



## MINTLAW ACADEMY

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An Introduction from Mrs Duthie . . . .

It's hard to believe we are at the end of Term 1 already. As ever this has been a very busy term at Mintlaw Academy.

Our 17-18 Executive team of Rebecca Kindness, (Head Girl) Alastair Strachan, (Head Boy) Emily Findlay (Depute Head Girl) and Luke Michie (Depute Head Boy) head up a large team of House Captains, Sports Captains and their deputies. In conjunction with our prefect group, who are made up of a small number of S4 students as well as their S5-6 peers, our seniors have been working hard to support school events.

Back in August, pupils celebrated another set of very strong results with eight S4 students gaining six Grade A National 5 Awards and three S5 students delighted to achieve straight A results across five Higher courses. Well done to them and to last year's S4-S6 as a whole who worked hard and should be very proud of their results. Both our S4 and S6 results were the strongest for the past 6 years.

Our S1 pupils are settling in and enjoying their new courses. In fact, across the school, staff are impressed with the work ethic shown by all our students. It is very pleasing to see how well turned out our youngsters are with school uniform being adhered to by almost all. I would ask your continued support in this and, in particular with should be all black, including trainers. I understand it is challenging to source all black trainers and we have agreed to accept white soles only but black otherwise. As previously I very much appreciate support shown over this. Our youngsters have attended a wide variety of events across the term already and I have had extensive feedback on how smart they look which is great to hear.

After postponing our Sponsored Walk for a week due to torrential rain, the walk did go ahead on the 20<sup>th</sup> of September, with a lovely morning - although those last back did get the occasional drop of rain! I am delighted to say that around 70% of our young people participated in the walk with our Sports Leaders supporting those who needed it. At this stage it looks like we have raised well in excess of £8,000 which will support and indeed enhance the very broad extra-curricular provision across the school.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of October we hosted a very successful Business Breakfast. The extended Mintlaw Academy Community of pupils, staff and partners enjoyed a fantastic breakfast before hearing Alison Robertson, Developing Scotland's Young Workforce coordinator for Aberdeenshire, address the group on the importance of links beyond school. A huge well done to Mrs Whitehead, Acting Depute, who along with her excellent group of senior students coordinated the event, and Ms McGillivray, who with her equally superb group of students, coordinated the catering. The real strength of the event however was the young people themselves who spoke compellingly on the opportunities to build skills to fit them for their next stage, be it college, university or the world of work. In the words of our Chief Executive, Mr Jim Savege, who was present, "Fantastic event! Fantastic young people!"

We have had a number of individual good news stories over the term. Katie Matthew, S6, received a 'Highly Commended' and 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize in her section for her photograph of the bridge at Aden. Also, Eve Coutts, again S6, has been selected to attend the German Youth Seminar during the October holidays. Eve will be part of the UK cohort travelling to Hamburg where she will discuss current issues and challenges facing our environment, seas and oceans. Together with young people from Germany, Eve will have the opportunity to explore how these issues impact our communities and future. Congratulations to Eve on this fantastic opportunity.

Coming up soon after the October break will be the In-service Days on 13/14 November. On the 14<sup>th</sup>, Mrs Richards and our Support for Learning Team has organised Dyslexia training with an additional parental session planned for the evening. More details will follow and we look forward to seeing as many of you as can attend then.

In conclusion, can I wish you and yours a lovely and relaxing October break. I look forward to seeing all our young people back ready to embark on Term 2 on the 30<sup>th</sup> of October and have every confidence that we will continue on what will be yet another successful year for the school.

### **Mintlaw Academy Therapeutic Garden**

Term 1 was a busy term for the therapeutic garden team. We have been delighted to secure additional funding that will provide us with our security fence, extra plants and some much needed wellies to stop our pupils' shoes getting muddy!

Having received the paving from Lovies and natural wooden edging from Gordon Sawmills, our pupils have been busy building up their muscles and their qualifications by digging out the paths of the garden, lining them with weed protection sheets and laying out the paving. We are also delighted to welcome on board the 'Be the Difference' Community Improvement Scheme from Scottish and Southern Energy who will be clearing the remainder of the ground and readying it for the significant amount of planting to be done next term before the frost sets in.

Next term we plan to take an inventory of our existing plants and trees and move them onto site, then make a plan of the garden and start planting. We also hope that our security fence will be going up and we can begin to plan for the reflective shelter and barbeque area in time for the summer.

So far we have been delighted with the response of local businesses and funding opportunities and would like to thank Mintlaw Academy PTA, Tesco, Shell, Crichton Inn, Mintlaw Community Council, Buchan Area Committee and SSE.

As a sustainable and continual project we are continually striving for further local involvement and support. If you would like further information or would like to become involved please contact Alex McKeown or David Coull, Mintlaw Academy, 01771 622994.

## Mintlaw Academy - Activity Week 2017

All Mintlaw Academy pupils were involved in the school's annual Activity Week which ran the last week of term. The Activity Programme started on the Tuesday with all year groups being involved the themed workshops; S2 Skill Development, S3 Apprentice - Design & Make a Muffin, S4 STEM, and S5/6 Teamwork. Workshops were led and delivered by staff, representatives from business and the Army Outreach Team.

