



## MINTLAW ACADEMY

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### NEWSLETTER: Term 3 2014/15

1	Trip to Health Village	10	SQA Exams
2	Celebrating Success	11	A Rights Respecting School
3	Health & Wellbeing Young Leaders	12	MySchool App
4	Concert	13	Mymaths
5	Charities	14	Course Consumable Charges - Session 2015/2016
6	Burns Supper	15	PTA Mega Draw
7	Science	16	Dates for your Diary
8	Holocaust Memorial Day	17	Other Important Dates for your Diary
9	Netball Club		

### Introduction

Welcome the newsletter for term 3, this session. I really do hope you enjoy reading it and finding out about all the many exciting, challenging, stimulating, enjoyable activities that are going on in our school both in and outside of the classroom.

I am delighted to note that our website has had over 250,000 visitors to it and we have recently slightly revamped the front page to include news to celebrate the many successes in our school. Please do take a moment to have a look and let us know if there is anything you would like that could further improve the website.

Last week we confirmed that Ms Clarke (Home Economics), Mr Patterson (Music) and Ms Anderson (PE) have been offered and accepted full time position to our teaching staff. I am also really pleased that Mr Shapiro will start in May as our new teacher of Computing. Mr Gale (Acting) PT Music will extend his time with us for a further 23 months which is also great news.

We are heading into "Exam Season" and unfortunately for our "Senior Phase" students (S4-S6) the forthcoming holiday is anything but a holiday as they will be studying hard for these important exams. We are running some Easter Revision Classes during the holidays to help support students and more information about these can be seen on the school website. Further support materials to help with revision can also be found on the website.

On Friday 20 March we held our 2nd "Business Breakfast" which was attended by over 60 local businesses who have subsequently offered to work with the school to provide opportunities to build employability skills with our learners which in addition to our revised and updated "Senior Phase

Curriculum" will help to prepare our young people for the very challenging world of work and learning when they leave school.

Next term is always exceptionally busy as we prepare and complete the final exams in May and then move to change the timetable and start new courses all over again in June. There will be inevitable staff changes but I am delighted to report that all areas of the curriculum will be covered and staffed for next session.

I wish all our S4-S6 the very best of luck with their forthcoming exams and I would also like to thank the entire Mintlaw Academy school community for making this an excellent place to learn, teach and work.

Thank you and have a great holiday

**A Horberry (Headteacher)**

## 1. Trip to the Health Village, Aberdeen

H Richards

On the 26th February 2015 the S3/4 Connexions Science class and the S3 Fresh Start Photography class went on a joint trip to Aberdeen Health Village. During their time there, they received information on dental hygiene and a healthy diet. They were also treated to Mrs Reid's Photography Exhibition and the photography pupils were so inspired that they have subsequently had their photographs exhibited in the village. Staff and pupils would like to thank Mr Sandy Reid and his staff very much for the welcome, information and time they gave to all. It was a most enjoyable and worthwhile visit.

