



ELLON ACADEMY WEEKLY INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/CARERS



To: All parents/carers
From: Pauline Buchan, Rector
Subject: Weekly Information Up-date
Date: Friday 11th December 2020

Quote of the Week beginning 14.12.20. Thanks to the Exec Team for this quote:

I will honour Christmas
in my heart, and try
to keep it all the year.
I will live in the Past,
the Present,
and the Future.
The Spirits of all Three
shall strive within me.
I will not shut out the
lessons that they teach.

READS
READS #Charles Dickens

Just a word of thanks to parents and carers for your patience and forbearance as we have tried to cope with the range of information from the NHS this week. We appreciate your continued support. Here are the updates for this week:

Virtual Assembly:

This week's Virtual Assemblies were slightly different for S1/2/3 and S4/5/6. The Senior one focussed on SQA and our January Assessment Block. However, there are still many unanswered questions which we hope will be answered by the SQA and our Local Authority in the near future. We acknowledge the stress and anxiety that the on-going uncertainty is generating for our senior pupils and also our staff and we would like to assure you that as a school, we will do our very best for our learners and also to support our staff for the vast workload that these changes inevitably imply.

The S1/2/3 assembly focused on our Covid-19 mitigations to continue to emphasise to our pupils the importance of complying with our school-based mitigations and risk assessment. Next week's assembly will be on Thursday 17th December and will have a Christmas theme. Registration will be extended for 5 mins to allow viewing of the assembly and for Register Teachers to read the daily bulletin notices to all learners.

Next Parent Council Meeting

The last Parent Council meeting of 2020 will be held virtually via Skype for Business on Tuesday 15th December at 7pm. You will be invited to let us know if you'd like to take part via the Chair of the Parent Council, Mr Nick Topping. The Parent Council have also been proactive in sourcing avenues of support for families and this week we have included some more signposting information. The themes are Exam Stress, Parenting, Separation and Divorce, Additional Support Needs and Alcohol and Drugs:

Signposting Support for Families

<https://www.children1st.org.uk/help-for-families/parentline-scotland/>

Separation and Divorce

<https://www.children1st.org.uk/help-for-families/parentline-scotland/guidance-advice/separation-and-divorce/>

Managing Stress

<https://www.children1st.org.uk/help-for-families/parentline-scotland/guidance-advice/coping-with-stress/>

Additional Support Needs

<https://enquire.org.uk/>

<https://www.familyfund.org.uk/>

<https://reach.scot/>

<https://www.mindroom.org/news/>

<https://www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk>

<https://www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk/sites/default/files/library/Training/Resources/DyslexiaGuide.pdf>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/developmental-coordination-disorder-dyspraxia/>

<https://www.understood.org/en/learning-thinking-differences/child-learning-disabilities/dyspraxia/understanding-developmental-coordination-disorder-dcd>

Exam Stress

<https://young.scot/get-informed/national/five-tips-on-looking-after-yourself-during-exams>

<https://young.scot/get-informed/national/how-you-can-survive-the-stress-of-exams>

<https://www.studentminds.org.uk/examstress.html>

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/feelings-and-symptoms/exam-stress/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/coping-with-exam-stress/>

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/school-college-and-work/school-college/exam-stress/>

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/your-stories/14-ways-to-beat-exam-stress/>

Alcohol/ Drugs

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/drug-addiction-getting-help/>

<http://www.alcoholanddrugsaction.org.uk/services/alcohol>

<http://www.nhsgrampian.org/files/english/Alcohol%20Drugs%20services.pdf>

<https://aberdeencityadp.org.uk/support-services/local-support-services/>

Thank you to Mrs H Wilson for sourcing these links.

Pupil Learning Toolkits

Our Leader of Learning, Mrs H Campbell has been busy with the help of Technician Miss S Kyle, putting S1 – S6 learning packs together for all pupils. These were distributed at registration this week.

The toolkits include a range of items including small white boards, a whiteboard pen, sponges and emoji cards.

SQA - A message for Parents and Carers (8 December 2020)

On 7 October, the Deputy First Minister announced that for 2020-21, National 5 results will be based on teacher and lecturer judgement supported by a robust set of checks – or quality assurance – which will be carried out by your child's school or college, local authority and SQA. The National Qualifications 2021 Group has overseen the development of the quality assurance process which will support teachers and lecturers in providing your child's provisional results for session 2020-21. Provisional results will be based on teachers' and/or lecturers' professional judgement of your child's evidence. The results will be finalised following various layers of quality assurance, including sampling by SQA senior subject specialists

Here is how the National 5 quality assurance model will work in session 2020-21:

November 2020 to March 2021 - Teachers and lecturers use guidance and assessment materials to help gather learner evidence.

January to April - SQA requests, reviews, and provides feedback on samples of assessment evidence from each school and college.

March to May - Schools, colleges and local authorities will work through SQA feedback and carry out their own quality assurance of the provisional results.

By 28 May - Schools and colleges submit quality assured provisional results.