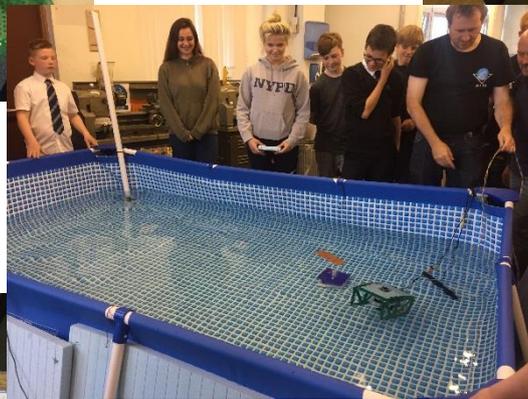
On Wednesday all 740 pupils were bussed off to various locations throughout the country. Furthest afield a group visited Edinburgh Zoo. Other trips included Transition Extreme, Landmark, Lochter Adventure Centre, Surfing at Banff, Golfing at Peterhead, Codonas and Cinema, Paintball, football coaching by AFC Community Trust, horse riding and a walk to Longside and BBQ. Needless to say trip day was the highlight of the week.

### Trip Day



## House Challenge

Finally on Thursday all pupils were involved in House Challenge. Pupils competed against other House Teams in a wide variety of activities to win points for their House. Despite the heavy rain calling off the outdoor activities, pupils were still able to complete in a range of indoor competitions which included; potted sports, designing House emojis and Christmas decorations, preparing an afternoon tea, *Grease* in a day, debating, making an ROV. After fierce competition Brucklay House, led by Mr Kilpatrick won the House shield.



## Construction Visit

This session we have a number of pupils going a one day a week Construction course at NESCOL Fraserburgh. In order to learn more about the Construction trade and the many job opportunities Ryan Urquhart of Baxter Design organised a trip for the group. The group first visited the Baxter Design premises in Old Deer and learned about the planning and design process. They were then taken to see a site under construction nearby and have the building process explained. Ryan then arranged for the group to visit the Colaren Homes site in Mintlaw. Here the group met with the site manager who explained the different jobs involved in building this development. The pupils finished off their visit with a look around the show home. The pupils said they found it really useful to hear about the many job opportunities available in the construction trade. Special thanks to Ryan, one of our former pupils, for organising this.



## CHARITIES

The charities wider achievement group this term worked with the Happy Café to raise money for the MacMillan Cancer charity and helped organise a coffee morning for the staff on 29 September. The Happy café wider achievement group raised £82 on 19 September when they invited people into the school which was well attended and everyone enjoyed their time and 'fancy pieces' with a nice cuppa. The Charities group then worked with Mrs Carr to decorate the staff room and organised the canteen ladies to help make 'Truffles' which were sold to pupils at breaktime, the staff were organised by Mrs Carr and all done an excellent job of providing lots of baking for staff to eat on their morning break, with cakes being sold at lunchtime also. The coffee morning raised £196.67, the cake sale at lunchtime raised £43.04 giving a grand total of £321.71 for MacMillan Cancer. A very big thank you goes out to Mrs Richards and the Happy Café team and Mrs Carr, her star bakers and the Charities pupils. Thank you to everyone.

This last week of term the Charities wider achievement group are hosting Mr Kenneth Thompson from the Rotary Club who is promoting the 'Shelter Box' charity campaign to raise awareness of the aid needed for the victims of the hurricanes in the last month. 'Shelter Box' are coming into school to host a series of presentations on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> October for all S1 to S3 pupils. On the last day of term Mrs Duthie has agreed that pupils can come to school in non-dress code with money being raised to support 'Shelter Box'. The presentations will highlight the fact that all the people have to wear after the hurricane was the clothes they were wearing when it hit their country or island and that is the reason pupils have been allowed to come to school to hopefully reflect on how they would feel if it was them with a £2 donation being asked for.

## Higher Geography Trips

On Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> Aug and Friday 1<sup>st</sup> September the Higher Geography class went on two fieldtrips to carry out fieldwork to collect data for their Assignments. They visited several sites in Aberdeen to carry out field sketches, traffic and pedestrian counts, and Environmental Quality Surveys. They studied the River Dee as it flows through Ballater, took a walk around Loch Muick and went to see the stunning Burn O'Vat. Great weather and a great time had by all!



### Higher Modern Studies Trip

The Higher Modern Studies pupils took a trip down to Edinburgh on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> September to visit the Parliament and the National Museum of Scotland. In the Parliament they attended an educational workshop learning about passing a bill and also had the chance to question their local MSP Gillian Martin. They then got to sit in on a very interesting debate.



### GCSE Geology Trip

The GCSE Geology class went to several locations along the coast, including Portsoy, Banff and Macduff on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> September. They carried out a number of gathering techniques to investigate the Buchan Metamorphism, including measuring the strike and dip, completing a sedimentary log, and observing minerals in the rocks. Thanks to the Geobus for helping!



