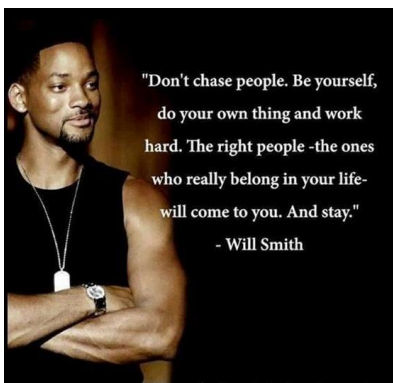


ELLON ACADEMY WEEKLY INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/CARERS



To: All parents/carers
From: Pauline Buchan, Rector
Subject: Weekly Information Up-date
Date: Friday 2nd October 2020

Quote of the Week beginning 5.10.20:



Thank you once again to all parents and carers for your continued support this week. We can't quite believe we're now in October, and the weather is certainly autumnal now.

On Tuesday 29th September, we had a very positive Parent Council meeting, attended by office bearers and a number of other parents/carers, who joined us via Skype. It was a full agenda, and I was able to have the opportunity to up-date parents on a range of issues, including staffing, budget, Covid-19 Risk Assessments and learning and teaching. Approximately 47 questions had been submitted to the Parent Council, and with the help of my Depute Head Teacher colleagues, we were able to provide answers to all queries. The minutes of the PC meeting and the responses to these queries will be published by the PC in due course.

We also expressed our sincere thanks to the Parent Council for supporting us to fund new snow clearing equipment which is desperately required for the winter months and for funding new Maths textbooks for pupils.

Here are the updates for this week:

Virtual Assembly:

Next week's Virtual Assembly will be shown on Friday 9th October 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.

These are the reminders for Pupils and Staff in our daily bulletin for next week:

For Staff and Pupil Information:

Reminder for all Pupils:

It is no accident that there have been no positive Covid-19 cases associated with Ellon Academy and this is because of the health and safety mitigations and procedures we have worked hard to put in place. However, we do not wish to become complacent in our practice, so here are some reminders for this week and after the holidays:

Arriving at School:

- S1/2/3 – Enter the school building via the pupil doors
- S4/5/6 – Enter the school building via the main reception doors
- All pupils must use the hand gel provided at the sanitising stations on arrival at school

Face Coverings:

- Pupils and staff are reminded to wear face coverings on arrival at school, whilst moving around the corridors, after eating/drinking at social times and as we leave the building.

Designated Pupils Gathering Areas:

- S1 – Canteen
- S2/3 – Sunken Social Area
- S4 – The Street and Foyer
- S5 – S5 Social Area/Maths Open Learning Area
- S6 – S6 Social Area

One-way system:

Pupils and staff are reminded to use the one-way system as all times.

Stairs:

At the start of break, lunchtime and at the end of the school day, all stairs are downward moving. After break and lunchtime, all stairs are upward moving.

School Uniform:

Some pupils are taking advantage of wearing PE kit on non-PE days.

We strongly encourage all pupils to wear full school uniform on non-PE days for Health and Safety reasons, to allow us to identify our pupils from any potential uninvited visitors to the school.

October break 2020

Next Friday (9.10.20) is the last day for Term 1 for all pupils and staff, and what a term it has been. We have successfully managed to have all staff and pupils back in school despite the Covid-19 situation and learning and teaching has been our one focus since our return, working with all our pupils to ensure learning is front and centre in our priorities. Pupils and staff will return to school on Monday 26th October, ready for the usual 8.25am start.

Ellon Academy Staffing Up-date:

Next week we are interviewing candidates for the following teaching posts, and I will be able to share the outcome of these interviews in due course after the October break:

- Teacher of Biology
- Principal Teacher – Pupil Development

LOCKDOWN LEARNING:

PRIORITY REMINDER – PLEASE GIVE YOUR PERMISSION FOR YOUR CHILD/CHILDREN TO ACCESS GOOGLE MEET:

We strongly encourage all parents/carers to give consent for their child/children to be able to access Google Meet. This platform allows pupils to access on-line and live video lessons, which will be essential in the event of any future lockdown scenarios.

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. This is less than half of our parents. There are over 1100 pupils in school, 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.

If you are still experiencing issues with parentsportal.scot, please phone the school office. I have been in touch with Aberdeenshire Council to request support with parental access to parentsportal because I am aware that many parents have had problems logging on. I will keep you informed.

Strategic Planning:

This week, the Senior Leadership Team has been working on:

- Faculty Attainment 2020 Results Reviews
- Working Time Agreement. The Whole staff meeting on Wed 30.9.20 at 3pm ratified the WTA.
- Contingency planning for local/national adjustments to lockdown – learning from the Fraserburgh experiences of positive Covid-19 cases in school.
- Curriculum structure 21/22
- Whole school calendar
- Learning Strategy for pupils not attending school

Safe Cycling:

Despite our many and varied efforts to encourage young people to cycle in a safe way to and from school, we still have concerns regarding a small group of boys who continue to cycle in a way which is dangerous for themselves and others.

We are planning with the local Policing Team and our Police Liaison Officer to take these concerns forward. More info to follow as we progress.

Multi-tools:

We remind parents and carers that bringing items like multi-tools/pen knives to school is not permitted.

Face Coverings on School Transport:

Below is a letter from Vincent Docherty, Head of Education for Aberdeenshire Council:

Vincent A Docherty

Head of Education
Education and Children's Services
Woodhill House
Westburn Road
Aberdeen AB16 5GB

Friday 2.10.20

Dear Parent/Carer

I write to request your further support in encouraging your child to continue wearing a face covering while on school transport. School staff are working hard to ensure that children and young people are wearing face coverings when entering vehicles at the end of the school day, but many are removing these as soon as the vehicle draws away. It is important to remember that we all have a responsibility in reducing the transmission of COVID-19 and the wearing of face coverings on school transport has been deemed as a measure that will support this aim.

I would also like to thank you for your support in enabling the successful return of our schools over the first term of academic session 2020/21. The hard work of staff, and parents/carers has ensured that the return of schools has been possible, and all of our children can benefit from all that this brings.

Yours faithfully

*Vincent Docherty
Head of Education
Aberdeenshire Council*

Thank you once again for your continued support and I hope you all have a restful and peaceful weekend.

Yours sincerely

P Buchan

Pauline Buchan
Rector
2.10.20