after operational health & safety and Andy Pratt who will be covering property, procurement, sustainability and hospitality. Paul Alston continues as Infrastructure & Facilities Manager, reporting to Andy, and Helen providing Health & Safety support, reporting to Simon. Julie Bowen continues as Management Information Administrator. They are a small team, but without them FSC would quite literally fall over.

### **GCSE and A level Geography changes published**

As hinted at in my last update, there has been some better news regarding fieldwork from Ofqual. All of the Awarding Organisations in England are following the same guidance which is "we'd encourage you to still plan and deliver as much fieldwork as reasonably possible, to consider engaging in the enquiry process by virtual means where appropriate, and consider practising fieldwork skills in the classroom, on school grounds or in the local area.". In short this means that A level geography students will need to collect primary data for their Non Examined Assessment and there will be questions about fieldwork on the GCSE paper. This will of course add to the workload of already stretched teachers concerned about covering all the content as well as catching up. This is where FSC is so well positioned with our new education offer.

### **Live Launch Event**

FSC's launch of our new education Day, Digital and Outreach packages is on Monday 21<sup>st</sup>, 4.00 - 4.30pm. You will be able to see it on [YouTube](#) where FSC will be showcasing how we can support teachers in the coming school year. Simon Ward has also done a short presentation for the education teams which has been uploaded alongside the 'all staff' zoom meetings (see below for the link catch up).

### **Tuesday's Staff Zoom meeting**

In another hugely enjoyable and uplifting Staff Zoom on Tuesday we heard three barnstorming talks by staff from Education, Hospitality and Catering. All of the speakers effortlessly enthused about

their colleagues, their work and why it matters to them and our customers. These meetings have allowed staff to “meet” online, sometimes for the first time as Zoom allows us to put names to faces. All of the speakers highlighted the sharing of ideas across the organisation which has only increased during the pandemic. If you have missed any of the previous staff zooms, click here to catch up: <https://web.microsoftstream.com/channel/3791cf71-eebb-45fc-bc6f-a3374192d32b> and try to join us for the next one. To view, you’ll need to sign in to Office 365 with your FSC email address and password.

### **News from other organisations**

Jennie Comerford has shared this recorded webinar which she highly recommends. With the state of the environment and biodiversity in the news headlines this address by James Bevan, CEO of the Environment Agency, is timely. Hosted by UCL, you can watch the event on [YouTube](#) or [read the speech here](#). He explores the links between the health of humans and the health of the environment. In short, his points are that we can only have healthy humans if we have a healthy planet and when we damage nature we damage people too. If we look after nature, it will look after us even through this costs money, but it’s the best possible investment we could make, because the benefit/cost ratio is huge – not just in costs saved for the NHS, but in lives saved for our communities, and a future saved for our planet.

### **Special Mentions**

Sarah Nicholls, Project Manager at Orielson, is joining Milford Haven Secondary School as science teacher for the new term. We wish Sarah all the very best after joining FSC as a trainee tutor and working as Tutor and Senior Tutor before leading the team at Orielson since January 2019.

Sam Dhadwar cheered up Head Office staff by reviving the cherished tradition of the ‘Dinky’s Run’ and treating them to breakfast. I am told that Dinky’s is the greasy spoon of choice for the team due to its unrivalled ability to produce food in every possible shade of “beige”.

Keep well and stay safe

Mark