



WELCOME TO ELLON ACADEMY



Only a few days left now until you say your goodbyes to your primary schools and get ready to come and join us at Ellon Academy after the summer. We know that moving from primary to secondary school is exciting, but it does involve a lot of change which can feel a bit scary sometimes.

Hopefully the information that's been shared with you already, the visits from Academy staff as well as all the conversations you'll have had with your primary school teachers has made you feel really confident about the move. However, there were quite a few questions from you when I came to visit you all, so I wanted to make sure that we answered as many of them as we can before you finish P7 and get ready for S1.

YOUR QUESTIONS ABOUT LEARNING

The first thing we want to remind you about are all the great learning opportunities you'll have whilst you are at Ellon Academy. Here are a few of the subjects you'll take part in during your first year: Maths, English, Science, Technical, PE, Drama Music, Art, PSE, Languages, Humanities, ICT.

You'll probably have done a bit of them all before, but they can be a bit different at the Academy. We know that not everyone will love every subject, that's OK, just try to keep an open mind and have a go at everything - you might just surprise yourself at what you enjoy if you give it a go!

Q. What languages can we learn?

A. French, Spanish and German.

Q. I have some additional needs with my learning - will the staff at the Academy know this about me when I go into class?

A. Your primary school teachers are working really hard to gather up all the information that they think Academy staff will need to best support you when you start here. This information is shared with all staff so they can best help you in individual classes. If you think that you might need a bit more support, please talk to your teacher or your guidance teacher and they will do all they can to help and support you.

Q. How much homework do you have to do?

A. The amount of homework you have to do really depends on the teacher and the subject. However, you won't get given loads and loads of homework in S1, it builds up over the years as you get closer to your exams. The advice from our S1 students has been not to worry about it, it's not that different to primary.

Q. Will we get to do Home Economics in S1?

A. Unfortunately not – you'll have to wait until S2 for this subject.

Q. What topics/sports will we do in PE? (Do we get to go swimming?)

A. A variety and this will be explained on the Open Days or when you come up in August.

Q. Do you get woodwork in S1?

A. Yes - the technical teachers are looking forward to helping you with your projects.

Q. Who teachers what subject and are there multiple teachers for each subject?

A. There are lots of different teachers at the Academy and they all teach their own, specialist subjects within departments. Each department has a few different teachers so you might have a different maths teacher in different years, you might have even have 2 teachers who teach you the same subject. Very soon you'll get to know your teachers and they'll get to know you though.

Q. How do you get a tutor if you need one?

A. A lot of people worry that they will need extra help with their learning, but just like primary school, there are teachers and support staff there to offer help and support when needed. Some people might want to take on extra tuition as they move up the school and get closer to exams. Subject staff may be able to help with this.

TIPS

Only take what you need, if you take everything you'll end up with a very heavy school-bag.

Take a picture of your timetable and save it as your lock screen - even better, see if you can memorise it!

Be prepared - make sure you always have something to write with and any equipment you need for lessons.

QUESTIONS ABOUT BEHAVIOUR, EXPECTATIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS

The school has 7 core values, but the central one is respect. Respect means different things to different people, but at Ellon we think that respect means being respectful towards ourselves, each other and the spaces that we share. We are responsible for our own behaviour and act in ways that we can be proud of and we treat others the way we would want to be treated, this means other pupils, teachers and people in our community. If we get something wrong, that's OK, we take responsibility and do what we can to make it right and not let it happen again.

As well as being respectful in our relationships, at Ellon Academy we also want you to respect the school building and surroundings. There are lots of teaching and support staff and pupils at the school but we also have amazing janitors, cleaners and catering staff who work hard to keep the school clean, tidy and safe for us all. If we want our school to be a place we can learn in and feel safe and secure in, we have a role to play by making sure we tidy up after ourselves, be respectful to the building which will help keep our school a great place to be.

Q. Can we wear shorts?

A. In PE, yes.

Q. Can we wear leggings?

A. Yes, leggings are fine to wear.

Q. What happens if you get lost and are late to a class?

A. Don't panic - in the first few weeks we know you are still finding your way around so teachers are going to be really understanding.

Q. What happens if you get bullied?

A. A lot of people really worry about this when they move to the Academy, thankfully incidents of bullying are rare and we are sure that you will settle in really quickly and make lots of new friends. If you do feel like someone is picking on you then please tell someone. We can't help if we don't know it's happening. Talk to people at home, talk to friends and in school there are guidance staff, class teachers, PSA's and the other support staff in the school like the trainee school counsellor and me, Steph, the PSW that loads of you met when I've been in to visit.

Q. People say that S3 or older can swear, is this true?

A. Definitely not - we really want to develop positive relationships at Ellon Academy which means being respectful to yourself and others in the school community. A lot of what we do at school is preparing you for life, so making sure that you can present yourself well to others is important.

