



MINTLAW ACADEMY

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NEWSLETTER: Term 3 2017/18

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An Introduction from Mrs Duthie, Head Teacher . . .

Well, here we are at the end of another very full term. Staff and pupils alike are certainly looking forward to a well earned break. January saw our S4-6 students prepare for and sit their prelim exams, a key part of their progress towards the SQA examinations in May. On the 18th of January, we delivered a new-look Options Evening for next year's S4-S6 students, with workshop sessions by a range of partners, including parents as well as the more traditional presentations by senior staff. Feedback on the evening was extremely positive.

A key event in February, just before the long weekend was our annual Burns Supper. Senior pupils and staff enjoyed a superb evening at the Ban Car Hotel in Lonmay. The outfits, speeches, meal and dancing to the Garioch Band all contributed once again to what was indeed a memorable evening for all concerned.

Post the long weekend, we once again hosted our P7 tours. The three tours offered our P7 parents the opportunity to tour the school campus during a working day, going into classes and discuss ongoing learning with both staff and S1/2 pupils. Evaluations were extremely positive. Just under 60 parents attended the tours and feedback cited a calm atmosphere, extremely supportive staff and a wide range of provision, both curricular and extra-curricular, as key strengths.

Towards the end of February and into March, Senior Leadership staff met with all Principal Teachers to consider prelim results. One outcome was to identify particular

youngsters who may benefit and set up a mentoring programme to support any youngsters PTs felt could benefit from further support with their revision techniques. The programme is now up and running and, in conjunction with an extensive programme of revision support from faculties and departments across the school, will hopefully support our seniors to achieve their full potential in May.

The end of February saw the school closed for three days due to adverse weather. In line with almost all Aberdeenshire schools, our pupils had three extra days off whilst "The Beast from the East" caused havoc across the north east. I am delighted to share that a huge number of youngsters were able to access resources, both online and distributed by staff in advance of the three day closure to ensure, particularly for our seniors at what is a particularly challenging period, their learning was able to continue.

On Thursday 1st March, Mrs Doreen Duncan, well-loved and highly respected member of the English Faculty here at Mintlaw for over 30 years, passed away very suddenly. Mrs Duncan's passing and the days and weeks after it, was a uniquely challenging period for the Mintlaw Academy community, pupils and staff. The entire community came together to deal with Mrs Duncan's death, and compiled a wonderful Book of Memories, which was handed over to her family at the funeral service. Four senior students spoke very movingly at the service about what Mrs Duncan's huge commitment to the life of the school had been. Senior students are currently organising a memorial Ball, to be held at the school on the 20th of April, to raise monies for Mrs Duncan's favoured charities and it is hoped that her daughters will attend to take receipt of funds raised. Memories of Mrs Duncan will live on across Mintlaw Academy for many, many years to come.

On the 26th of March, Mintlaw Academy had a visit from Mr Sullivan, assessor for Customer Service Excellence. Due to the prestigious nature of the award, establishments are visited annually to ensure they continue to meet the fairly stringent criteria for success. I am delighted to share with you Mr Sullivan was delighted with the school's overall performance. Following meetings with staff, pupils and parents and an extensive tour of the school with our Head Boy and Head Girl, he was able to share that he was very impressed, all previous "partial compliances" were removed, and he plans to award us three "Compliance Plus" measures, namely areas of particular strength, for Performance Management and Collaborative Planning across the school, Working with Partners and the school's strategic approach to Information Technology. A very good news story for the school. The completed report will be published into next term and uploaded onto our school Website.

In conclusion, I would have to mention two key events as the term draws to a close. Last Saturday over 80 of our youngsters took part in Rock Challenge, an annual event aimed at supporting young people and them being involved in their own production from conceptualisation through to the live performance. The challenge is also to be the best that they can with no reliance on substances of any kind. Mintlaw's production,

dedicated to the challenges around Ground Zero, was cited as very strong in terms of video, entertainment, costume and character, visual enhancement, set design and function and stage crew. They also took home the coveted "Spirit of Rock Challenge" voted by fellow teams, for their efforts. Well done to all pupils, staff and parents involved!

Thursday 29th saw the school join forces to celebrate Sports Relief. Staff and pupils alike dressed in their sporting best for both Sports Relief and our own school fund and I am delighted to say raised an impressive £1414.38 in total! One highlight - for some - of the event was "Pie the Teacher", which saw Mrs Gore head the voting with an impressive 120 votes. Someone else's turn next year!

And finally, can I take this opportunity to wish our entire Mintlaw Academy community, pupils, parents and staff, a wonderful Easter break. It's been an exceptionally challenging three months since Christmas and time now for everyone to recharge their batteries and return, refreshed and really to face the challenges of Term 4.

MINTLAW JUNIOR GIRLS REACH SCOTTISH QUARTER-FINALS

The Mintlaw Academy Junior Girls' football team have reached the Quarter-finals of the Scottish Cup for the first time in a number of years. Having defeated Grove Academy 10-0 in Dundee and Perth Grammar School on penalties at Mintlaw, the girls travelled to Stornoway this week to play Nicholson Institute and again won the penalty shoot-out after the match ended in a 1-1 draw.

