



MINTLAW ACADEMY

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NEWSLETTER: Term 3 2018/19

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An Introduction from Mrs Duthie, Head Teacher . . .

Well, here we are at the end of another very busy 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. This session, post consultation, the Prelim diet was slightly earlier to ensure pupils had the results of their exams before choosing their subjects for next year. Hopefully also the longer period between the prelims and the SQA diet this session, will be helpful in terms of increased time for preparation and revision. On the 20th of February, 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. The evening commenced with a Careers Fair and Curricular displays by all Faculties. Feedback on the evening was extremely positive.

A key event in February, in a slight change of date from previously, was our new look Burns Supper. Senior pupils and staff enjoyed a superb evening at the Tufted Duck Hotel in St Combs. The outfits, speeches, meal and dancing to the band, Pepperpot, all contributed to what was indeed a memorable evening for all concerned. Thanks go to all staff and senior pupils who worked hard during the session to coordinate the evening and it was great to hear the positive feedback from the hotel staff and band members post the event.

Post the long weekend, we once again hosted our P7 Parent Tours. The four tours offered our P7 parents the opportunity to join S1/2 pupils for Assembly, tour the school campus during a working day, go into classes and discuss ongoing learning with

both staff and S1/2 pupils. Evaluations were extremely positive. Just under 70 parents attended the tours and feedback cited a calm atmosphere, consistently supportive staff and a wide range of provision, both curricular and extra-curricular, as key strengths. Our new Learning Plaza in particular was a great hit!

Towards the end of February, 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. Over the past two weeks, I have met with all Principal Teachers to evaluate where Faculties are in terms of their Improvement Planning for the current session. As always, focus on Teaching, Learning and Assessment is a priority.

On the 19th of March, Mintlaw Academy had our annual 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, and he plans to award us seven "Compliance Plus" measures, namely areas of particular strength, for Leadership of change, Learning and Teaching, Performance Management and Quality Assurance, Partnerships, Communication, Transitions and Technology. In all, 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. On Saturday over 80 of our youngsters will take part in Rock Challenge, an annual event aimed at supporting young people and then 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, "Chitimba" explores the story between poachers and key members of the local village, with tension built around the tragic impact of relationships within families, There is a real feeling that the cast are likely to be highly successful this year! All the very best to all pupils, staff and parents involved!

Secondly, post the Easter holidays, we hope finally to regain use of our playing fields to the rear of the school. Externally, we now have a grass (seasonal) running track, two football pitches, two long jump pits and the 3G astroturf all hopefully available for use from the first week of next term. And, slightly later in the term, planning is now at a fairly advanced stage for a whole-school Sports Day in May. Excellent news indeed!

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.

JUNIOR GIRLS FOOTBALL**M Watt****U15's - Away League match v Inverurie 19-12-18**

Players were thin on the group - Bobbi Middleton, Kaela Gray, Kadie Whyte, Sarah Downie, Jamie-Lee Annan, Katie Buchan, Jami, Jennifer Hall, Kirsty Reid, Eilidh Gibb, Njah McCredie, Sophia Gibb, Leah Findlay & Isla Hynd finally getting a league match. Girls got off to a great start with an early goal from Jennifer, however Banff didn't sit back taking all their chances scoring with almost every effort. Mintlaw had the better of the second half however couldn't turn possession into goals, including a missed penalty.....Jamie-Lee got a late consolation but Banff had secured the win by then. Final score 2-5

Well played all!

Concept Soccer 7s 13-3-19

Congratulations to the Mintlaw Junior Girls A team who have progressed to the next round. Some great football saw the girls beat off Fraserburgh, Kemnay, Ellon & Portlethen with Captain Jamie-Lea Annan scoring 9 goals, Sarah Downie Scored 4 and Martha Fowlie also scored 4. An outstanding display from the whole team showing great strength and skill against some very good opposition.

Unfortunately the Junior Girls B didn't make it through. They put in a lot of hard work, never gave up and conceding only one goal against the eventual winners. All pupils involved did themselves and the school extremely proud!



Burns Supper

Our annual Burns Supper was this year held at the Tufted Duck Hotel Tuesday 12th February and was organised by a committee of staff and pupils. 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 John Campbell. This was followed by a full dance floor all evening as pupils enjoyed the music of Pepper Pot. An enjoyable evening was had by all.

55 pupils



Young Philanthropy Initiative

This session our S3 pupils took part in the Youth Philanthropy Initiative (YPI) for the fourth year running. This initiative is funded by the Wood Group and involves groups of pupils working alongside each other to research social issues in the community, select a charity that aims to tackle one of these social issues, make contact with the charity, do research, visit the charity and make up a presentation. The winning group receive £3000 to hand over to their charity.

We were absolutely delighted with how the 3rd years got involved in this project which has undoubtedly improved their skills in many key areas e.g. communication, organisation and presentation skills to name but a few.

Six groups made it through to the final representing the following charities: Teen Challenge -Benaiah, Alzheimer's Scotland, Grampian Women's Aid, MND Scotland, Penumbra, Anna Ritchie School. All the finalists did an amazing job in presenting to parents and staff and should be very proud of their group work and presentation skills. The judges, who had a difficult task, selected Benaiah as the winning group. Well done to all involved.



The Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award group have completed their practice expedition this weekend. They all did so well walking from Fraserburgh to Mintlaw Academy via Mormond Hill and then Brucklay Castle. Their trek took in 2 overnight camps where they worked as a team in putting up their tents and cooking their planned meals. They were then able to relax and enjoy some smores by the camp fire.

It was great for the staff involved to see the young folk do so well - pushing themselves on through blisters, heavy rucksacks and some strong winds!

The group are now ready to plan their qualifying expedition that they will undertake in June.

We currently have some bronze groups at various stages - some are moving on to silver very soon.

Our plan for the Duke of Edinburgh award group within Mintlaw Academy is to make it as accessible as possible. We will continue to have a silver award as an option for Wider Achievement alongside some lunch time groups of bronze and perhaps silver. We are also looking at including bronze within some alternative subjects such as Fresh Start, ASDAN etc.



Vex IQ the Next Level Compaction

Code Club Members

Charlie Taylor S3 - Team Captain

Oliver Withers S2 - Driver

Bailey Clark S1 - Driver

Wesley Morgan S1 - Manager

Andrew Addison S1 - Coder

Daniel Whyte S1 - Assembly

Over the last several months members of the code club have used every lunch hour to construct a robot. The pupils designed the robot themselves and it did not always work, this robot went through a lot. It was pulled apart fell off surfaces while they were writing their code. As such they named their robot not dead yet. It went through several changes right up to the week of the competition to improve the driver control. The club competed in a regional event held Robert Gordon College where they had qualified for the national event. Charlie and Andrew were responsible for the final changes to the robot as they finished the driver control and final assembly.

The National Event Took place in Telford and they took part in a sponsored walk to raise funds and other sponsorship was provided by local business and parents. _ They were Accompanied on the Trip By Mr Shapiro and Mr Hynd.

They flew down to the national event on the 2nd of March for competing on the 3rd and 4th.

They met pupils from all over the country and thanks to Wesley worked with several teams due to issues with the robot.

The team took part in the team work challenges and the skill challenge using the rebuilt robot.

They won the Sportsmanship award and are now rebuild the robot yet again.

Below are two quotes from members of the team.

I loved the trip, we won the sportsman ship award for just generally being kind to all the teams we were working with. Even though we only came 43rd we still got a trophy and we are all very proud to have been given the chance to go to Telford and take part in this competition, and we got pizza.

I really enjoyed the rebuilding of the robot as it was under time pressure and was full of adrenalin and was very fun. - Bailey

I enjoyed Telford and the vex competition I enjoyed eating pizza and having a double bed the competition was fun and it was a bit stressful but really fun it was really interesting seeing all the other teams - Oliver

Aberdeenshire Council would like to invite you to take part in a consultation on the pattern of school holidays, term dates and in-service closure dates. The consultation will run from Monday 25th March 2019 until Monday 6th May 2019 and is available online at: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/TN2JMV9> .

The current pattern of school holidays and term dates was approved by the Education, Learning and Leisure Committee on 29 May 2014. This covered the sessions from 2014/15 to 2019/20.

The pattern of school holiday and term dates currently takes into account the following factors:

- The national requirement that the school year for teaching staff consists of 195 days, which includes 5 In-Service closures and results in a school year of 190 for pupils
- There are four sets of school holiday periods: a summer break of 6 weeks, three further breaks of two weeks during October, at Christmas and at Easter.
- The aim to avoid part weeks as far as possible where the week begins on a day other than Monday; ends on a day other than Friday, or where there is a closure on a day mid-week.
- Alignment where possible of holiday and term dates with neighbouring local authorities. It should be noted that Aberdeen City are currently consulting on their school holiday pattern which includes options referring to changes to the mid-term break and October holiday.

Final dates will be issued in June 2019.

School Uniform**A Campbell**

Please be advised that Pom Print Designs, one of our uniform suppliers, will shortly be providing the option to purchase goods online. They are hopeful that this facility which can be accessed from their website www.pomprintdesigns.com will be available to Mintlaw Academy parents during term 4.

School Meal Charges**A Campbell**

Increase to School Meal charges - the percentage increase will be applied to the tariff in Academies - Main course £2.00 - soup/ pudding 85p. New Tarriff will be available on line and in Academies from Friday 13th April 2019

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

S1 pupils will be invited to attend a health and wellbeing assessment including distance and colour vision screening this school year.

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
Health & Wellbeing Faculty	@mintlaw_health

SQA Exams - S4-6**EJ Whitehead****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 2019' 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/SQA_Your_Exams_2019.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 is on the school website. This has 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:

<https://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 6th 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 2019' booklet issued to all pupils. Pupils should go to www.mysqa.info in order to sign in and activate their account by 5pm on the 16th July so that results can be emailed or texted to them directly on the 6th 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

<https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/65428.html>

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

Study Leave

The last day for pupils in S4, S5 and S6 to be in school will be Wednesday 24th April. Study leave for S4, S5 and S6 will therefore begin on Thursday 25th April.

'New' S5 and S6 pupils should return to school on Tuesday 4th June for their 'Induction' programme and to start their new courses. Further information about study leave and exam arrangements will be provided by letter.

Dates for your Diary 2018/19

Term 4

- 15th April 2019 - start of term 4
- 19th April 2019 - Good Friday holiday
- 6th May 2019 - May Day holiday
- 3rd June 2019 - Occasional Day 2
- 5th July 2019 - end of term 4
- 8th July 2018 to 16th August - Summer holiday