### **Mintlaw Academy Sponsored Walk 2017**

On Wednesday 20 September, around 750 pupils from Mintlaw Academy, accompanied by members of staff, walked the line from Mintlaw to Maud and back to raise money for the Mintlaw Academy School Fund. The walkers set out around 9am and all were back in time for lunch - some fitter and fresher than others! As always, this year's event was notable for the supreme effort put in by pupils and staff and the incredible good humour shown by everyone who took part. Sponsor money is still coming in and to date we have raised almost £8,000 - a fantastic sum. We would like to thank all the families, friends and members of the community who supported the pupils so generously. This support means that the school can continue to run its impressive range of extra-curricular activities and to give pupils the opportunity to participate in a range of events, both locally and further afield. Your continued support is much appreciated.

### **Mintlaw Academy School Reunion - Class of 1989**

Former pupils who have or will be turning 40 this year are planning a reunion at the Country Park Inn on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2017 at 7.30pm. It would be great to have as many former staff and pupils attend as possible and we are fully aware that many pupils currently attending Mintlaw Academy are the children of former pupils so please help us to spread the word. Tickets are priced at £15p.p which will include food and entertainment and are available from Audrey Campbell, Support Services Coordinator at Mintlaw Academy.

### **Work Experience**

Work experience provides pupils with first-hand experience of the world of work. This year, around 97% of our pupils went out on work placement the week commencing 25<sup>th</sup> September. There were lots of placement opportunities arranged by pupils from a variety of sectors and this will probably have been the first experience of working life for many.

Work experience is an excellent opportunity for pupils to gain an early understanding of the importance of working practices and attitudes, and can help contribute towards decisions about future career choices.

53 pupils will be informed about work experience after the Christmas holidays and be provided with information about finding a placement for their work experience week in September 2018.

If you are an employer who is interested in offering placements then please get in touch with the Work Placement Unit: [workplacementunit@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:workplacementunit@aberdeenshire.gov.uk) or call (01224) 664905.

**School Health****K Jarvis & S Robertson****S1**

As part of the core health programme for schools, S1 pupils will be offered 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 earlier this term.

S1 Girls will receive an information pack and consent form for the HPV immunisation prior to the session in March 2018.

**S2**

S2 girls who have consented to the HPV immunisation will receive their second dose in March 2018.

**S3**

S3 pupils will receive information and a consent form for their Teenage Booster of Diphtheria, Tetanus and Polio and Meningitis ACWY immunisations prior to the session in January 2018. Pupils who have not completed their two doses of MMR previously will be offered the opportunity to receive this, if required, in March 2018.

**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.

**Medication**

If any pupil has to take medication at school, please note that written consent is required. Forms are available from the medical room. A reminder to parents who received consent forms to update prior to summer holidays. These should be returned to school ASAP.

**Online payments for school meals and consumable charges****N Robertson**

Pupils use their National Entitlement cards to make purchases at catering counters and can put money on their card via the Revaluation units at the Academy. Parents can also top up or credit pupil's cards online (and view what pupils have purchased), using the online payment facility via the Aberdeenshire Council web page Pay option. Parents are required to register onto the facility using the "MyAccount" portal, instructions are available on the Aberdeenshire Council School Meals web pages. Once successfully done this will take you to the iPayimpact facility, where you will require the unique reference code to link to pupil's accounts (separate codes for each pupil). These codes are available from the school. Consumable charges can also be paid using this facility, allowing parents to pay online if they wish, as you do for school meals.

For more detailed information on paying for school meals online, please view this web link - <http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/schools/meals/cashless-catering-in-secondary-schools/>

**Alerts System - Aberdeenshire Council****N Robertson**

If you used to receive email alerts from Aberdeenshire Council, (e.g., school closure), "MyAccount" has been introduced which will allow you to receive notifications but also provide access to other public services using a single username and password. To receive notifications you must register at <https://mygov.scot/myaccount/> and then select the alerts you wish to receive. If you pay for school meals online then you will already have a "MyAccount" setup and can use the same login details to access the new system.

**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

**Groupcall messenger - improving how we communicate with you****N Robertson**

We will write to parents next term about Groupcall messenger and how it should improve communication, for example, you will be able to directly reply to texts from the school and we will be less restricted in the length of text we can send. We will need up-to-date contact information for parents, including mobile numbers and email addresses. Look out for this next term.....

**PTA Mega Draw Winners**

	<b>September</b>
<b>Prize £60</b>	Norman Smith
<b>Prize £30</b>	Stuart Beagrie
<b>Prize £15</b>	A Watson
<b>Prize £10</b>	Katie Buchan

**Dates for your Diary 2017/18**

Start of Term 2	Monday 30 <sup>th</sup> October
S5/6 Parents Night	Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> November
S4 Parents' Evening	Wednesday 8 <sup>th</sup> November
S2 Tracking Reports	Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> November
In Service	Monday 13 <sup>th</sup> November
	Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup> November
S3 Tracking Reports	Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> November
Christmas Concert	Wednesday 13 <sup>th</sup> December
S4- S6 Full Reports	Thursday 14 <sup>th</sup> December
Christmas Break	Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> December
Start of Term 3	Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> January