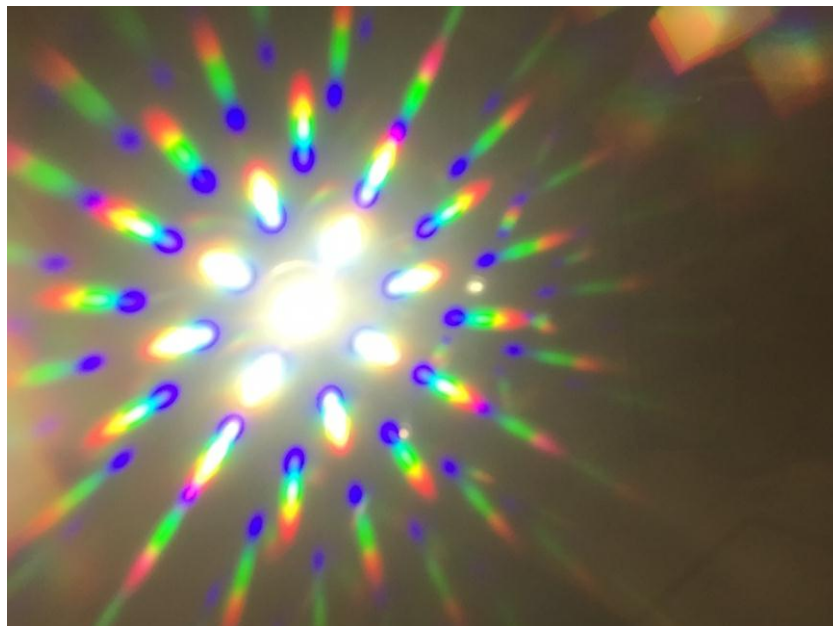
## 2. Celebrating Success

R Anderson

Throughout the school there are numerous achievements and successes that go on unrecognised by the wider community. To try and celebrate more 'Good News' throughout the school we now have a section on the website which is updated weekly to advertise these items. Below are some examples of Good News that have been published:

The Mintlaw Academy Fresh Start Group now have a photography exhibition running in Aberdeen Health Village, go along to see their brilliant work!

Miss Stephen's S2 Science class have been investigating refraction of light as part of their Light topic. Ellie Campbell (2B1) took these amazing photographs using refraction glasses to show the splitting of white light.



### 3. Health and Wellbeing Young Leaders

Miss MacQueen

Nine sixth year pupils have been working throughout the year to gain a Health and Wellbeing Leadership Award. To do this, the seniors organised and delivered an S1 'Respect Me' event in November. The seniors devised and delivered four workshops which, as well as stressing teambuilding skills, helped pupils examine the effects of bullying on a person's wellbeing. In addition to organising this successful day, the young leaders analysed the qualities of a famous leader and discussed the valuable skills that they had learned from carrying out the event.

The group then created a poster and a presentation to summarise their day. As this is an Aberdeenshire wide initiative, three pupils, Roxy Dyson, Becky Tosh both 6B and Ellie Cahill 6M, went to Woodhill House in Aberdeen to present their group's achievement in front of other schools, councillors, NHS Grampian representatives and other members of the education authority.

Working towards gaining the award has been a rewarding experience for the senior pupils and has given them an insight into how Health and Wellbeing is at the core of an individual's success. Organising the S1 event as a group encouraged them to also realise that "working as a team divides the tasks and multiplies the success".

### 4. Concert

D Donald

The Spring Concert, held in the Gym Hall, was an excellent evening of varied musical entertainment. From the lilting ballad "A Thousand Years", to the Concert Orchestra belting out the James Bond theme tune, there was something for everyone in the packed programme.

As well as established groups like the Ceilidh Band performing a traditional *Gay Gordons* and a *Dashing White Sergeant*, we also had performances from some new groups, like rock band, *Segregated Elephant*, who played a medley of their own music. The *Groove Band* allowed improvisation into the programme for the first time, while the *Percussion Group*, *Brass Group*, *Orchestra* and *Concert Band* played a wide variety of up-beat pieces. Soloists included sixth year Rebecca Phelan on the *Classical Guitar*, fifth year pupil Matthew Henderson on the violin, fifth year Alisha McGregor on the xylophone, as well as Leah Watt who played and sang "A Thousand Years". "Flower Duet", played by flautists Anna Strachan and Justine Phelan, two numbers from the choir - "When You Believe" and "Twist and Shout" - and a guest appearance by the Fetterangus Primary school music group completed the evening.

The audience enjoyed coffee, tea, juice and home-made cupcakes (thanks to the S3 Home Economics class) at half-time. At the end of the evening, Mr Horberry thanked everyone for coming along to the concert, declaring it the best he had attended in his teaching career. Thanks must go to Mr Gale and Mr Paterson as well as the music instructors who prepared the pupils so well for the evening.

## 5. Charities

Friday the 13th is a date that is normally associated with dread but which has turned out to be a day of enjoyment at Mintlaw academy when pupils and staff wore 'Onsies' to school on behalf of Red Nose Day. The odd tiger, lion, dinosaur and various Pokémon's and a shy unicorn were seen wandering the corridors of the school. The senior pupils of the charities committee also got together and baked 120 cupcakes which had pupils and staff queued out of the Home Economics department, every cupcake was sold by the end of morning break! A great big thank you goes to Mrs McGillivray and Mrs Pollard for all their help in organising and allowing the budding bakers to make the delicious cupcakes. At lunchtime the fun continued when pupils could get their faces painted in the social area and or play dodge ball in the main gym hall. Again a big thank you goes to the PE staff and especially Miss Currie for allowing us to use the gym hall and for helping out with the dodge ball. Also I would like to thank you to Dion's Mum for allowing us to borrow her face paints, Mrs Carol Brook for organising a cake sale and Mr Mair for dressing up and dancing in his onsie in public whilst waiting on his football team coach. Overall a wonderful day with the total being raised £1021.43.

