



ELLON ACADEMY WEEKLY INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/CARERS



To: All parents/carers
From: Pauline Buchan, Rector
Subject: Weekly Information Up-date
Date: 21st August 2020

Quote of the Week beginning 24.8.20:



Thank you to all parents and carers for your continued support this week. We have been heartened that the vast majority of pupils have settled back to school in such a positive way and have demonstrated great resilience in getting back to learning and coping with new routines and protocols that are in place to keep us all safe.

Here are the updates for this week:

Ellon Academy Parent Council:

Throughout lockdown and during the summer, the office bearers from the Ellon Academy Parent Council have continued to meet regularly with myself and members of the Senior Leadership Team. Our last meeting was on Monday 17th August. I am extremely grateful to the office bearers of our Parent Council, who are so committed to Ellon Academy. They work tirelessly behind the scenes, liaising with the school and answering parental questions and queries. This is an example of excellent parental involvement and participation and I value and welcome their support.

All questions and issues of concern which are brought to the Parent Council are addressed at our meetings and reflected in the minutes, which are always posted on the Parent Zone of our Ellon Academy school website. As information and guidance changes, we review our Restore, Reset and Return plans on a weekly basis as good practice in quality assurance, and the latest version of our Ellon Academy Risk Assessment is also posted on our school website. Aberdeenshire Council also review practice and we received a new RA template this week, so it has been updated to reflect the local mitigations at Ellon Academy Community Campus.

Here are the links to the Parent Council minutes and the latest version of our Risk Assessment:

<http://ellonacademy.aberdeenshire.sch.uk/parent-council/>

<http://ellonacademy.aberdeenshire.sch.uk/parent-zone/>

SQA Appeals 2020

Statement released from the SQA on Wednesday 19 August

Following the Deputy First Minister's direction to SQA, there are three grounds upon which a centre can submit an appeal.

1. an error within SQA's internal processes for reinstating the original centre estimate.
2. an administrative error within the centre leading to provision of estimate information to SQA which did not accurately reflect the Centre's intention at the time of submission, and/or (3)...
3. discrimination or other conduct contrary to the Equality Act 2010 identified within the centre relating to protected characteristics, leading to the provision of estimate information to SQA which does not accurately reflect the Centre's view following investigation of the circumstances carried out by the centre.

We anticipate these grounds will arise only exceptionally.

It is only the head of centre, or their nominated representative, using their professional judgement and discretion, who can submit an appeal.

Ground 2 above does not permit an appeal where the centre seeks to revise the original estimate on the basis that it considers that its academic judgement as to the estimate in May was wrong.

The Ministerial direction included an [Appeals process](#), that is in place and due to conclude in early September. The outcome of Priority Appeals will be communicated to Centres and UCAS by Friday 4 September. All other appeals will be communicated to Centres by the end of September.

Car Park Safety:

Here are some reminders, particularly for S1 and new parents/carers to Ellon Academy:

Firstly, welcome to all our new parents/carers who have joined our school community this year and welcome back to everyone else.

The school and Parent Council have taken a proactive approach to helping parents and visitors to the Ellon Academy Campus to use the car park at the front in a way which does not risk the safety of other users. We are one of the lucky secondary schools in Aberdeenshire who have a car park which may be used by parents. The car park is not a perfect design and it has been a bit of a journey towards the systems we now have, but we have tried to organise the area in a way which reduces the risk of injury to individuals or damage to property. Please help us by following the car park guidelines:

- All drivers are reminded that there is a strict 10mph speed limit in the school car park. (We all know that pedestrians are much more likely to be severely injured or killed by vehicles travelling at excessive speeds.)
- Please be alert to the signage in our car park and the fact that there will be children around.
- If the weather is poor, the car park will be much busier- please be patient.
- Parents/Carers are encouraged to use the Meadows area to drop pupils off or pick them up where possible. Pupils can use Boaty Tam's Bridge for access.
- Car sharing involving pupils from different households is now discouraged due to COVID19.

- Please note that parents should not exit their vehicles while on the campus (from school risk assessment).
- Morning Drop Off

All Parents/Carers are asked to either:

1. Drop off your child at the designated drop-off area (on the left-hand side of the car park as you drive in where all the cones are). Please ensure your child exits your vehicle from the left-hand doors to avoid them meeting cars which may be driving past on your right-hand side.

Or:

2. Continue further down the carpark and **forward** park into one of the spaces. Please note that if you decide to do this, you will need to be careful when reversing out into the flow of traffic from the drop-off area.

- There is a one-way system through the car park; drivers are asked to travel to the far end of the car park and use the turning circle before proceeding out using the other lane.
- Please do not drop off your child by stopping in the driving lane- this causes an obstruction to the flow of the car park.
- Please do not drop off your child at the entrance to the disabled parking area.
- Please do not enter the disabled parking area unless you have a disabled parking badge or have express permission from the school (even if you are late).
- Please do not reverse park in the spaces; the car park is designed for forward parking.
- Please do not stop on the zig zag lines outside the school.

Afternoon Pick Up

- Please park forwards into the spaces which are slanted at an angle to facilitate this.
- Please do not stop in the driving lanes to pick up your child.
- Please do not stop where the cones are on the right-hand side of the car park when entering the car park at any time. This impedes the flow of traffic and causes an obstruction.
- Please be careful when reversing out. Some parents/carers prefer to delay arrival or departure until the car park is quieter
- Please be courteous when you see cars reversing out in front of you.
- Please follow the one-way system.
- Please do not enter the disabled parking area unless you have a disabled parking pass or express permission from the school.
- Adults should not exit their car unless necessary when on campus.
- All adults are always reminded to practise 2m social distancing when on campus and do not enter the school building unless you have prior permission

In following these guidelines, we are ensuring the safety of all pupils and parents/carers.

