

Thu 25/11/2021 13:01

Dear Colleagues,



### **Testing Times**

I'm asking staff to keep taking Lateral Flow Tests twice a week if you do not have Covid-19 symptoms. If you do have any symptoms, please do not come into work but get a PCR test. Guidance across the UK is that you should also test if you are going to be in a higher risk situation such as a crowded or enclosed space if socialising with others particularly those with a higher risk of severe illness or if travelling to another part of the UK. Packs of tests can be ordered online here for [England](#), [Scotland](#) and [Wales](#). Covid is still having a big impact on the business and I'm encouraging all eligible staff to book your booster vaccine. If eligible you can book an appointment in [England](#) and [Scotland](#) and in Wales you will be contacted.

### **Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge**

A great bit of work was turned around this month by Centre Managers, ETLs and other staff by completing and returning the LOfC Quality Badge renewal forms. It was a really tight timescale, picked up and led by Helen Robertson. The support from everyone involved meant that the forms were all completed to a high standard. Particular thanks to Julie Bowen and Jo Harris too for collating all the past information, drafting the generic form and providing support to other Centres. We have now submitted applications for the 12 Centres who will be assessed this time round, with assessment visits planned over the winter and into next Spring.

### **Sustainability Coordinators are back**

Yesterday saw the first gathering of the SusCos who have heroically volunteered to take on this role at their centres. This will be incredibly important in delivering the  [Carbon and Nature Plan](#) and also in putting projects forward to the  [New Green Fund](#). SusCos are a welcome sign that organisational life beyond the immediate Covid crisis is starting to return.

### **Single Use Plastic Ban – possible extension to more products in England**

Politics hasn't exactly covered itself in glory recently and many I know are quite happy to leave responding to consultations to political nerds aka Joy the Policy Officer. However, I do like to flag up consultations that are likely to be of more interest to all staff and to which you can respond as an individual. [A short 12 week consultation](#) is looking at banning more single use plastics in England with a few exceptions. Do have your say and play a part in seeing a reduction in the 1.1 billion plates, the 4.25 billion pieces of cutlery, expanded polystyrene containers and balloon sticks which I hadn't realised were a thing until I read that we use 16 million each year.

### **Farewell to Jane Richmond**

Margam's Centre Manager Jane will be leaving us shortly and will be greatly missed. As a centre with a unique set of challenges, Jane is well known for dealing with everything from rustlers, intruders on site, plumbing emergencies and last summer, the demands of a film crew and attendant starlets. She worked to pull the sector in Wales together and made sure that FSC was involved in the development of the new Welsh curriculum. Above all, her passion for ensuring that learners got the best possible experience with FSC shone through even during the most difficult times. We wish her well as she starts on a new role developing ambitious plans for a large local authority to become carbon neutral fast.

Stay safe and keep well

Mark