## 6. Burns Supper

D Donald

The annual Burns Supper for Senior Pupils and staff took place on Thursday 12th February at the Ban Car in Lonmay.

This year's event, as ever, was a great success. Around 130 pupils and staff arrived in their finery and after they were seated, the haggis, carried by sixth year serving wench Iona Robertson, was piped in by third year pupil Beth Cruickshank.

The Address to the Haggis, the first Burns poem of the evening, was ably recited by Nenah Bradford and Lisa Ross, after which the traditional Selkirk Grace was said by Aimee Mowat.

After a lovely meal of broth or fruit cocktail, haggis, mince, neeps and tatties (with a vegetarian alternative) followed by cloutie dumpling or peach melba, the formal part of the evening commenced.

Matthew Henderson, the chairman, introduced the main guest speaker of the occasion, Mintlaw Academy's very own Mr Alex Mair, to deliver the Immortal Memory, the speech dedicated to commemorating Scotland's Bard, Robbie Burns. Mr Mair earned his fair share of laughs, delivering a lively, light-hearted yet enlightening speech, in which he revealed his hidden ambition as a singer. There is no doubt that Mr Mair, if you ever hang up your "jimmies", the X Factor beckons!

Following Mr Mair, it was the turn of Jonathan Addison to Toast the Lasses. Jonathan's speech tried to undermine the fairer sex - but he failed dismally to hide his true admiration for the girls of Mintlaw Academy. Morgan Irvine offered a lively reply to Jonathan's speech, sticking up for the female species in a feisty though equally tongue in cheek manner.

Lisa Ross entertained with a beautiful rendition of the Rowan Tree, singing along while playing on her clarsach. The evening's formal proceedings were then drawn to a close with Jenna Milne delivering the Vote of Thanks.

After a rush to fill out their dance cards, the pupils danced to the Garioch Blend for the remainder of the evening. Local photographer Neil Willox was in attendance and took photos of individuals and groups throughout the evening. Overall, the evening was deemed a great success by all who attended. Grateful thanks must go to Mrs Duncan and Miss Stephen, who between them organised another excellent Burns Supper. Next year is the event's 25th anniversary - see you there!

## **7. Science+ technology x staff + pupils = Learning+ fun+ excitement!**

British Science week took place this year from 13th-22nd March. To mark this, staff and pupils at Mintlaw Academy took part in a variety of Science and Technology Events. One of the most exciting was part of the P7 Induction Programme which saw 147 P7 pupils descend on the academy over two days to experience science and technology in action.

Accompanied by their P7 teachers, pupils from Mintlaw Academy's associated primaries participated in a series of four hands-on workshops to introduce them not only to the academy and some of the staff, but also to the wonders of science and technology. In addition, working in mixed school groups gave the P7s a chance to meet and get to know each other in preparation for their move here in August.

In the science department under the direction of Miss Wallace, Miss Stephen, Mrs Reid and the pupils of 3-Connexions Science, the P7 pupils donned their protective goggles and got down to creating a bouncy ball using glue and custard powder. The S3 pupil helpers ensured that safety rules were enforced and ably explained how to measure and mix accurately so that chemical magic could be created. Everyone was sceptical that custard powder could ever be made to bounce but, 147 bouncy balls later, the scepticism had turned to amazement!

Downstairs in the Social area, Mr Hynd and his helpers were involved in a team-building exercise and were constructing a bridge out of wooden dowels and rubber bands. This task introduced important engineering concepts to the pupils and they soon realised that trial and error is all part of the design process. Working together as a team, the young pupils were soon able to create their structures which were big enough for the whole group of 20 to sit underneath.

Also in the social area was a project led by engineers from SCORE in which the pupils were encouraged to problem-solve using valves. Pupils disassembled a complex valve and had to work together to decide which parts could be recycled and which would be unsuitable for reuse. This was a real life application of the process and the P7s interacted well with the visitors and enjoyed the session.

