



ELLON ACADEMY UP-DATE FOR PARENTS/CARERS

To: All Parents and Carers
From: Pauline Buchan, Rector
Subject: Information Up-date
Date: 5th June 2020

Quote of the Week beginning 5.6.20:



Message from the Rector – 5.6.20

I hope that this newsletter finds you all safe and well. It certainly feels more like autumn than summer at the moment! Here are the updates for this week:

SQA Estimates and Awards

Our SQA estimates are now complete and have been sent away in plenty time for the deadline of 12:59 on Friday 29th May.

MySQA

Please encourage your child to set up an account with MySQA (link in the table below). This will allow them to check the details the SQA currently holds, e.g. their name, address, courses, etc. to ensure accurate certification and delivery of results. If there are any inaccuracies, they should advise the school by emailing ellon.aca@aberdeenshire.gov.uk as soon as possible.

2020 Qualifications: Parent and Carer Support

Due to Coronavirus the SQA 2020 exams were cancelled. However, the SQA has stated your child will still receive their results on 4 August. The SQA will base its decisions on three principles:

- fairness to all learners
- safe and secure certification of your child's qualifications
- making sure the qualifications your child achieves are equal to any achieved in the past, or in the future

How the SQA will provide your child's results

1. Estimating	2. Awarding	3. Results	4. Appeals
<p>Teachers tell the SQA what estimated grade they expect your child to achieve.</p> <p>An estimate grade is what teachers would expect your child to achieve based on your child's performance.</p> <p>An estimate grade is not just the result of one prelim or one project, it's an overall judgement based on all activity for the year.</p>	<p>The SQA check and validate your child's estimated grade, adjusting if necessary to be consistent across schools/ colleges and with results from previous years.</p> <p>The SQA will use the estimates to produce your child's result.</p>	<p>Tuesday 4 August</p> <p>The SQA issues your child's results.</p> <p>Your child can sign up to MySQA for results by text/email.</p>	<p>After 4 August</p> <p>If your child disagrees with their result, speak to their school who may use the free appeals service.</p> <p>The school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - must have evidence to support their estimate - can only request an appeal if the grade your child receives on 4 August is lower than the estimated grade that was sent to the SQA.

For more information on the process, visit the SQA website pages for parents/carers at:

https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/93825.html?mkt_tok=eyJpIjoiTIRVMk5qWXdaRFU1TWpReSIsInQiOiJweXpHa25oYUYxMFh5ZVA0UkpTS1o4dIU5cHR4aEdiOWNQd0dybkgwQmxSbmZyXC9tc3hUeGhhOEh0dEwweFZkckpMRmdzOVdNUkhXUxqMkhtZGRtSWhPT2lwMXFVTmk0UkZxdEFDWWRrVUZqVklCK1paQXQyWHO4WVNkMGILNW8ifQ%3D%3D

A pupil version of the information is available on the school website at:

<http://ellonacademy.aberdeenshire.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Pupil-Presentation-SQA-Awards-2020-002.pdf>

Google Classroom

As you will be aware, Google Classroom has become the main vehicle for delivery for online learning. In preparation for the change of timetable on 2 June, teachers have set up Google Classroom. Teachers have sent email invites to pupils to join the appropriate Google Classroom for their new courses. Please encourage your child to sign up to their new google classrooms as soon as possible to begin engaging with their new courses. In the weekly Lockdown Online Learning Schedule there are also google classroom codes to help with access to the online classrooms.

It is important to note that Google Classroom is a mechanism for teachers communicating with pupils, not parents. Any parent wishing to make contact with the school should do so through the normal channels of communication by emailing ellon.aca@aberdeenshire.gov.uk or by contacting your child's Guidance Teacher.

Cheyne House	-	Mrs P Waugh	paula.waugh@aberdeenshire.gov.uk
Keith House	-	Mr K Findlay	kris.findlay@aberdeenshire.gov.uk
Forbes House	-	Miss N Jeffrey	nicole.jeffrey@aberdeenshire.gov.uk
McDonald House	-	Mrs C Kaczmarek	claire.kaczmarek@aberdeenshire.gov.uk
Sinclair House	-	Mr Niall Corser (Mon/Tues)	niall.corser@aberdeenshire.gov.uk
	-	Miss M Watt (Wed/Thurs/Fri)	may.watt@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

On-line Learning and Pupil Engagement:

This week's schedule has been published today (Friday 5th June) ready for the week beginning Monday 8th June. This will continue to help and support pupils and parents/carers to see the work posted for the coming week on one document. We are aware that some parents have found it challenging to motivate their child/children to engage in school work at home, therefore, we have been collating the names of pupils who have not been engaging with on-line learning and we will be in touch with parents to offer support over the next week or so.

We will continue with on-line learning for the rest of this term and we are also working together to plan for a return to school in August. There have been some changes to the return date for next term:

Tuesday 11th August will be an In-service day for school staff and the new term will start for some pupils on Wed 12th August.

Change of Timetable and Moving Learning Forward:

Our new google classes and courses started this week on Tuesday 2nd of June. Pupils have been assigned new Google Classroom codes to access their new subjects. As is usual practice, there will be a 2-week window in August/September for pupils to change subject options in light of course award results.

