

ELLON ACADEMY WEEKLY INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/CARERS

To: All parents/carers
From: Pauline Buchan, Rector
Subject: Weekly Information Up-date
Date: Friday 5th February 2021

Hopefully, this newsletter finds you all well and we continue to appreciate the support of our parents/carers during these difficult times. It is good to be finally see February and the days gradually becoming longer and lighter. Here are the updates for this week:

Virtual Assembly:

I've posted the week's assembly today and here is the link for those who do not have Facebook:

<https://youtu.be/QH1igfRbd6U>

Next Parent Council Meeting:

The next virtual Parent Council Meeting is on Wednesday 3rd March at 7pm.

Half Term and In-service Days:

All pupils and staff will be on half-term long weekend holidays on Friday 12th Feb and Monday 15th Feb. Tues 16th and Wed 17th are staff inservice days and there is no in-school provision for key worker or vulnerable children/young people. The Learning Schedules will be adjusted to take into account deadline dates for submission of on-line learning work to reflect the half-term break which is from Friday 5th – Wed 17th Feb, inclusive. Pupils and staff will return to on-line learning on Thursday 18th February and the in-school provision for keyworkers and vulnerable children will also resume on Thursday 18th February.

Remote Learning from Home in January 2021 Up-date

Learning from Home:

Our staff continue to work remotely, planning, preparing and reviewing on-line remote learning for our pupils. Next week's Learning Schedules have been sent home to all parents/carers and pupils today, one for S1/2/3 and another for S4/5/6.

We are also happy to support families with ICT to support learning from home, so please get in touch if you require a device for your child to access during lockdown.

The provision for children of key workers and vulnerable children continues in school and if your circumstances change, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Engagement Tracker:

From this Friday, the school will be moving towards a more streamlined approach to sending emails home when assignments have not been handed in by the deadline. Previously, individual emails were sent from each subject. Now, parents/carers will receive an email if their young person has not handed in 5 or more assignments (S1-S4) or 3 or more assignments (S5/6) across a range of subjects. Google Classroom 'to do' lists allow pupils to manage their assignments. Parents/Carers, who have signed up to the Google Guardian notification service, will also be notified in the weekly summaries of assignments not handed in by the deadline. Hopefully this new system will help keep parents/carers informed but without potentially a significant number of emails, which may feel overwhelming at times. We will keep the revised system under review. Parents/carers may continue to get emails from individual subjects/teachers until the old and new systems converge or if you need to be contacted for another reason.

We understand these are challenging times for families and there may be numerous reasons for the non-submission of work. Outstanding tasks will remain available for completion in the respective Google Classrooms.

We very much want to support families to help their young person engage in their learning away from school. Please see below for the support we can offer:

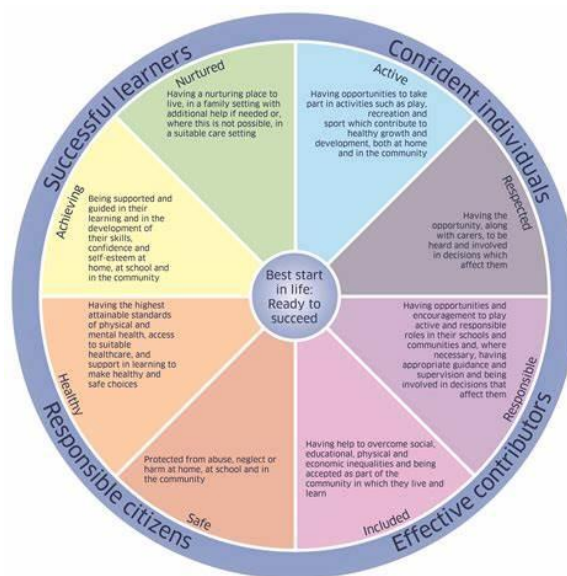
| Issue | Support/Contact Details |
|------------------------|--|
| Lack of devices | Email: techsupportellonacademy@aberdeenshire.gov.uk or contact your child's Guidance Teacher |
| Connectivity issues | Email: techsupportellonacademy@aberdeenshire.gov.uk or contact your child's Guidance Teacher |
| Technical Difficulties | Email: techsupportellonAcademy@aberdeenshire.gov.uk |
| Unsure of task | Message Class Teacher through Google Classroom |
| Need help with task | Message Class Teacher through Google Classroom |
| Any other issue | Contact your child's Guidance Teacher Cheyne: Paula.Waugh@aberdeenshire.gov.uk Forbes – Nicole.Jeffrey@aberdeenshire.gov.uk Keith – Kris.Findlay@aberdeenshire.gov.uk Macdonald – Claire.Kaczmarek@aberdeenshire.gov.uk Sinclair – Lyndsey.Donald@aberdeenshire.gov.uk (Mon/Tue), May.Watt@aberdeenshire.gov.uk (Wed – Fri) |

On-line Registration:

All pupils are now in their Registration Google Classroom and this is working well. The purpose of this is to support our tracking and monitoring of pupils' wellbeing and engagement, so we can be in daily contact with our learners.

Wellbeing Tracker – Universal Support:

Our House Teams (Guidance, ASL and DHT House) are reviewing all pupils' wellbeing, in partnership with registration teachers, based on a weekly check in through the Registration Google Classrooms. This began on Friday 29th January and will continue each Friday thereafter.