Finally, the fourth workshop dealt saw the creation of a polymorph. Under the direction of Miss Grant, P7 pupils participated in creating a 'smart' material which, when heated, could be moulded to any shape. When cooled, the material holds its shape: science and technology for the 21st century!

All of the workshops were fun and informative and gave the P7 pupils an idea of the sort of activities they might be participating in when they come to the academy. Academy staff were ably assisted by a team of S3 pupils who interacted well with the younger pupils and are to be commended for their maturity and helpfulness and for the positive impression they made on the visitors.

Primary seven pupils will be continuing their induction to the Academy with further events later this term culminating in their three day visit in June.

## 8. Mintlaw Academy pupils mark Holocaust Memorial Day

J Robinson

Pupils at Mintlaw Academy were involved in marking Holocaust Memorial Day on January 27th in a variety of ways.

There were assemblies held for all year groups which gave pupils the opportunity to remember the millions of individuals who died or were affected by the Holocaust. Pupils also participated in a display project which included photographs of dramatic works based on the Holocaust, survivor's stories and quotations of young people's reactions to learning about these harrowing events.

In addition, two pupils from Mintlaw Academy, Fiona Park 5B and Ainsley Morrison 6D visited Auschwitz as part of the Holocaust Educational Trust's 'Lessons from Auschwitz' Programme. Upon their return they were the guest bloggers on Colin McKenzie's, former Aberdeenshire Council Chief Executive, blog and vividly described their experiences.

Ainsley wrote "When we arrived at Auschwitz, we were guided through some displays of items, including piles of shoes and clothes, which were all removed from prisoners as they entered the camp.

"We also saw photographs of some of the victims of the camp. This was very poignant as I was able to see lots of the different faces of the Holocaust."

Fiona noted: "You really can't appreciate the size of the camp until you see it for yourself. It's very easy to just think of the numbers but it's harder to think about the fact that every one of those numbers represents a single person with their own stories, families, goals, dreams and lives."

Ainsley continued: "The trip was very interesting and a good opportunity to have been able to have been given a chance to go on. I am going to keep the memory alive by giving assemblies at my school about what I learned on the trip."

Fiona concluded: "I think that the Holocaust is something that everyone needs to know about. The whole trip was definitely something that I will always remember and will always pass on my knowledge about.

"I also think that anyone who gets the opportunity to go should go."

## 9. Netball Club

T Siwek

After starting up a Netball club after school at Mintlaw Academy at the end of September 2015, the girls were entered into a local tournament held at Fraserburgh Academy, which was held on Thursday 6th November 2015, the tournament was for players in S1 and S2 and only 1 team per school could be entered. The tournament consisted of the following local academies: Fraserburgh, Gordon Schools (Huntly), Mintlaw, Turriff, Ellon, Meldrum, Inverurie and Peterhead, who all came together for a day of netball.

The teams were split into 2 groups, the Mintlaw group consisted of:  
Mintlaw, Turriff, Ellon, Inverurie

The girls played each of the teams and the winner of that group played the runner up of the other group, and vice versa with the other group.

The girls played exceptionally well and the results were as follows:

Mintlaw v Turriff 9 - 0

Mintlaw v Ellon 4 - 1

Mintlaw v Inverurie 7 - 0

They came out winners of their group so played the runners up of the other group in a semi final, the results were :

Semi Final 1 Mintlaw v Huntly 6 - 4

Semi Final 2 Meldrum v Turriff 1 - 3

The girls went on to play Turriff in the final, which again resulted in a win for the Mintlaw girls with a score of Mintlaw v Turriff 8 - 2.

This was the first tournament the girls had played in and the first time they had played as a team. The Mintlaw team consisted of the following players:

GS Chelsea Robbie S1, GA Lara Sanders S1, GK Maisie Cowie S1, GD Joanne McDonald S2

C Ellie Massie S1, WA Rhian Johnston S2, WD Emma Stephen S2

Reserves: Wallis Henderson S1, Ellie Gray S1, Fiona Ducker S1

The team was awarded a shield for the school and a medal each.



The girls are continuing to play some fantastic netball and are currently waiting to play in the quarter finals of the Scottish Schools Cup, all of that team consists of S1 players, we also have another team in the same competition and they are older girls who haven't played netball for a number of years, they too are waiting to play their quarter final, the older girls team consists of players from S2 - S6.