Timetables with classrooms and period times that are usually given to pupils in school on the day of timetable change are not currently being sent to pupils. As we have moved to a virtual change of timetable this session, pupils have been added to and invited to join Google Classroom for all their new subjects. In these platforms, pupils will have access to all the subject learning and be able to send their teacher any questions regarding any difficulties with work. Teachers will also be able to provide any feedback to pupils on the work. Some pupils did receive their timetables early, and this happens every year to support those young people who need preparation for change as part of their additional support.

Return, Restore and Reset

The timetable for returning to school in August will not look like the one we have created for 'normal times'. Therefore, pupils only need to know what their subjects are going forward. We are now in the planning process for delivering blended learning in August with some teaching in school and some delivered online and this information will be given to pupils in due course.

We have narrowed down our discussions to 2 different models of return and we are working to refine our preferred option. There are many things to consider, but our priority is the wellbeing of pupils and staff in returning to school. Our janitors and support staff are involved in an exercise assessing school spaces and our capacity to reduce class sizes for social distancing purposes and safe delivery of aspects of the curriculum. This will take the form of a blended learning approach where pupils and staff will be able to access learning online. There are many unanswered questions currently, including transport and catering, but there are working groups within the council addressing many key factors to build capacity for safe return.

When pupils and staff do return, the school will look quite different.

These are the issues we have been working on since my last newsletter:

- Classrooms and teaching areas will be configured with 8 – 10 desks/workstations, all 2 meters apart
- Currently refining a model of in-school and on-line learning in preparation for August
- Deciding if on-line delivery of some curriculum areas/subjects is preferred and feasible
- Deciding on how we safely deliver practically based subjects in school
- Cleaning services have been mobilised to ensure the on-going deep cleaning of schools
- Discussing how we ensure hygiene regarding the use of practical teaching resources, for example, ICT, school equipment like tools, apparatus, paintbrushes, musical instruments etc
- There will be one-way signage and 2-meter distance floor markings all around the building at Ellon Academy
- Pupils will work in learning zones and will be allocated their own entrances/exit and toilet facilities in that learning zone
- Awaiting local authority advice on catering services – is it better for pupils/staff to bring their own snacks/drinks and packed lunches to avoid queuing and hygiene concerns when using school canteen and servery facilities?
- An isolation/infection control room will be set up for those presenting with COVID-19 symptoms as part of Track and Trace
- Awaiting local authority plans regarding transport/ASN transport to school

Summary

- **Weekly Rector's Newsletter** to be issued to all parents on Fridays via Groupcall email, up-loaded on the website and signposted on Facebook, detailing up-dates and on-going information
- **Ellon Academy Weekly On-line Lockdown Learning Up-date** - The next schedule has been published today Friday 5th June in preparation for learning week beginning Monday 8th June
- **Weekly On-line Assembly for pupils** to be published ready for week beginning Mon 8th June
- **Moving Learning Forward** – Letters issued to parents/carers and pupils this week are available to view on the school website
- **Supporting family engagement in learning** – On-going work supporting vulnerable pupils and families to access on-line learning
- **P7 – S1 Transition** – The 2nd letter to P7 parents has been issued this week and P7 pupils will be made aware of their new S1 classes today. The Ellon Academy P7 Transition Facebook page: **Ellon Academy P7 Transition 2020** has information for parents/carers too. This work has been done in collaboration with our P7 Transition Working Group comprising of staff from the Academy and our Cluster Primaries. Ellon Academy faculties have already started preparing introductory videos for P7 pupils to view.

School Leavers (S4/S5 and S6)

The staff at Ellon Academy are dismayed and upset that we can't mark the end of a school era in the usual ways, to say our fond farewells to our leavers, wishing them well as they take the next steps in their lives. So, with the help of Ms Jane Smith, one of our parents, we would like to offer our S4, S5 and S6 leavers the opportunity to purchase a Leavers Hoodie 2020. If your son/daughter has just finished S6 and didn't order a hoodie prior to lockdown, they can still do so now. If your son/daughter is in S4/S5 and is leaving school now, you can order a Leavers Hoodie for them with their nickname or an appropriate favourite slogan on the back.

If you are interested in this for your 'school leaver', please contact Ms Smith at marsmel2@gmail.com She has kindly offered to contact the company for us to help support our amazing school leavers and mark this occasion for them in this way. We would also like to thank one of our senior pupils, Carla Clark, for organising the initial S6 Leavers Hoodies and for giving Ms Smith the information required to organise this.

Communication

The Parent and Pupil Zones on our school website for information and up-dates, which are listed chronologically, newest posts first and I have included some other signposts to links you may find helpful:

- <http://ellonacademy.aberdeenshire.sch.uk/parent-zone/>
- <https://covid19.nhsgrampian.org/pages/for-the-public/mental-health-covid-19/how-do-you-self-refer-to-the-psychological-response-hub/>
- Aberdeenshire Educational Psychology Service telephone line: 01779 403721

And, of course, contact us, when you need to.

We hope that our Ellon Academy families will continue to keep safe and well and that together, we can ensure that our pupils will be able to thrive in these challenging times as we plan the safest and most considerate ways of a new model of schooling for the start of session 20/21.

Have a restful weekend.

Warmest wishes,

Pauline Buchan

Pauline Buchan
Rector