



ELLON ACADEMY WEEKLY INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/CARERS



To: All parents/carers
From: Pauline Buchan, Rector
Subject: Weekly Information Up-date
Date: Friday 18th September 2020

Quote of the Week beginning 21.9.20:



Thank you once again to all parents and carers for your continued support this week. We continue to be encouraged, noting that almost every learner is supporting our risk assessments by complying with the mitigations currently in place to keep everyone safe. Learner walks have shown excellent engagement in lessons and we suspect learners are pleased to be back at school, although some may not admit that!

Here are the updates for this week:

Virtual Assembly:

This week's Virtual Assembly will be shown on Thursday 24th September and registration will be extended for 5 minutes to ensure that there is enough time to view and for the Register Teacher to read the daily bulletin notices to all learners.

Congratulations!

S4 pupil Kaitlin has been so self-motivated in doing some additional study and has achieved a Level 4 Certification in Cyber Security. Very well-done Kaitlin!



Pupil Progress - Tracking, Monitoring and Reporting:

In the current climate, we will be unable to have Parents' Evening this year, so we have been working with staff and Principal Teachers to build in additional tracking, monitoring, and reporting of pupil progress. Below is our TMR Calendar for this session and this will be added to a whole school calendar for pupils, staff and parents when our Working Time Agreement has been finalised with staff, Professional Representatives and ratified by the Local Authority.

Assessment Block 1

Assessment Block 2

Assessment Block 3

TMR 20/21	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5/6
AUGUST				-	-
SEPTEMBER				Tracking Report 1 QA Deadline 30-Sept	Tracking Report 1 QA Deadline 30-Sept
OCTOBER	S1 Tracking Report 1 H/E/B	S2 Tracking Report 1 H/E/B	S3 Tracking Report 1 H/E/B	Issue Reports	Issue Reports
NOVEMBER	Issue Reports Parents Eve (Pastoral) <i>provisional</i>	Issue Reports	Issue Reports	Full Report QA Deadline 27-Nov	Full Report QA Deadline 27-Nov
DECEMBER	S1 Tracking Report 2	S2 Full Reports		Issue Reports	Issue Reports
JANUARY		Subject Choice Virtual Presentation	S3 Full Reports		

TMR 20/21	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5/6
FEBRUARY		Course Choice Deadline 18 February	Subject Choice Virtual Presentation	Tracking Report 2	Tracking Report 2
				Issue Reports	Issue Reports
MARCH		S2 Tracking Report 2		Parents Eve (Pastoral) <i>provisional</i> & Subject Choice Virtual Presentation	
				Course Choice Deadline 12 March	Course Choice Deadline 12 March
APRIL	S1 Parents Eve <i>Provisional</i>	Issue S2 Reports			
MAY	S1 Full Reports	S2 Parents Eve <i>Provisional</i>	S3 Tracking Report 2		
JUNE	Issue S1 Reports & S1 Profile		Issue S3 BGE Level Reports & S3 Profile		

This will be under review in the event of any relaxation of current restrictions.

Ellon Academy Staffing Up-date:

- Miss Ferguson has been successful in securing a new post at Bucksburn Academy and she will take up this post after the October break. We wish her every success in her new post.
 - We have advertised a 1 FTE Biology Teacher post and we have already had 5 applicants and we will be interviewing in the next 2 weeks.
- We welcome Mrs Tracey Ross to our school Administration Team and Mrs Ross's main area of work is currently school finances.
- Congratulations to Mrs Wyllie who goes on maternity leave after the October break and we are so fortunate to have Mrs Wilson who is a Modern Languages Teacher, covering this post.
- We are currently advertising a Principal Teacher Pupil Development post which will complement the pastoral work of the Guidance Team. More information will follow when we make an appointment to this post.
- We are also very proud of our Pupil Support Worker Graham Wilson who is off to university one day per week to continue his studies in Counselling. Therefore, we have a one-day per week PSW vacancy for up to 23 months to advertise. Good luck to Graham!

We are fortunate to be fully staffed here at Ellon Academy and this favours well for future absence cover. We also have a good range of supply teachers who enjoy working with us. The Scottish Government has allocated additional staffing budget to all schools and we are working towards the local authority deadlines to decide on how best to utilise these funds for the benefit of our learners.

Senior Pupil Ties:

The S4 blue senior school ties have arrived and will be distributed to all S4 pupils by their Guidance Teachers at their next PSE class. They are currently in quarantine for 72+ hours. Thank you for your patience.