Q. What will the punishment for fighting be?

A. We really don't want any of our pupils fighting at the Academy, it's dangerous, scary, and really unpleasant for everyone involved. If there are any fights then pupils will be subject to the behaviour management policy which can poten-

Q. What happens if you forget homework?

A. We all know that life happens sometimes so if you forget homework, don't panic, just take the time to explain to your teacher what happened. However, homework is part of your learning whilst you are at the Academy, so we do want you to complete the work that's set. We will make sure that you have planners so you can make a note of any tasks that have been set and teachers will also put tasks up on Google classroom which makes it much easier to remember.

Be Kind to Yourself.

Moving up to secondary school is a big change, it's all new, don't expect to know it all, there's a lot of learning to do. Try and relax and have fun and engage with all the new opportunities that are waiting for you.

Look After Yourself

Have a good think about who can be in your support group - parents, friends, siblings or other people you know what are already at the school, guidance staff, PSW etc. This will really help you if you ever think you need to access a bit more support. Get enough sleep and make time to relax, it makes a huge difference to how you can cope with things. Watch what you eat - having a healthy, balanced diet and staying hydrated helps you concentrate and regulates your mood.

Making New Friends

A big worry for lots of pupils is whether or not they will make friends when they move to the Academy. Our advice is for you to try to relax and be yourself. There are going to be a lot of new people to meet and it'll take time. Your registration class can be a great way to meet new people, so can after school clubs. Making plans with your friends to meet them at lunch can be great to make you feel a bit more confident and also making friends with your friends new friends will mean that you get to know loads of people. Be bold, say hi to someone, smile and give them a compliment too. Give everyone you meet a chance, difference is what makes us all interesting. Try and be yourself, really why be anything else?

YOUR QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENTS

The secondary school day is a lot longer than your primary school day. You'll have to get up, get ready, get the bus and arrive at school for 8.25 so do your best to be prepared. Get enough sleep, have a reliable alarm clock and make sure you have breakfast too – it's a long time until lunch time on Mondays and Tuesdays.

We know it feels like there is a lot to learn, but we are very confident that within a week or two, you'll know your way around and all of this will feel really familiar and you'll be wondering what all the worry was for.

Q. How long are school days?

A. Mon and Tuesday are 8.25 to 3.30 and Wed - Thursday it's 8.25 - 2.40

Q. When do we get to leave school for lunch?

A. Monday - Tuesday 1-1.50, Wed - Friday 12.10 - 1

Q. Do we need to wear a tie?

A. Yes – these will be handed out on the Open Days or on your first day.

Q. How do you get access to lockers?

A. You need to request a locker and pay a small deposit too. This information will be shared on the Open Days or when you start in August.

Q. Who are the guidance teachers and what are their names?

A. Cheyne House - Mrs Waugh, Forbes House - Mrs Jeffries, Keith House - Mr Findlay, McDonald House - Mrs Kaczmarek, Sinclair House - Mrs Watt & Mr Murdoch

Q. Are there gluten free foods in the canteen?

A. Yes there is. A full menu is available for all.

Q. When will we get our timetables?

A. You'll get them on day 1 in registration.

Q. Are our classes mixed up for practical subjects or do we always stay with our registration class?

A. No – more information about sets will be available on the Open Days.

Q. Will the buses be parked in the same place every day/same bay and do they have something on them that lets us know we are getting on the right bus?

A. Yes they will be parked in the same bay and all the busses have signs on them so you know you are getting on the right bus. If you're not sure, just ask.

Q. Who will we be with when we visit the school for the transition days at the start of the summer?

A. Mr McLachlan, Depute Head Teacher (DHT), maybe your Guidance Teacher, senior pupils and your new registration class.

Q. When can you leave school?

A. As long as you don't move away from the area, you'll be at Ellon Academy until at least the end of 4th year. However, lots of our pupils remain at school until S6.

Q. What do you do in break/lunch?

A. You can spend time indoors in your year groups allocated social space which will all be explained when you arrive at the school. You can also go outside, and we'd really encourage this when the weather is nice, a bit of fresh air really helps with our concentration and learning.

You are allowed to leave the school grounds, many pupils do head to Ellon or Tesco, but you have to make sure you are back in school in time for your classes. In your first year, we'd encourage you to stay in school until after the October holidays just to let you get really settled at the Academy.

QUESTIONS ABOUT EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Q. Can we play football in the playground, and if so, do we need to bring our own ball?

A. Yes you can play football in the grounds, and yes, you'll need to bring your own ball.

Q. Are there going to be school trips?

A. We really hope we will be able to get back to school trips and extra-curricular activities but that will be dictated by government and authority guidance.

Q. What after schools club usually run?

A. There are lots of clubs you can take part in – a timetable of these will be handed out on the Open Days or when you join us in August.

Useful Websites

*sleepfoundation.org
youngminds.org.uk
bbcbitessize*

Search Facebook for Ellon Academy P7 Transition 2021 for lots of up to date information and a virtual tour of the school.

Enjoy your last week at Primary School, have fun at the open day and enjoy your holidays.

It was great to visit so many of the primary schools and lots of you over the past term, I hope I managed to answer all your questions and you're feeling really exciting about the move to S1. See you in August!

Steph Smith, Pupil Support Worker