Bike Safety:

Unfortunately, members of the public and staff have reported seeing extremely worrying and dangerous cycling behaviour to and from school since we returned to learning in school. They have reported the following:

- Teenage boys on bikes (in school dress) doing 'wheelies' in the middle of busy roads with traffic on either side
- Teenage boys on bikes (in school dress) weaving in and out of stationary and moving traffic
- Teenage boys and girls (in school dress) on bikes without helmets

We ask for your support in speaking to your sons/daughters about safe cycling because we are fearful that it is inevitable that an unnecessary and preventable accident will happen if pupils continue in this way.

We do not wish any driver or road user to be involved in an accident because of the needless and reckless behaviour of children and young people.

This will be stressed **yet again** at our weekly virtual assembly next week.

Eat out to Help out - School Meals:

Pupils and staff will be able to get discounts on school meals in Aberdeenshire thanks to the UK Government's Eat Out to Help Out scheme.

This initiative has been established to support restaurants and cafes by offering a 50% discount to customers on food and drink in exchange for helping a local eatery. The scheme also applies to school canteens allowing parents, carers and staff to obtain the discount for school meals and drinks.

It will be available to use in Aberdeenshire's schools from the 17th to 31st of August.

During this period on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays the price of Academy food and drinks will be discounted by 50%. These tariffs will be set on the system centrally.

Parents/Carers and visitors in school:

As we have already stated, parents/carers should not arrive at school without a prior appointment – can we respectfully request that anyone visiting the Campus wear a face covering in line with Government FACTS guidance where face coverings are recommended in enclosed spaces.

The following will apply:

- Anything to be dropped off at school for a pupil can only be done so in emergencies only. If your child has forgotten subject materials or PE kit, we deem this not to be an emergency
If you have forgotten to provide a packed lunch for your child

Parent/Carer to arrange collection with son/daughter – pupils will not be called out of class

Morning collections – parent/carers can meet child in car park and parent/carers has to remain in car

Lunchtime collections can be arranged between parent/carers & child outside of school grounds

- If you need to bring in any medication for your child which needs to be kept on the premises, this can be arranged by calling the First Aid office directly on 01358 281165 and you will be given instructions to follow

Return, Restore and Reset

We have been so impressed in how our learners have adapted so quickly to the new one-way system. We understand that some routeways are slightly longer, but learners are really trying hard to comply. This has resulted in more orderly movement around the school, particularly at class change over times and senior leadership staff are out and about during the busier times to ensure safe movement at break, lunchtime and the end of the school day.

To address the busiest time at lunch queues, one year group per week will be released 10 mins early from class to access the canteen and grab bag pre-order stations first:

Week beginning:

24.8.20	S1
31.8.20	S2
7.9.20	S3
14.9.20	S4
21.9.20	S5/6
28.9.20	S1
5.10.20	S2

Attendance Monitoring Procedures – Reminder and Information for S1 parents/carers:

As per our usual period-by-period attendance monitoring procedures, any learner missing from class will be coded 'TBC' (To be confirmed) on our Seemis Registration System. This code generates a text message home so that parents/carers have an early alert if their child has not registered for class and staff in school can follow this up. We take this very seriously as part of our child protection policies.

S6 pupils who have study time on their timetable sign in at the start of each study period. The venue for signing in changes on Monday 24th August from Reconnect to the reception window, which is closer to the Sunken Social Area, which is the designated study area for all S6 pupils.

Introducing our new Exec Team:

Head Boy	-	Connor Grugeon	Head Girl	-	Isla Burns
Deputy Head Boys	-	Roo Glen Donald Pirie	Deputy Head Girls	-	Manar Alsabih Abbey Harris Emily Stewart

(Photos to follow next week!)

I met with the new Exec Team this week and I am so impressed with their commitment to their roles and duties. They have some excellent ideas to implement and we look forward to working with them this school year.

Prefecting:

Our prefects are doing a wonderful job in support staff at break and lunch in patrolling and supervising queues and social areas.

Considering our current situation, we will be providing each prefect with their own personal hi-vis vest. The new stock of vests will arrive today, and these are all individually packaged in cellophane wrap. Each prefect will be able to uplift their own vest next week after they have been left untouched for 72 hours over the weekend.

School Blazers:

Members of staff in school are planning to offer our S6 pupils school blazers very soon. Prior to lockdown, we were in discussion with a range of suppliers regarding school blazers, but this process came to halt. This year, we have reverted to S6 blazers and next year blazers will be optional for all pupils.

Emergency Fire Evacuation Drill:

Our Emergency Evacuation policy has been updated and changed so that the muster points for pupils and staff are all around the campus to encompass social distancing. Previously, the whole school would assemble at designated muster points at the front of the school in the plaza. I can report that the evacuation drill, held on Tuesday 18th August, went very smoothly with all classes and staff around the campus supervised by Depute Head Teachers at each point.

IT Device Recall:

Pupils who borrowed a school device during lockdown should return this on Tuesday 25 August. During Registration please take the device and charger to The Street, where it will be signed back into school stock. Please do not pack the device/charger with a water bottle or any other fluids in your school bag. Thank you.

Thank you for taking time to read my information up-date and I hope you and your family have a lovely weekend.

P Buchan

Pauline Buchan
Rector
21.8.20

