



October 2024



Dear Families,

I hope you all had a lovely time during the holidays, whatever you were up to. I can hardly believe we are approaching November! We may have only been back to school for a week but we already have so much to share!

### Life and Work of School as a Community- Interactive Learning Pit #How we learn

Thank you to all families joining us for our Open Evening during the last week of term. It's always lovely to welcome family members into school to learn more about how we do things here at Newmill Primary, gaining a clearer picture of what daily life looks like for our wee people. We hope you enjoyed participating in the learning tasks on offer and feel in an even stronger position to support home learning as a result. We were delighted to see so many of you complete our questionnaire matching our newly developed interactive learning pit. Please remember you can access this at home too on our Newmill Blog. Link below



<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/my/newmillprimary/2024/09/23/our-interactive-pit-howwelearn/>

It's great to hear (via questionnaire) that so many of our learners refer to learning ninjas out of school, confirming that they help promote learning attitudes which support wider achievement.

As part of our school improvement agenda we are introducing 'cold' and 'hot' assessments in writing. As always, the learners are fully involved in the process and are aware of the rationale behind changes. This ensures their voice can be heard as we measure impact. As we embark on a term focusing on learning to write reports, the children completed their 'cold' assessment this week, using only success criteria to guide them. The whole school wrote a report about Newmill Primary School. It was really interesting to read what our pupils had to say about our school. Almost all children included information about 'The Wall', 'Newmill's Learning Pit', Reading Schools, Rights Respecting Schools and our newest recruit, Rosie the Rights Rabbit, with a really strong understanding of our vision and values. All teachers were

impressed with the children's unsupported effort in terms of written content but also their strong knowledge and understanding of the school's ambitious vision, the journey we are on and their part in it. Here's some examples...

*"Newmill have their own way of learning. They use their pit and wall. On the wall they have ninjas that prove you should always try and never give up. We aim to grow the four capacities everyday which are effective contributors, confident individuals, successful learners and responsible citizens."* Molly, P7

*"We also have the learning pit. It shows us how much understanding we have of different elements in school. We also have ninjas to help guide us through the pit."* Allana, P7

*"The school staff are important because they help the students learn. Many people like Newmill Primary School and their learning methods'.* Lyla, P5

*"At Newmill Primary, we take rights very seriously. Our rights are very important and once a week we have fun 31. Our rights are so important we have a new rabbit character to help us learn about them. Our school has two silver awards. At Newmill Primary, we also love reading, actually we are working towards our Gold Reading School award."* Freya, P7



I'll be interested to see how the 'hot' assessment compare when we use the same context to moderate value added as a result of the learning and teaching focus. As a staff team, we continue to make our way through the learning pit embedding the 'Explicitly Teaching Writing Approach' and maximising use of our newly purchased PM writing resources to up level our curriculum.

## **Life and work of the School as a Community- Scholastic book Fair**

### **Reading School Accreditation- Parental Support**



We were delighted with the support for the Scholastic Book Fair earlier this month. We haven't worked our exact commission yet.

However, based on our school spend, we will have a significant amount to support purchase of up to date reading material. We must say a huge thank you to Mrs Stewart for organising and supporting the Book Fair. This will help make sure all learners have access to up to date reading material, relevant to their needs, interests and experiences. Looking ahead to Christmas, the children were able to identify authors and titles they would like to explore further via whole class novel study in term three, funded by Parent Council Christmas Gift. Pupil led selection and votes were key in selecting our novels. It was great to have the Book Fair in the school hall to discuss genres, authors and how to select books using the blurb, in



addition to, the front cover. All classes voted from a choice of three books following class sessions exploring options.

P1/2/3 opted for - Speak Up- You can make a difference

P3/4/5/6 opted for The Twits

P6/7 opted for The Letter with the Golden Stamp

### Life and work of the School as a Community- Reading Schools- Spooky Story Hunt

We have so many entries submitted for our Spooky Story Hunt. Thank you to all families for taking the time to participate. We also have a number of entries from families outwith Newmill. It's great to see so many enjoying the hunt as a holiday activity. The Reading Leaders started to mark entries on Monday afternoon. However, there is still time to enter as the closing date for entries is 31<sup>st</sup> October. A special thank you to Ashley Inglis for her support in getting the hunt up and running and everyone who agreed to share story recommendations in their window....over and above certificates celebrating their commitment to our school value 'support' heading their way. There will be a special assembly on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> November to share winners and present prizes.

The Reading Leaders have had a busy week as they put together and delivered their 'Read while you Wait' Lending Library to Keith Swimming pool this week. Mrs Wright has already managed to catch some community members enjoying story while their siblings participate in swimming lessons.



## Curricular Skills - The Litter Muncher

A huge well done to Mrs Watt and P1/2/3 for another fantastic end of term musical extravaganza. It's a real bucket filler to see how our learners' performance skills are developing. It's great to see aspirational attitudes developing as new P3s step up, taking on lead roles to challenge themselves and move through the learning pit.



## Curricular Skills -PE

Please note PE days have changed this term and teachers have asked me to include the following information: P1/2/3 - Monday and Friday, P3/4/5/6- Wednesday and Friday, P5/6/7- Monday and Thursday

## Life and Work of the School as a Community- Christmas Plans

I've noted some Christmas dates for your diary in the section below. Reverend Wiekus Van Straaten has been in contact with me to try and arrange a Nativity performance as part of Sunday Service. I appreciate the run up to Christmas is a busy time for families to commit to weekend services. As a result, we have decided to a weekday alternative for a special Christmas Service to which all parents and extended family members are warmly invited. I'll be meeting with Reverend Wiekus next week to confirm exact timings. However, a service starting at 11am is what we are hoping for. I know this is important information for parents looking to book time off work to attend.

## Remembrance Day

Poppies will be available from Monday 4<sup>th</sup> November. Wellbeing Ambassadors will circulate classes selling poppies throughout the week until Remembrance Day. Pupils can bring donations at any point within this time.

Have a lovely weekend,

Rachael Smith, Head Learner

## DIARY DATES

- **Monday 28<sup>th</sup> October**- Newmill Primary School Parent Council AGM 2.15-3pm in School Hall
- **Monday 11<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> November**- In Service closure for pupils
- **Monday 18<sup>th</sup>**- Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> -Book week Scotland, Read, Wrote, Count gifting Event this week- more information to follow.
- **Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December**- Christmas Jumper Day- Community Christmas Card Focus
- **Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> December**- Christmas Service and St Rufus Church, including whole school Nativity performance. More details to follow.
- **Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> December**- Christmas Party Day for all pupils
- **Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December**- Term 2 ends