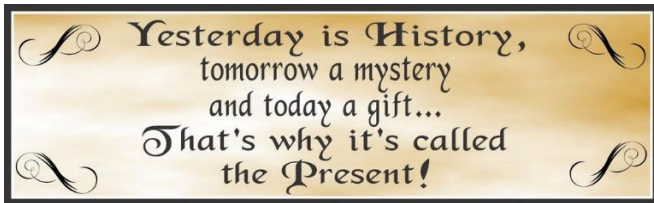


ELLON ACADEMY WEEKLY INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/CARERS



To: All parents/carers
From: Pauline Buchan, Rector
Subject: Weekly Information Up-date
Date: Friday 4th December 2020

Quote of the Week beginning 7.12.20. Thanks to the Exec Team for this quote:



Here are the updates for this week:

Virtual Assembly:

Thanks to our Exec Team for their Virtual Assembly last week detailing some of our Christmas Community Plans. Next week's Virtual Assembly will be shown on **Thursday 10th December**. There will be 2 separate assemblies, one for S1/2/3 and one for S4/5/6. The senior assembly will have information regarding our January Assessment Block. 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.

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 over the next two weeks we will include some signposting information. This week the theme is Mental Health, Managing Stress and Finances. Over the next two weeks we will also cover Exam Stress, Parenting, Separation and Divorce, Additional Support Needs and Alcohol and Drugs themes:

Mental Health:

<https://www.samaritans.org/?nation=scotland>

<https://www.samh.org.uk/about-mental-health/mental-health-problems>

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

<https://enquire.org.uk/publications/talking-to-your-child-about-anxiety-related-absence/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/suicide/>

Managing Stress:

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

Finances:

<https://www.mygov.scot/ema/>

<https://www.mygov.scot/young-carer-grant/>

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.

S2 Engineering Challenge

Both S2 Teams are through to the final of Build Your Future Challenge in partnership with NESCoL and will compete against each other in January.

Team 1

Grace 2K1, Sienna 2C1, Hayley 2F1, Duncan 2C1, Findlay 2F1,
Megan 2F1, Heather 2M1, Jack 2M1, Rebecca 2S1, Rebecca 2S1.

Team 2

Ross 2S1, Blair 2F2, Leah 2F2, Liam 2M2, Mauli 2M2,
Gregor 2M2, Hannah 2M2, Sam 2S2, Teigan 2S2, Charlie 2S1.

Well done to them all.

Christmas Jumper Day – Friday 11th December

All pupils and staff will be invited to wear a Christmas Jumper on Friday 11th December or just a general dress down. We can confirm that we are asking pupils to bring non-perishable items for the Ellon Community Food Bank, and these will be subject to a covid risk assessment before distribution.

Reminder of Ellon Academy Christmas Lunches

Christmas lunch will be served to different year groups on the dates below. S3 pupils had the choice of a lovely turkey dinner with all the trimmings this week:

S4 - Wednesday 9th December
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 too.

SLT Strategic Planning this week:

- Covid Case Communication and planning
- Google Classroom for self-isolating pupils
- Senior Phase January Assessment Block planning
- Skills Development Strategy
- Curriculum Plans for session 20/21
- Pupil Learning Survey – Learning in the Broad General Education (S1/2/3)
- Promoting Positive Relationships – Looking at the use of Merits
- Assessment Calendars and Moderation Cycles

Staffing up-date:

Principal Teacher Pupil Development

Mr N Coe joined us this week and has made a great start in his new role as Principal Teacher Pupil Development, working closely with Mr McLachlan DHT and our Principal Teachers of Guidance.

Teacher of Technical Education

Mr H Bester will be joining our Technical faculty in January have successfully secured this post after interviewing this week. We look forward to welcoming him to Ellon Academy.

Teacher of English

After interview today, Miss H Pirie will join our English faculty when her start date has been negotiated with her current school. We look forward to welcoming her to Ellon Academy.

Positive Case Covid-19 this week

This is the message posted on our Facebook page this week regarding a new positive case of Coronavirus in our school community:

Thursday 3rd December 2020.

To ensure that all our communication channels have been used, we are posting this message to inform our parents/carers that there is a new identified positive Covid-19 case affecting our school community. Firstly, our we send our warmest wishes to the family affected and hope for a full and speedy recovery.

Our first priority this afternoon was to contact the parents/carers of those pupils who may potentially have been in close contact with the affected person. These pupils have been asked to stay at home tomorrow to allow Track and Trace to call and establish close contact status. If close contact status is ruled out, these pupils can return to school as normal on Monday 7th December. However, if they are deemed to be close contacts, they will be required to self-isolate at home for 14 days as per NHS advice and guidelines. Teachers will ensure that Google Classroom will be updated for these pupils during their time of self-isolation. Siblings of pupils asked to self-isolate can still attend school as per NHS advice. The parents and carers of all other pupils were sent a letter via email/xpressions this afternoon to advise of the current situation. This letter has been uploaded to our school website.

Please follow the link below to view.

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

All other pupils should attend school as normal tomorrow and we can reassure parents/carers that all affected classrooms and areas have been subject to additional cleaning, over and above the current norms. Our 2nd priority this evening was to send the contact details of potential close contacts to the Health Protection Team and this has taken most of this evening with all members of Senior Leadership working on this task.

Our final priority this evening was to compose this message to ensure we reach our whole school community. We had already been in touch with the Chair of the Parent Council this afternoon and we are appreciate of the support of the PC. We will be happy to take calls to answer any questions you may have in the morning, but please be aware that we will not be able to disclose any confidential information and we ask that we avoid any speculation for the wellbeing of all concerned. Thank you all and stay safe.

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.

YPI Grand Final

On Wednesday 2nd December, our S6 Class Finalists took part in the Youth Philanthropy Initiative Grand Final in the Theatre in the afternoon. The panel of judges were overwhelmed by the moving and creative presentations and we are delighted to announce that the winning group represented the Aberdeen In Recovery Charity and £3,000 from the Wood Foundation will be donated to this worthwhile cause. The runner up was Logan's Fund, who will receive all the money collected from the next dress down day. Well done to all, we are very proud of each and every team.

Kafta Shoe Box Appeal

This year the Exec Team are running the usual Christmas Shoe Box appeal for refugees in Greece. They are asking if Register Teachers could collect donations from pupils in bags from Monday 30th November until Friday 11th December. Some possible donations include:
Toiletries, stationery, toys, small games, colouring books (not books to read), hats and gloves.
Please do not donate any sweets. Thank you.

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.

S4 Seating at social times:

As you may be aware, especially if you have a child in S4, that the social time seating in the Street is limited. Therefore, from Monday 7.12.20, we plan to change our pupil gathering areas around a little to give our S4s more space as follows:

- S1 – Canteen as usual
- S2/3 – Sunken Social Area and the Street
- S4 – Canteen
- S5 – S5 Social Area and Maths Open Learning Area
- S6 – S6 Social Area

Have a lovely weekend,

Yours sincerely,

P Buchan

Pauline Buchan, Rector
4.12.20