Reminder - Google Meet:

There are still a number of parents/carers who have yet to grant/deny permission for their child/children to access Google Meet as part of the Google Suit. Ms Booth sent out a link prior to the summer. Google Meet facilitates video conferencing for teaching lessons. So far, over 500 parents have granted permission, so if you have yet to do so, please follow the link below. Thank you:

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=BpPZ_i1NCUSVndDttzBKCw15nWANUipGkQs1n2P-2hZURTE4TzJCUVJGWEEzTjBYWDgzT1ZDSkIBMS4u

Reminder - Parentsportal

If you have not yet signed up for Parentsportal.scot, please do so as soon as you can by following the link below

<https://parentsportal.scot/home/>

You will need to have a MyAberdeenshire account to do this. If you pay for school meals online through IPayImpact, you will have this already. If you require any help with setting any of this up, please contact the school office on 01358 281150.

In previous years, we have sent you our Annual Data Check Forms in paper format. These forms ensure the school holds accurate and up to date information for children and parents/carers. This year we shall be asking for this information electronically. This is done through parentsportal, hence the reason for our request.

We have a small list of parents/carers who are still experiencing issues with parentsportal.scot and will be in touch by telephone to help resolve these problems.

Pupil Absence/Self-Isolating:

Currently, pupils can access Google Classroom if they are absent due to a requirement to self-isolate. We are currently tightening up this procedure so that a whole school approach is adopted to ensure all faculties are providing work for absent pupils on a frequent and regular basis. More info to follow when these plans are in fully embedded and due consideration for staff workload and consultation has taken place.

Prelims 2021:

In light of current restrictions, it will not be possible to have our usual prelim structure where pupils are gathered in large group in one space. Therefore, we have proposed to staff that the prelims will be delivered in classes as part of the normal class timetable in January 2021. However, it will be important for the well-being of pupils that we plan to schedule these exams so that pupils can see how they will be spaced out.

NHS/Head Teacher Meetings:

Aberdeenshire Council has been in liaison with NHS Grampian and now, 3 times per week, there are NHS Health Protection Team and Head Teacher Skype meetings. These meetings have been set up for Head Teachers to ask questions as Covid related issues emerge and they are very helpful indeed.

Strategic Planning:

This week, the Senior Leadership Team have been working on the Working Time Agreement for Teaching Staff Session 20/21. Usually this work is completed annually in May, but in light of differing times, the deadline for completing this work is now September so that schools can factor in time for staff to plan and develop digital learning (Google Classroom/Suite for Ellon Academy), tracking, monitoring and assessing progress following national lockdown. As you will understand, learning and teaching is our core business and never more has this been so crucial than now.

We have also been working on our Covid-19 Contingency plans so that in the event of partial or full lockdown in the future, we can be ready. Senior Leaders have a range of tasks to complete by the Oct break deadline to ensure our plans are robust going forward.

Senior Leaders have also had a refresher on how to input staff absence cover from our Schools Services Support Co-ordinator Mrs S McGill, who is an expert on absent staff cover. We have been very fortunate that there have been very few staff absences to date, however, as we embark upon cold and flu season, it is essential that all Senior Leaders can use the cover allocation system.

Next week, we will be looking at our Curriculum Structure for session 21/22 to begin the planning process.

S3 Mental Wellbeing SQA Course:

All of our S3 pupils are currently working on a SQA Mental Health and Wellbeing course during their Tutor Time. This course will lead to a SQA qualification and we feel it is crucial for all young people to develop their awareness and understanding of Mental Health issues, particularly during these times.

S5 Supervised Study

S5 pupils have 2 periods a week of supervised study with their Depute Head Teacher for their House. This week pupils have had some Google Classroom Refresher sessions. S5 study is supervised by DHTs to allow time for learner conversations and discussions regarding learner progress

S6 Study:

S6 pupils are currently using the Sunken Social Area for their study periods and they sign in at the reception window to ensure we can account for their attendance. Pupils have been instructed to wear their face coverings during study time and there are only 4 pupils per table permitted for now.

Scottish Government ICT

This week we have taken delivery of 105 Chromebooks which will be allocated to identified pupils. This is a fantastic support and it is appreciated by schools in Scotland.

Pupil Conduct:

Covid-19 Health, Safety and Wellbeing – Learner Compliance with School Mitigations:

I am pleased to say that the vast majority of our learners demonstrate excellent conduct and compliance with our current Covid-19 mitigations and those learners who have exemption from wearing face coverings have been issued with an exemption card.

Thank you once again for your continued support as we navigate these challenging times, and I hope you all have a restful and peaceful weekend.

Yours sincerely

P Buchan

Pauline Buchan
Rector
18.9.20