Jamie-Lee Annan scored the Mintlaw goal but it was instantly cancelled by a Nicholson equaliser. No more goals in the second half so the match went straight to penalties.

Majidah Moursil calmly scored the first spot-kick but after Nicholson missed the target with their second, Jamie-Lee, Cari Willox, Chloe Johnston and Jamilah Moursil all converted to give Mintlaw a 5-3 win from five excellent penalties!

The girls will now play either Lornshill Academy or Boroughmuir High School in the Quarter-finals at home. The result in Stornoway also resulted in a North of Scotland semi-final game v Inverurie during the next few weeks.

The girls had a great 2 days away from home and from school. They were a credit to themselves, their families and the school. They created a great impression with everyone they met with the highlight being a passenger at Stornoway telling Mr Robertson that he had travelled on the ferry with many school groups, often badly behaved, but the Mintlaw Academy girls had been the best behaved group he had ever travelled with! What a compliment and the staff were so proud and pleased to hear that comment from a complete stranger.

The girls did brilliantly on the long bus trips to and from Ullapool. They were polite, kept the bus tidy and always created a good impression. Likewise in the Heb Hostel in Stornoway, they were superb - going to bed on time and settled by 11 O'clock - well almost!! Mr Robertson, Mrs Watt and Mr Peterson could not fault them on all 4 aspects of the trip.

We also had two parents with us and Mrs Gray and Mrs Buchan had a great two days - enjoying the atmosphere and especially the football and result! Their daughters can be proud of them.

Mr Robertson, Mrs Watt and Mr Peterson had a great trip in the company of 16 outstanding girls. Long may it continue!

Finally and very importantly, Mintlaw Academy would like to thank LFH Engineering Ltd for their most generous £250 sponsorship to the school for the trip to Stornoway. It was very much appreciated.



Mintlaw Academy reach the Semi-Final of the North of Scotland Cup

Mintlaw Academy U13 Boys Football team beat Dingwall Academy in the quarter final of the North of Scotland Cup. They played some excellent football and had a convincing 8-1 win.

Scorers: Callum Moir (2), Joe Selman (3), Keane Meldrum(2), and Callum Elphinstone (pen.)

They will now play Ellon Academy in the semi-final after the Easter break.

U 15 Boys Football

The U15 Boys kept there changes of winning the Aberdeenshire League alive by defeating a very strong Peterhead Academy side. The boys were 2-1 down but fought back brilliantly to win 6-4. All boys contributed in an excellent team performance.

Scorers: Ryan Milne (2), Mathew Keith, Kian McCredie and Craig Buchan (2)

Senior Phase Options Evening

On 18th January we held our annual Senior Phase Options Evening for S3-5 parents. The evening took the form of a short introductory presentation giving an overview of the subject choice process. This was followed by a Curricular Exhibition which will provide an opportunity for parents to speak to department staff about the various courses on offer. Following on from this parents opted into a range of workshops, some delivered by our partners. These included Senior Phase Qualifications, Preparing to go to University, Apprenticeships, Wider Achievement, and NESCOL school link courses. Also involved was our Parent Council who delivered a very successful workshop on how best to support your child in the Senior Phase. Parents commented that the new format for the evening worked very well. We plan to hold a similar evening next year.

FutureChef Competition

Erin Anderson, S2, Mintlaw Academy successfully reached the final of a four stage National Cooking Competition run by Springboard in the Futurechef Competition. Erin won the Local Final for all the Aberdeenshire schools in January and then the north Scotland Regional final in Inverness. She went on to represent North Scotland at the National Final in London on the 11th - 12th March, where she competed against 11 other Regionals Finalists from across the United Kingdom. Erin produced 3 portions of a 2 course meal. TV celebrity chef Brian Turner, chairman of the FutureChef competition was on hand to lend his encouragement to all the finalists.

Her Mentor Chefs, Mr Bill Innes and Mr Ian Mundie, from Sodexo, based at Shell, St Fergus, have been supporting her throughout the competition. Graeme Strachan, North Scotland regional manager for Springboard, has also been a great support throughout the Local and Regional stages.

Unfortunately Erin was not successful at the London finals but performed extremely well against some tough competition. We wish her every success in the future if she continues her passion for cooking.



S5/6 Burns Supper

Our annual Burns Supper was held at the Ban Car Thursday 8th February. A number of our senior pupils were involved in delivering the Address to the Haggis, Selkirk Grace, the Toast to the Lassies and Reply speeches. The Immortal Memory was given by our very own Mr Alan Reid. The meal was followed by ceilidh dancing to the Garioch Blend. An enjoyable evening was had by all.



Rights Respecting School Award

Just recently, the school achieved bronze level Rights Respecting School Award. This Award is supported by UNICEF and is about becoming a rights-based community in which children are valued and are able to thrive.

In school, a group including both staff and pupils meet regularly to discuss to plan and we have surveyed both staff and pupils, collating those result and identifying what we already do for the rights education.

