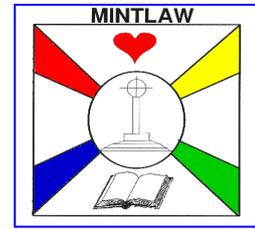


Mintlaw Primary

Newsletter



August 2016

A Warm Welcome Back!

I hope you have all had a lovely summer holiday, we certainly had the full range of Scottish Summer weather! The children have returned to school looking very smart in their uniforms, please make sure all clothing, gym shoes and belongings are clearly labelled. The book bags and gym bags continue to be very popular; all reading books **must** travel to and from school in a protective folder or book bag. It is lovely to see the children all prepared to engage in their learning with their own pencils, rubbers, colouring pens etc, it is important that the children come to school prepared with these items. We have water bottles with the school logo available for £1.50. Water bottles for classroom use should only have water in them, juice can be available for lunch only, a reminder that fizzy water or juice is not permitted in school. **Please note:** these water bottles are not suitable for dishwasher use.

At Mintlaw Primary School we aim to provide a welcoming and inclusive environment for all pupils, staff, parents and the wider community where we can learn together and achieve our full potential. We operate an open door policy, where you can come in to discuss any queries or concerns with the class teacher, please check in with reception first, as they can pass on appointment messages etc and also they need to check with staff when an appropriate time would be to meet. We encourage an environment of respect, pride, enthusiasm and achievement; these are the 4 key words from our Vision, Values and Aims that we discuss regularly in school with the children. We look forward to continuing this ethos this session with your support in demonstrating these values. .

Diary Dates – See separate sheet with this year’s dates.

Health and Safety

Every year I put a reminder to all parents and carers, in regards to the staff car park and every year we have near miss situations with children nearly being hit by a vehicle. For the safety of your child, please do not access the car park by foot or in your vehicle; staff members are working different patterns and deliveries are regularly entering the car park. **It is not safe for your child to cut through the car park.** Please use the path at the rear of the playground or use the new entrance at the front of the school to take you and your child safely to and from the back playground. Please help us to keep your children safe!

Also we have members of staff with shellfish and nut **allergies**, a reminder that children can't have anything in their packed lunches or snacks containing any form of shellfish. Thank you for your continued co-operation with this sensitive matter.

Parent Helpers

We are very fortunate at Mintlaw Primary to have parents keen to help in all aspects of the school and we would like to continue to encourage this. If you don't have a PVG Disclosure Check these forms are available from the office. Over the last few years Mrs Dingwall has successfully arranged parent helpers for a Friday afternoon, we would like to extend this support to across the school, if you are available at this time, please advise the office and we can set up a rota. The type of activities range from photocopying, to making games, organising resources, mounting artwork etc these are all areas which can make a great difference in our school. My sincere thanks to the team of helpers who have worked effectively in recent years to support this area. **Also a request:** we are looking for donations of wooden pallets is there anyone who can help – please get in touch!

Parent Council AGM – Tuesday 13th September 2016 6.30pm

Fundraising Committee: Ladies Tea Party 17th September – see flyer for more information and how to support this event.

School Communication

We continue to try to improve ways of communicating with Parents. The Fundraising Committee have successfully run a Facebook Page over the last year and now there is a School page – Search **Mintlaw Primary School**, click like to follow us. The purpose of this page will be for sharing information and achievements with parents and the wider community who are not on our school mailing list. It will be used as reminders for events that have already been in the Newsletter/ diary Dates, or sharing success that will appear in the next newsletter. Aberdeenshire Council have a very clear policy on acceptable use of Social media and if any users are found to be abusing this system they will be removed from the page. We want this to be a positive engagement for the school and the community and look forward to your continued positive support.

Communication for parents from Aberdeenshire Council

Aberdeenshire council has changed the way parents receive online alerts about school closures and changes to school transport. You can now sign up for these notifications through *myaccount* on the Aberdeenshire Council website – if you currently pay for school meals online, you will already be registered.

myaccount is a simple, secure way of accessing a range of Scottish public services using just one username and password and 13,000 parents across Aberdeenshire are already enjoying the benefits of it.

As well as being able to sign up for alerts, your home page will automatically give you handy information such as your bin collection days, where your nearest recycling centre is and the names of your local councillors.

So, if you want to be kept up-to-date and take advantage of the other *myaccount* benefits, sign up to the new system by going to the Aberdeenshire Council website and clicking on the red **register** button in the top right-hand corner.

Survey for the Consultation for the Rezoning of Mintlaw Primary School Network

Dear Parents & Carers,

Aberdeenshire Council is going to be reviewing the catchment areas for some of the primary schools in the Mintlaw Network. Due to housing in Stuartfield and Mintlaw the schools we are focusing on are Stuartfield, Mintlaw Primary, Pitfour, Fetterangus and Longside. To help us do this we would like to gather information from current parents about any changes they think might be needed for the catchment area that they live in. We would be grateful if you could spend a few minutes completing an online survey following the link below. The survey will be open until Friday 23rd September.

