



Personal Best

Lawrence Findlay
Director of Education, Learning & Leisure

Pauline Buchan MSc, SQH, BMus Ed Hons,
Dip T Mus, LTCL, PGDE
Rector
Ellon Academy Community Campus
Kellie Pearl Way
ELLON AB41 8LF

Telephone: 01358 281150

Tuesday 17th March 2020

Dear parents and carers,

Coronavirus/COVID-19 Information and Up-date 17.3.20

As you will have noted from the media, the situation regarding COVID-19 continues to evolve rapidly. Prime Minister and First Ministers' statements are now likely to take place daily, as is advice and guidance from Aberdeenshire Council. Please be assured that as these announcements are made, we will review our guidance and communications to parents and carers to ensure they are as up to date as possible. The guidance for schools received at 9.00pm last night was as follows:

"We are asking all schools to postpone or cancel non-essential meetings, activities and events planned for between tomorrow (Tues 17.3.20) and the Easter break. This list is not exhaustive, and schools are asked to exercise their professional judgement". The **red font** refers specifically to Ellon Academy:

For schools:

- **Parents evenings and Parent Council meetings (None scheduled for Ellon Academy prior to Easter)**
- **Assemblies (School assemblies are cancelled until further notice)**
- **Ellon Academy's planned Mental Health Week (23.3.20 – 27.3.20) is now cancelled as some providers are no longer able to support**
- **Prizegivings and Award Ceremonies (Ellon Academy Prizegiving on Mon 30.3.20 – postponed)**
- **School fetes and fayres (None scheduled for Ellon Academy prior to Easter)**
- **Concerts (school and music) (Music for Spring Concert on Wed 1st April – cancelled)**
- **Extra-curricular activities (All extra-curricular activities postponed until after Easter and potentially beyond)**
- **All non-essential trips and excursions (All planned trips and excursions are cancelled for the time being and also the Wider Achievement Programme for S1/S2 now cancelled)**
- **All school-based Work-Related Learning placements are now cancelled, and pupils should attend school where alternative provision has been arranged**
- **NESCOL college course face-to-face delivery has been suspended, and pupils should attend school where alternative provision has been arranged**

There is no plan to close schools in Scotland so far. With the measures above, we are working as normal, focussing on learning and teaching, without extra-curricular activities and trips which are deemed as non-essential. However, there are already families who are opting to self-isolate for a variety of reasons, so staff have been and still are working very hard to ensure that schoolwork, resources and materials are accessible on-line, via Ellon Academy's Glow page, for absent pupils to use. Owing to the increasing numbers of absent pupils, we cannot realistically deal with each individual request for work to be sent home. Therefore, we ask all parents who have self-isolated their children to encourage them to access schoolwork online. Here are some helpful website links for senior phase pupils (S4/5/6):

Ellon Academy Glow page - <https://sts.platform.rmunify.com/Account/SignIn/glow>

<https://scholar.hw.ac.uk/>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/levels/z6gw2hv>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/levels/zkdqxn>

School closures:

Closing the school is **not** at the discretion of Head Teachers. If the Scottish Government decides that schools should close in the future, pupils should access the resources online via the Ellon Academy Glow page where they will find specific subject based resources.

SQA Exams:

Pupils, parents and staff are also concerned about SQA exams this year, but we have been informed by the SQA that it's 'business as usual' for folio and assignment deadlines and preparing for exams. We await further guidance from the SQA.

School Measures so far:

- Assemblies - COVID-19 Information and effective handwashing assemblies (Week beginning 9.3.20)
- Additional cleaning and wiping down surfaces, door handles, handrails twice per day
- Checking soap dispensers are full prior to registration, breaks and lunchtimes
- Cancelling/postponing events and activities

Self-isolating/pupil absences:

Pupils who have been infected, or are self-isolating to prevent the spread of the virus due to contact with others who are vulnerable or are displaying symptoms, will be marked as 'authorised absence'. Pupils of parents who have chosen to keep their children away from school as a precautionary measure where there is no advice to take such measures, they will be marked as 'unauthorised absence'. Pupils who have already been self-isolating for 14 days and are now fit and well, they can return to school.

Staff

Just like pupils, staff can become unwell too. We are monitoring staff absences and will inform Aberdeenshire Council if we come to the point where staff absences are challenging in terms of managing the school effectively. However, we are fortunate that our supply staff are fit and well so far, and have committed to coming in to cover for absent staff until the Easter break.

If the Scottish Government decide to close Scottish schools, we will communicate further instructions and information to all parents and carers.

Yours sincerely,

P Buchan

Mrs P Buchan
Rector