## 10. SQA Exams - S4-6

G Oldham

### Exam Timetable

The Easter holidays are a crucial time for pupils in S4-6 preparing for their exams. The dates of the exams are on the SQA website and pupils have been issued with a booklet 'Your Exams 2014 - what you need to know'. This has the exam dates in it as well as advice and information to help pupils fulfil their potential in the exams. On the back cover of this booklet there is a tear off card for pupils to record their personal details and Scottish Candidate Number (SCN). They should complete this card and bring it to every exam.

The exam timetable for the school will be on the exam notice board before the end of Term 3 and this will have the start and finish times of the exams on it. Pupils will be issued with their personalised exam timetable during the first week back after the Easter break. This will show their seat number and room as well as the times for the different exams. A covering letter will accompany this timetable giving final information relating to the exams including information about what to bring on the day of an exam and what it is acceptable to bring into the exam room.

### Revision

A structured programme of revision must be undertaken over the Easter holidays. Pupils should be doing a number of hours of revision each day, over the break and in the lead up to their exams. They should vary the subjects that they revise as well as the activities that they do when they are revising. They should be active when they revise - attempting past papers, making summary notes, or listing key terms and definitions are all examples of effective revision strategies.

Past papers and mark schemes are also available from the SQA website. Please use the past paper finder available at the following address:

[http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/CCC\\_FirstPage.jsp](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/CCC_FirstPage.jsp)

### Exam results

These will arrive in the post on Tuesday 4th August by first class mail. We would encourage all pupils to register for 'MySQA'. Details of how to do this are in the 'Your Exams' booklet issued to all pupils. In addition, all S4-6 pupils have recently received a leaflet specifically about this service. Pupils should go to [www.mysqa.info](http://www.mysqa.info) in order to activate their account so that results can be emailed or texted to them directly on the 4th August. They must register by 5.00pm on Monday 13th July.

### Results Services.

SQA's Results Services have replaced the Appeals Service for all National Courses where an exam or coursework contributes to the final grade. More detail about the two services can be found at <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/69127.5385.html>

Should you have any questions or concerns relating to these 'Results Services' please contact Mr Oldham: the SQA Coordinator for the school.

### Study Leave

The last day for pupils in S4 and S5 to be in school will be Monday 27th April. Study leave for S4 and S5 will therefore begin on Tuesday 28th April.

The last day in school for pupils in S6 will be Friday 24th April. Study leave for S6 pupils will therefore begin on Monday 27th April.

Pupils returning to S5 and S6 should attend school on Tuesday 2nd June when their new timetable will begin.

## 11. Mintlaw Academy: A Rights Respecting School

J Robinson

This term Mintlaw Academy began its journey towards gaining a UNICEF UK Rights Respecting School Award (RRSA). A rights-respecting school is a community where children's rights are learned about, taught, practised, respected, protected and promoted. Achievement of this award is encouraged and supported by Aberdeenshire Council and the Scottish Government.

To gain this award, pupils and staff of Mintlaw Academy must gather evidence which shows that young people and the recognition of their rights are at the centre of our school's ethos and culture. In addition, we must prove that pupils have a voice which is heard in all aspects of school business.

Pupils at Mintlaw Academy are already highly participant in school affairs and are encouraged through membership of the Pupil Senate and the Senior School Executive to take an active role in the running of the school. Pupil opinion is already sought, gathered and acted upon in all aspects of school - from lesson planning to the design and layout of classroom spaces. Gaining the award will ensure that that this pupil voice is fully embedded in all aspects of school life across the entire school community.

Recently pupils in all year groups were made aware of how some of the rights they enjoy as residents of Scotland may not be afforded to young people in other countries. They were encouraged to reflect upon this and to consider how they could make the most of these rights and ensure that they were properly accessed by all. It is important for pupils of Mintlaw Academy to be aware of their responsibility as global citizens and working towards achieving this award is an excellent starting point.

Since the year assemblies were held, a steering group, comprised of pupils from across the year groups and staff, has been formed. The group is now looking to see how much is known across the school about children's rights and how much work has yet to be done to be awarded the full award. We hope to be awarded the Recognition of Commitment certificate shortly after the Easter break. Thereafter, our target is to gain level one of the award before Christmas 2015 with full RRSA recognition in 2016.