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/Mintlawrezoning>

Informal Engagement Session: 19th September; GP3 CLD Huts Mintlaw Academy; 3-7.30pm. Drop in session – see maps, ask questions and make suggestions.

Many thanks, Learning Estates Team LearningEstates@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

New Pitsligo Visual Arts exhibition.

The children selected Art work at the end of last session that they would like entered into the Arts Exhibition. The exhibition takes place on Saturday the 24th of September and Sunday the 25th of September, at St John's Centre, New Pitsligo. from 10.00am to 5pm on both days.

Online Safety

I often get asked by parents how they can support their children and try to ensure their safety online. Over the holidays I discovered this excellent guide for parents on BBC iWonder How I can keep my kids safe online: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/guides/zs83tyc>

Staffing

At the end of the session Mrs Rose Macphail was successfully appointed as our Lead Practitioner in the Early Years, we are delighted that Mrs Macphail's knowledge and experience will continue to benefit the children in our nursery.

Following recent recruitment and successful interview, we have appointed Miss Cheryl Robertson who will be joining our Enhanced Provision team at the end of this month.

I am currently teaching across the school to cover Visiting Specialist vacancies after the departure at the end of session of Mr Witt who has moved to Banchory Cluster and Mr Walker who has moved to Aberdeen City, we wish both these gentlemen every success in their new posts and thank them for their hard work and support in delivering PE and extra-curricular activities across our school and the cluster. Hopefully this cluster vacancy will be filled shortly.

A reminder - in the office Mrs Hyman and Mrs Fraser are here to help with your enquiries. In the morning if you are phoning to advise that your child is not attending that day please leave a message on the answer machine before 8.45am and it will be dealt with. Each day there will be a member of staff in the office between **9am and 3.30pm** (except for their breaks). Also, if you phone the school after 3.30pm please leave a message on the machine, because if I am in another part of the school I can return your call later or the following day. Thank you for your support in this matter.

Mintlaw Academy

We have many positive links with the academy and this year we are engaging again with the Book Buddies. Two senior pupils will be in school every Friday for 30-40mins working with some children from P5-7 as book buddies. These senior pupils have received training from the academy and are able to help develop confidence and enjoyment in these areas under the guidance of the class teacher. We look forward to working with the senior pupils as within our own school we know how effective a buddy system can be.

Kitchen – dinners are £2.15 each which can be purchased online, for more information or if you are having any issues please speak with Mrs Price. If any child has taken the lunch bands home, please can they be returned to the kitchen – Thank you! Also for the tuck shop, please provide your child with change rather than notes.

School Photos

Tempest will be in school twice a year, once for individual/family school photos and they will return to take Primary 1, 4 and 7 class photos in the new style. Traditional class photos of P1 and P7 will be taken by the press in term 1 and 4 respectively. Also the fundraising committee organise Catchlites Photography who were in the end of August for your casual family photos.

Celebrating Achievements

At the end of term we had a highly successful P7 leaver's assembly and a Prize Giving Assembly also. The following children were our prize winners:

Scottish Mathematical Challenge: Participation – Erin Anderson and Ellie Whitelaw;
Bronze – Amy Cumming, Emma Conah and Ashlyn Petrie

Sutherland Trophy (for Sporting Success and Sportsmanship)– Leon Park

Mintlaw Primary Outstanding Citizenship Award – Kirsty Finnie

Donaldson Trophy for Expressive Arts and Creativity – Emma Connah and Emma MacDonald

P1-3 Medal Winners

Aden: Tyler Willox and Piper Mayhew

Mormond: Lewis Park and Amy Chalmers

Pitfour: Finlay Elphinestone and Lydia Watkins

Ugie: Kian Leith and Maisie Dalgarno

P4-7 Medal Winners

Aden: Ross Davidson and Taylor Irvine

Mormond: Holly Dingwall and Finn Rennie

Pitfour: Isla Anderson and Cole Cruikshank

Ugie: Kirsty Finnie and Brooke Willox, Caleb Watt and Aidan Barron

P1-3 Sports Champions: Lewis Park and Maisie Dalgarno

P4-7 Sports Champions: Finn Rennie and Taylor Irvine

Sports Day Shield was won by UGIE (for the 7th consecutive year)

House Cup was won by MORMOND

We are kindly supported by the Parent Council and Fundraising Committee for the purchase and engraving of our trophies, which is greatly appreciated. We continually look to improve our Prize Giving and if you have any suggestions for future prizes please do get in contact.

Further Success...House Captains 2016/17

I was extremely pleased with the high number of Primary 7 children who put themselves forward as potential House Captains, as is the case every year it is a closely fought contest with some disappointed and some delighted children. Congratulations to...

Aden: Chloe Forman and Tyler Martin

Mormond: Jessica Lovie and Bobbi Middleton

Pitfour: Emma Johnston and Megan Davidson-Gall

Ugie: Aidan Barron and Aimee Wood

Finally...

All the staff at Mintlaw Primary work extremely hard to ensure they are providing a stimulating and supportive learning environment. However, this is in partnership with parents, other agencies and the wider community and we continue to appreciate the support and positive impact this has on the children and Mintlaw Primary.

Kind regards

Sarah Forrest
Head Teacher