June

SQA carries out national check of provisional results and may follow up on any issues with schools, colleges and local authorities. These processes are in place to ensure that a National 5 awarded in the North of Scotland is of the same standard as one which is awarded in the South of Scotland, and everywhere in between.

Most of the support will be provided before the school or college submit your child's provisional results to SQA. This should reduce the need for schools and colleges to resubmit provisional results following SQA review in June. If your child's provisional results need to be adjusted to reflect their evidence, this will follow discussion between their school or college and SQA.

Fairness for your child

SQA is developing an equality impact assessment as part of this quality assurance model which aims to ensure fair and credible results for all National 5 learners. Schools, colleges, local authorities and SQA are committed to working together to support teachers and lecturers in providing their provisional results in 2020-21.

We are discussing the appeals process for 2020-21 and will keep you informed of progress. To stay up to date on 2021 National Qualifications visit www.sqa.org.uk/NQ2021.

The National Qualifications 2021 Group*

*Represented by the National Parent Forum of Scotland, Scottish Government, Education Scotland, SQA, Local Authorities, School Leaders Scotland, Colleges Scotland, Scottish Council of Independent Schools, the EIS Teaching Union and, from this week, the Scottish Youth Parliament.

Here is a link to information for pupils too:

https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/96098.html?mkt_tok=eyJpIjoiTWpJNU1Ua3hPRFF6TWpkaCIsInQiOiJSQjRrTUtrR3RzTEFnRUV4Uzk2TWlnZkNaZXEyTHRwOCTPTEJJbytHUWp4eStXS29uVnJKT3NPUTRwRVFjdWFHmN3emo0SXNITk95ZHkUXI3dFwvVkm5TXFSMzQ4c21FeFlzQVIHVW5KSmRzUHhNWjFLbjN2MUhOXc9hSVRmQzBGIn0%3D

Heating and Ventilation Up-date:

Staff and pupils can all wear 'permissible flexible clothing' in school in order to remain warm where this is necessary; this includes outdoor coats and jackets.

Our latest risk assessment update has the following information/guidance from the LA regarding heating and ventilation:

Schools should as a minimum ensure that adequate levels of ventilation and appropriate temperatures are maintained, with reference to the School Premises Regulations. The primary effective method of increasing natural ventilation remains the opening of external doors, vents and windows. Wherever it is practical, safe and secure to do so, and appropriate internal temperatures can be maintained in line with statutory obligations, this approach should be adopted.

Ventilation

- *partially opening doors and windows to provide ventilation whilst reducing draughts*
- *opening high level windows in preference to low level to reduce draughts*
- *purging spaces by opening windows, vents and external doors (e.g. between classes, during break and lunch, when a room is unused, or at other suitable intervals if a space is occupied for long periods at a time)*

Temperature

- *providing flexibility in permissible clothing while indoors – including coats and jackets.*
- *designing seating plans to reflect individual student/staff temperature preferences*
- *adjusting indoor heating to compensate for cold air flow from outside (e.g. higher system settings, increased duration)*

Centralised or local mechanical ventilation systems should wherever possible be adjusted to full fresh air. Air recirculation should be avoided or minimised.

Young Enterprise – Flames 'n' Frames

Our Young Enterprise pupils have been so busy making lovely Christmas candles, wax melts and photo frames and will be stationed in the sunken social area to display and sell their products at various break and lunchtimes in the run up to Christmas.

Christmas Jumper Day/Foodbank Donations – Friday 11th December

We were delighted and overwhelmed by your most generous response to our local Foodbank donations today. It was heartening to see so many pupils with their bags of non-perishables today. The Ellon Storehouse are due to pick up these donations soon and this will benefit so many families in the Ellon area. Thank you all so much for your support.

Reminder of Ellon Academy Christmas Lunches

Christmas lunch will be served to different year groups on the dates below. S4 pupils had the choice of a lovely turkey dinner with all the trimmings this week:

S5/6 - Wednesday 16th December

This falls in line with the year groups that get out early for lunch on specific days each week.

Christmas lunch will be an option amongst other options every Wednesday from the 18th Nov until the end of term. Other options, including gluten free and vegetarian/vegan meals will be on offer too. Each year group will have an opportunity to have a Christmas lunch and this would also be an option for the other year groups and staff on the day too – if there's any left!

S6 Charities Committee

The S6 Charities Committee have organised a Giving Tree for the ARCHIE Foundation.

They are asking staff to take a bauble from the tree (they are laminated and have been wiped!) and donate an appropriate gift for the age and gender on that tag. They are also collecting for a hamper which is to be given to NHS staff working on the wards over Christmas. Well done to them all.

Elevate Magazine:

As a result of Covid-19, it has been one whole year since the last edition of Elevate Magazine. The March 2020 edition had to be cancelled as we moved into lockdown and our priorities shifted significantly to learning from home. Work has started on a December 2020 edition and this should be ready to be sent to parents/carers before the Christmas break.

Have a lovely weekend,

Yours sincerely,

P Buchan

Pauline Buchan, Rector
11.12.20