## 12. mySchoolApp - Mintlaw Academy

G Oldham

Pupils can now download our Mintlaw Academy app from either the Apple App Store or Google Play. Look for 'mySchoolApp'. You then need to sign in with your name, email, phone number, and your own PIN which you make up yourself. Login and type in 'Mintlaw Academy'.

## 13. Mymaths

S Ferguson

The Mathematics department would like to encourage the use of the website [www.mymaths.co.uk](http://www.mymaths.co.uk). This is an excellent resource which can be used for consolidation of the work done in class, further practice and revision. The site will provide pupils with up to date revision materials and homework tasks as well as many lessons on a wide range of topics which will help your child achieve their target in Mathematics.

When you first go on to the page the main login is

Login: mintlaw                  Password: pentagon

Pupils then use their own personal login and password when completing tasks, as this allows teachers to see what they have been doing. Pupils should see their teacher if they do not have their own personal login and password

To access the website on an iPad please follow the instructions below:

Download the free app "Puffin academy" and then search for "mymaths"

**14. Course Consumable Charges - Session 2015/2016****N Robertson**

In line with other schools across Aberdeenshire, Mintlaw Academy requires to levy some charge towards items described as consumables within particular subject areas. This usually refers to items which pupils can take home e.g. Art and Design, Design and Technology projects and dishes made in Home Economics. We believe it may be helpful for you to know how much money you are likely to be asked for at the beginning of the session and have included a list of last year's charges for your information. Should there be any individual circumstances which, at any time may cause particular difficulties with payment, please let your child's Guidance Teacher know. These payments will be requested either at the end of term 4 or during term 1.

**S1 Course Detail and Applicable Charges:**

Art £5

Home Economics £27

Technical £6

**S2 Course Detail and Applicable Charges:**

Art £6

Technical £6

Maths/Science/Numeracy across the curriculum £7.20

**S3 Course Detail and Applicable Charges:**

Art £15

Child Care - £50

Hospitality £80

Design and Manufacture - £15

Technical Engineering - £6

**S4 Course Detail and Applicable Charges:**

Art £10

Hospitality £95

Textiles £40

Craft Skills £30

Design and Manufacture - £20

Engineering Science - £4

Graphic Communication - £7

**S5/6 Course Detail and Applicable Charges:**

Art &amp; Design £15

Hospitality £95

Cake Craft £90

Textiles £40

Craft Skills £30

Design and Manufacture - £20

Engineering Science - £6

Graphic Communication (Nat 5) - £7

Graphic Communication (H/AH) - £6

Technical Studies - £6

H Photography - £25

## 15. PTA Mega Draw Winners



	December	January	February	March
Prize £70	Moira Milne	Tommy Robertson	Jill Seivwright	Toby Donaldson
Prize £35	Tracey Hutchison	Avril Stables	Pamela Ross	Stuart Dalgarno
Prize £15	Catrina Webster	Mary Wallace	Mr & Mrs W Duthie	Gillian Hall
Prize £10	Michael Sibert	Gillian Wood	Melanie Johnston	Linda Yule

## 16. Dates for your Diary

2014/2015

Term 4	Start of term 4	Monday, 20 April 2015
	May Day Holiday	Monday, 4 May 2015
	Occasional Day 2	Monday 1 June 2015
	End of term 4	Friday, 3 July 2015

Link:

[http://aberdeenshire.gov.uk/schools/information/term\\_dates.asp](http://aberdeenshire.gov.uk/schools/information/term_dates.asp)

## 17. Other Important Dates for your Diary

28/04/15 - 05/06/15	SQA Exams
14/05/15	S2 Reports Issued
02/06/15	Timetable Change
16/06/15 - 17/06/15	Higher Geography Fieldtrip
17/06/15	Awards Ceremony
24/06/15	P7 Visit - P7 Parents Evening
25/06/15	P7 Visit
26/06/15	P7 Visit
27/06/15 - 05/07/15	German Trip
29/06/15	Iceland Trip
02/07/15	House Challenge Day

PLEASE REMEMBER TO UPDATE THE SCHOOL OFFICE WITH ANY CHANGES TO YOUR HOME ADDRESS AND CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBERS.

This is a draft calendar and dates may change, please check website for updates.