Last week we had over 800 responses, the vast majority of which were positive in terms of pupils' self-assessment of their personal wellbeing in relation to the Wellbeing Indicator Triangle.

Aberdeen Football Club Community Trust:

Aberdeen Football Club Community Trust's (AFCCT) weekly update to the fantastic resources in **DONline Learning**. These resources can be used at home or in school will be on their site shortly.

<https://www.afccommunitytrust.org/donline-learning-3/>

As you will see once the resources are uploaded, AFCCT have linked their activities to Childrens Mental Health Week, and they will also have various messages going out on social media throughout the week.

AFCCT also have a live competition called AFC Moments. It would be great to encourage our children and young people (and adults) to get involved!

<https://www.afccommunitytrust.org/donline-learning-3/afc-moments-challenge/>

Subject/Course Choices:

The course choice process is now on-going, focussing on S3 – S4 choices first. S2 and S4 pupils should now have seen their option forms too. Guidance staff have been delivering live course choice lessons via the PSE/Guidance Google Classrooms.

Here is the link to the video presentation if you haven't already seen it or wish to review it again:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mwmAKdRAR8c&t=20s>

Also, the link below will take you to a video presentation about the S3-S4 option form information:

<https://youtu.be/CdOfUX7NYTs>

Returning to school from Monday 22.2.21:

As you will be aware, the First Minister made an announcement on Tuesday 2nd February regarding plans for pupils returning to school from Monday 22.2.21.

- Children in early learning and childcare and in primaries P1-P3 are now scheduled to make a full return to nurseries and schools from 22 February.
- In addition, limited numbers of pupils in S4-S6 will also be able to complete in-school practical work that is essential for completing national qualifications on a part-time basis from 22 February. No more than 5-8% of S4-S6 pupils should be in school at any one time.
- In-school provision for keyworkers' children and vulnerable children will continue over and above the 5-8% capacity.
- Two-meter physical distancing for adults and pupils will be required in secondary schools in the period immediately after return.
- Guidance for schools will be published on Wednesday 10 February.
- Home testing kits will arrive in school from next week for adults and pupils who would like to take up the offer of 2 tests per week. Details on distribution and logging procedures will follow next week.
- These decisions will be confirmed on Tuesday 16 February, providing sufficient progress in tackling the virus has been made.

Over the past 2 days, the Ellon Academy Senior Leadership Team and Principal Teachers Guidance and Faculty have been discussing a proposed model for the return of our S4-S6 pupils who have practical subjects and would need to return to school to fulfil the requirements for national qualifications. We should be in a position to share this model with parents/carers and pupils in due course.

parentsportal.scot

In support of Aberdeenshire Council's ambition to offer more digital services to its residents, Aberdeenshire primary and secondary schools have rolled out a new online service called **parentsportal.scot**. **Parentsportal.scot** is designed to replace the paper 'schoolbag run', giving a child's registered main contact access to a range of school-related online services, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

At the heart of the system, is a secure account through **mygov.scot**, which is referred to as a '**My Account**' or '**MyAberdeenshire**' account. 'MyAberdeenshire' is already used to allow parents/carers to make online payments for school meals or receive notification if a school closes unexpectedly. **Parentsportal.scot** and '**MyAberdeenshire**' will work together, making this a handy one-stop-shop, to access all Aberdeenshire digital services.

Initially, **parentsportal.scot** will introduce basic information about our school and will allow a child's main contact to:-

- make a link to your child(ren)
- complete the annual data check process electronically*
- update your own as well as your child(ren)'s details at any time
- access online school meal payments (iPayImpact)

Please can we ask that you sign up as soon as possible to enjoy the benefits this service provides. For further information, guidance and access to **parentsportal.scot**, please click on the link below:-

[Aberdeenshire/parentsportal.scot](https://parentsportal.scot/Aberdeenshire/parentsportal.scot)

As security is paramount, the information provided during the sign up to 'myAberdeenshire' and **parentsportal.scot** link child processes **MUST** match the information the school already holds for yourself and your child(ren). If your 'myAberdeenshire' still has an old address, you use a different email account, mobile number or you use your child's known name rather than birth name, for example, a match **will not be made**. To rectify this, you will need to either update your details held in 'myAberdeenshire' or at school. The school will be able to see any rejected attempts to set up a **parentsportal.scot** account.

As the product develops, we look forward to using more services such as electronic school notices, permission slips and consent forms, to name but a few.

This is an exciting first phase of parentsportal.scot, which continues to build a digital relationship between parents/carers, pupils and our school.

Pupil Voice:

Prior to the Christmas break, pupils were telling us that there isn't enough social seating at breaks and lunchtimes, especially when more pupils were staying in school at lunchtime due to Covid-19 restrictions. Therefore, we have ordered one of these tables below and the longer rectangular ones too and we will measure on site to see how many we can fit into the sunken social area as a starting point.

We will then order as many as we can to maximise seating space for our young people in the sunken social area and when we build up our funds again, we can look at replacing existing seating in the school canteen too.

We have chosen violet/purple tabletops and dark blue seats to match the paint colours on the sunken social area walls. The colours in this picture are examples.



Website up-dates:

Please follow the link below to the latest up-dates on our Ellon Academy school website:

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

Thank you once more for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

P Buchan

Pauline Buchan, Rector 5.2.21