Our next steps are to inform the community that we exist and highlight what we do.

Throughout the year we will continue to work towards embedding the 54 rights into the ethos of the school. If you would like more information, or Tojo in the group, please contact the front office on 01771 622994 and ask for Mrs Whitehead or Ms Morris.

Sponsored Walk Results

Prize winners have been presented this term as follows:

- House Points for the house raising the most money
 1st Mormond
 2nd Ugie
 3rd Deer
 4th Brucklay
- An Afternoon Tea Party for 1M1 was held on Thursday 8th March.
- A Cineworld Voucher for pupils raising over £100 was awarded to:
 Leeann Brown - 1M1
 Tyler Buchan - 2B1
 Kyle Stuart Strachan - 2M1



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 2018' which has been published by the SQA. This has advice and information to help pupils fulfil their potential in the exams. It is very important that all pupils sitting exams this summer read this booklet carefully. The key messages will be reinforced with all pupils through assemblies at the beginning of the summer term. An electronic copy of this booklet can be found via the link below.

https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/YourExams2018.pdf

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. If, for any reason, a pupil does not have a copy of this booklet they should see Mr Oldham as soon as possible

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. Pupils with Additional Assessment Arrangements (AAA) will be issued with a personalised exam timetable by the Additional Support Needs (ASN) department which they should follow. A letter will be issued to all pupils in S4-6 giving details and dates of study leave and induction for new S5 and S6 pupils.

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/pastpapers/findpastpaper.htm>

In order to help pupils plan their revision every S4-6 pupil sitting exams this session has been issued with an SQA Exam revision planner. An electronic version of this can be found on the school website. Pupils will be encouraged to use this to break down what can seem a daunting task into manageable 'chunks'. As a starting point pupils are asked to think about how they performed in the recent prelim examinations and target those units or topics where they feel that their knowledge, understanding and skills are not as strong as they need to be. They should then decide on what would be the best revision strategies to tackle these.

Exam results

These will arrive in the post on Tuesday 7th 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 2018' booklet issued to all pupils. Pupils should go to www.mysqa.info in order to activate their account by 5pm on the 17th July so that results can be emailed or texted to them directly on the 7th August. In order to register they should have their Scottish Candidate Number (SCN) and a unique email address.

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/65428.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, S5 and S6 to be in school will be Friday 27th April. Study leave for S4, S5 and S6 will therefore begin on Monday 30th May.

'New' S5 and S6 pupils should return to school on Tuesday 5th June for their 'Induction' programme and to start their new courses. Further information about study leave and exam arrangements will be provided by letter.

S1- S2

As part of the core health programme for schools, S1 pupils are being invited to attend an introductory health assessment appointment with the School Nurse. This includes a distance vision test and a colour vision test. Details of the assessment can be found in the leaflet "An introduction to your child's named school nurse" which was issued in Term 1.

There will be a catch-up session for pupils who missed HPV vaccination on the 6th June.

All pupils

Can we ask that parents remind their children of the importance of good hand hygiene to prevent the spread of illness. We also advise that children remain off school for at least 48 hours after symptoms have settled with any vomiting and diarrhoea illness.

If any pupil has to take medication at school, please note that written consent is required. Forms are available from Mrs Robertson in the medical room.

Absence Procedure**Office**

Could parents/carers please text the Academy on **07860029120** or call the absence line on **01771 620000** to report an absence as soon as you can and leave a message at any time. Please leave pupils name, class and reason for absence. Thank you in advance.

Follow us on Twitter!**L Simpson**

A number of Faculties and Departments now have Twitter accounts, with news, photos and updates of the wide variety of activities and achievements of our pupils and staff.

Mintlaw Academy	@MintlawAcademy
Developing Young Workforce	@MintlawDYW
Home Economics Department	@MintlawHomeEc
Music Department	@MintlawMusic
Science Faculty	@MintlawSci
Social Subjects Faculty	@mintlawsocsub
Support and Challenge	@Mintlaw_SandC
Technology Faculty	@Mintlawtech

PTA Mega Draw Winners

	January	February	March
Prize £60	Brian Buchan	Mandy Noble	Lynn Dalgarno
Prize £30	Garry Taylor	Karoline McCallum	Mrs T Rhind
Prize £15	Rosealie Byrne	Mark Lovie	Shona Cumming
Prize £10	Tony Sladdin	Susan Matheson	Helen Stewart

Dates for your Diary 2017/18

Start of Term 4	Monday 16 th April
SQA Exams Begin	Monday 30 th April
May Day Holiday	Monday 7 th May
Sports Day	Tuesday 22 nd May
SQA Exams End	Monday 4 th June
Occasional Day	Monday 4 th June
Start to New Timetable	Tuesday 5 th June
Awards Ceremony	Thursday 14 th June
	Thursday 15 th June
Workshop Day	Tuesday 3 rd July
Excursions Day	Wednesday 4 th July
House Challenge Day	Thursday 5 th July
End of Term 4	Friday 6 th July
In Service	Monday 20 th August
Start of Term 1 2018/19	Tuesday 21 st August