

Ellon Academy Community Campus



Rector's News Letter October 2017

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s),

I can hardly believe that it is now almost a year since I took up post at Ellon Academy. My initial positive impressions of the school, the staff and our young people have continued and have been enhanced by getting to know the school and its community better. Ellon Academy is a school to be very proud of and despite the current challenges in Scottish education, we have continued to improve outcomes for our young people.

Just before the summer, I issued the June edition of *Elevate* magazine in which the numerous and vast array of pupil achievements were highlighted. Ellon Academy offers so many additional opportunities for young people and all of that rests on the good will of our staff who willingly give up their time at breaks, lunchtimes, after school and at times on weekends, to provide additional experiences for our learners to be able to broaden their skills. Thank you to them all. We continue to enjoy excellent achievement in examination performance with many pupils meeting and exceeding their targets and moving on to their next school year or leaving school to a positive destination.

Community Safety Event

Back in June we hosted a Community Safety Event and although only a small group of parents attended, they all agreed that it was an extremely worthwhile event providing lots of information on how we can work together to keep our young people safe in the community and on-line. We plan to offer more sessions for parents and carers at parents' evenings in the hope that many more can benefit from the expertise of our partner agencies.

New School Core Values

Having been appointed to the permanent Head Teacher post in June, I have been working hard to further establish the vision and aims of Ellon Academy. As you will be aware, we consulted widely prior to the summer in deciding upon a set of Core Values for our school and the following values have been adopted. We are working to embed pupil understanding of these values and what they mean in real life actions through assemblies, in our classrooms and in our daily interactions in school:



Respect, Responsibility, Excellence, Equality, Aspiration, Dedication and Integrity

Ellon Academy – Five Pillars of Successful Learning - The ‘Learner Mark’

We also continue to embed the Ellon Academy ‘Five Pillars of Successful Learning’ – The Learner Mark.

I have also been working with staff to ensure that we recognise hard work, commitment to learning, effort, a positive work ethic and to ensure our high expectations are met and that pupils can reach their full potential.

The Five Pillars of Successful Learning at Ellon Academy

	<u>Am I?</u>	<u>Achieved all 5</u>	<u>Achieved 4 or 3</u>	<u>Achieved 2 or 1</u>	<u>Achieved None</u>
1	Punctual	1	2	3	4
2	Prepared	1	2	3	4
3	Participating	1	2	3	4
4	Persevering	1	2	3	4
5	Progressing	1	2	3	4

Citizenship and Learning for Sustainability – Global Goals STEM Summit – September 2017

As you will be aware, Ellon Academy is a Level 2 Rights Respecting School and we are beginning the process in working towards achieving a Gold award in this area. As part of this agenda, at the end of September we planned and organised a STEM Global Goals Summit in partnership with the Montgomery Education Centre and pupils from Ellon Academy and five other secondary schools had the pleasure of presentations delivered by esteemed experts and academics.



Respect, Responsibility, Excellence, Equality, Aspiration, Dedication and Integrity

Sportscotland Gold Award – I am delighted to inform you that as a result of the dedication and hard work of our Health and Wellbeing staff and other staff who run the Ellon Academy Sports Association, that we have achieved Sportscotland’s highest Gold award. Well done to all staff and pupils involved.

Stem Ambassadors – We had also had great success in our STEM Ambassadors’ programme and we have received national recognition for our work in this area too. Well done to all involved.

Staffing at Ellon Academy - I am happy to say that we have been successful in appointing new members of teaching staff in the following departments: Art, Business Education, Drama (2 teachers), English, Maths, Modern Languages, Humanities, PE and Science. We also have welcomed Probationary Teachers in Geography/History, Maths and English. We also welcome to student teachers following the Dlite Programme in Business Education and Technology. We have one vacancy in English and one PE vacancy to fill and we hope to so early in the new term. We have also appointed the following promoted posts: Principal Teacher Mathematics Mr Richard Gatehouse and we would like to thank Mrs Pamela Macdonald for her dedication in the role of Acting PT Maths in the interim period. Also taking up new posts are Principal Teachers Wider Achievement Mrs Karin Leslie and Miss Lucy Green. Mr Stuart Bell has joined our team as Supervisory Janitor and Mrs Gosia Summers takes over as the Senior Clerical Officer when Mrs Anne Eadie retires at the end of term. I would like to thank Mrs Eadie for all her hard work and dedication to Ellon Academy.

Car Parking and Pupil Drop Off and Pick Up Safety - With the support of our parent council, on 20th September we hosted a meeting in school involving key representatives from Aberdeenshire Council to support us in addressing the concerns expressed by staff and parents/carers regarding safety issues when pupils are dropped off and picked up at school. In the interim, whilst new solutions are being explored, I reiterate to all that we must not be using the community car parking spaces, but instead please use the pupil drop off zone and follow the one-way system, to ensure pupil safety at all times. You will see cones set out in the mornings to emphasise that the parking spaces should not be used so that cars are not reversing into pupils alighting in the drop off zone. Thank you for your continued support. Pupil safety is our highest priority.

New procedures for Latecoming

From Mon 30th October, pupils who are late for school during registration will be sent to reception by their register teachers to sign in and collect a late slip. Similarly, pupils who are late for school at any time during the school day after registration, should come to reception and collect a late slip from office staff. We are aware that pupils can be late for school for a variety of genuine reasons and we can give them their late slip at reception, rather than sending them to the Time Out room which has been the practice up until now. We feel that going to Time Out for late coming may give the wrong impression, especially for those who are genuinely late and may be embarrassing for some young people. This change also helps support our admin staff who can process all latecoming data in one place.



Information for Parents/Carers

Please see the school Website and Facebook page for information on Adverse Weather/Storm Closures.



Dress down/up day bring £1 (Halloween Theme)

Term 1 ends on Friday 13th October 2017

New Terms begins on Monday 30th October 2017

Senior Phase Tracking progress week beginning 30th October 2017

Shakespeare Festival – Thursday 2nd November 2017

S4 Mock Interviews – week beginning 6th November 2017

S5 Safe Drive, Stay Alive – Aberdeen Beach Ballroom – Tues 7th November 2017

UKMT Senior Maths Challenge – Tuesday 7th November 2017

S1 Parents Evening (Pastoral) – Wednesday 8th November 2017

S3 Entrepreneurship Day – Wed 8th November 2017

Armistice assemblies – Friday 10th November 2017

In-Service Days – Mon 13th and Tues 14th November 2017

Youth Philanthropy Finals – Wednesday 15th November 2017

Family Learning Evening 6.00pm Wednesday 29th November for S3/S4/S5/S6 Parents – Changes to SQA National Qualifications/Scholar Presentations and Faculty Curriculum stalls

S4 Parents' Evening - Tues 5th December 2017

S5/6 Parents' Evening – Mon 11th December 2017

Music for Christmas Concert – Wed 20th December 2017

Dress as you please day – Thurs 21st December 2017

Christmas services – Fri 22nd December 2017



On behalf of the staff and pupils of Ellon Academy, I wish you and your families our warmest wishes for the autumn season and hope that if you are able to get a break during the October holidays, that you have a peaceful and restful time.

Yours sincerely,

Pauline Buchan

Rector