



Newton Families Together Meeting 26.4.21

Headteacher's Report

Contexts for Learning for Term 4

P1 - 'It's a Pirates Life for me!' Children in P1 have shown an interest in ships and pirates. There will be approximately a three week focus on technology and science outcomes including floating and sinking, how a ship sails linking to 'what makes things go', designing and constructing models and problem solving to make junk model ships to float and carry certain weights. Children will compare ships in the past with now and what jobs people (or pirates) do on board. Children will learn about directions, maps and key symbols. Following on from this teachers hope to plan short contexts around mini-beasts, growing and the senses in consultation with the children.

P2 – 'Fairyland' P2 children will focus on Literacy, particularly writing. They will be reading a variety of fairy tales and discussing characters, settings and themes, using this to help children write their own fairy tales. Children will also be discussing gender stereotyping by reading some alternative fairy tales. Children will also be looking at properties of materials and taking part in problem solving/STEM challenges by creating the best house for the three little pigs and a basket for Red Riding Hood etc. As P2 are unable to invite parents into school for a tea party to share our stories, they hope to record the children reading their stories to be shared with parents and give parents a virtual tour of our Fairyland classroom transformation.

P3 – 'The Science of Sound' P3 children will be focusing on hearing and the ear. They will be learning about how sound travels and moves, carrying out fun sound experiments and learning about sonar communication.

P4 - 'Time Travellers' Children in P4 will focus on local history by comparing Dunblane/Stirling now and what it was like in the past. Children will develop and improve mapping skills, look at what the local community has to offer today and learn about at the past. Children will be given an opportunity to research an aspect of local history of their own choice.

P5 – 'Nature Detectives' Children in P5 will be focusing on the natural environment and outdoor learning in our school grounds and local area developing their skills and knowledge through the John Muir Award. This context will be launched next week and P5 teachers would prefer it was a surprise for the children so shhhh

P6 – 'Evolving Inventions'. This is a technology, history and topical science based context where P6 children will explore a variety of inventions over time. The children will then have opportunities to research and create their own inventions sharing these digitally with parents/guardians.

P7 - 'Our Magical Journey'. P7 children will explore the novel 'The Nowhere Emporium' focusing on how the literary techniques and themes within novel ignite our imagination, learning about cities in the past and how have they developed over time and there will be a focus on transition and how children share memories and leave a legacy of their journey at Newton

School Partnerships

Holmehill – Through their 'Fairyland' context, children in P2 are working in partnership with Holmehill by taking part in a competition along with children from DPS and StMPS to 'Name the Fairies' at Holmehill.

NSPCC – Our Numeracy School Improvement Planning Group are organising a 'Number Day' on 7th May in partnership with NSPCC. We have also signed up to 'National Numeracy Day' and resources and advice from

this will support the NSPCC day. We will be asking for donations for this as we are unlikely to have an End of Term Service in the Cathedral.

Active Schools– We have a new Active Schools Co-ordinator for our Learning Community who will be working across the schools to develop sport, support children’s needs and work with DHS and our Nurseries to support transition.

Staffing

School has been allocated money from Scottish Government for staffing to support COVID Recovery. We have been able to access teachers for 2 additional days from now until the end of the summer term in June.

- Mrs Campbell (PT) will focus on Health and Wellbeing on a Friday and will work with groups or individuals to require support with anxiety, wellbeing, and motivation etc.
- Mrs McNally has increased her time with us and is now permanent 3 days. This term she will also work a 4th day - Thursday. She will continue to support children with Literacy and Numeracy on her additional day.
- Mrs Cadden will return to her post as SLA on 7th June 2021.

Stirling Council are currently looking at our numbers for next session. It has been confirmed we will have 14 classes. We have not yet been given our staffing allocation.

School Improvement Plan

Priority - Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion

- ***Through further embedding ‘Nurturing Newton’, ensure the Six Principles of Nurture are at the heart of our return to school and thereafter.***

Google Form shared with teaching and support staff and data gathered. The central areas for development, for both teaching and non-teaching staff, centred on knowledge of theories of attachment and brain development.

Taking advice from the Nurture Ambassador Course we identified one nurture principle to revisit:
“Nurture is important for the development of wellbeing.”

During the February In-service all staff completed Attachment E-modules from Stirling Educational Psychology Service as well as this staff were signposted to professional reading to explore as they see appropriate:

This month (April) the Nurture Group intend to ask teachers to gather baseline evidence from pupils using a Google Jamboard based on questions from ‘Applying Nurturing Approaches’ (Education Scotland) about their understanding of the importance of emotional wellbeing and their awareness of measures taken to support their wellbeing.

The group then intends to gather baseline evidence from parents using a Google Form to gather information, understanding and attitudes towards the Six Principles of Nurture. A small group of interested parents will then be invited to be part of the extended Implementation Group.

This work will culminate, with the support of our Educational Psychologist in creating a virtual workshop/video for parents to share the Six Principles of Nurture, discuss brain development and Attachment Theory and how this all has an impact on our children’s behaviour and our practice through our Nurturing Newton approach.

- ***Newton’s Play Framework to encompass play and pedagogy of play at First and Second Level. This should ensure that Outdoor Learning and play experiences are enjoyed by all children.***

Miss Ingram (P2) and Miss Kemp (P1) have attended ‘Play Pedagogy’ a course provided virtually by the University of Strathclyde. There were 6 evening sessions focusing on

- Why play is important for young children
- How to plan for and effectively resource play
- Ensuring the learning environment has a positive impact on children's learning
- How to support and plan for children's skill development
- Planning for high quality play

Miss Johnstone completed a similar course last year and this has been an excellent opportunity to ensure our teachers are fully implementing learning through play at Early and the beginning of First Level.

Ms Spencer, Support for Learning Assistant, who is also currently working towards her HNC in Childhood Practice has taken on a small leadership project to support and implement play within the playground environment at break and lunchtimes. She has ensured that loose parts such as wood, crates, tarpaulin etc is available for the children to create, make, build and use their imagination. Sensory play – sand, water, bubbles is also now available for children who like to feel, touch, watch etc. Quiet play – cars, jigsaws, magazines, lego, books, drawing etc are also now outside at each break and lunch playtime. Soft balls are available in the field. Our picnic tables and our new Outdoor Classroom have supported this and children are enjoying them. We have a further 4 picnic tables to be built and Mr Thomson is seeking help from other janitors as they are very heavy and require two people to build.

Priority - Raising Attainment and Achievement

Literacy

- ***To continue to promote opportunities for reading for pleasure.***

All classes took part in World Book Day on 4th March (p4-7 remotely) and we celebrated becoming a Silver Accredited Reading School on this day also through Book Trust's online celebration.

Wee Library project inspired by parent is ongoing and we are hoping once all books have been sorted to have our 'Big Newton Book Swap'

- ***Review and refresh current reading guidance for teaching staff to incorporate new resources***

Group have been refreshing Newton PS Literacy Framework. This is currently at consultation stage with SLT and will be shared with staff in coming weeks. All staff, and in particular teachers who are new to our school will have a clear understanding of how we teach reading at Newton and how to implement resources at particular stages and levels.

- ***Create Parent Guides for reading at Newton***

Group have been working on Early, First and Second Level Parent Guides for supporting Reading at home. We aim to ensure parents have a clear understanding of how we teach reading at Newton and they can best support their child at home. Guides are currently being shared with SLT and staff for comment and feedback.

Priority - Raising Attainment and Achievement

Numeracy

- ***Review and Refresh Newton's Numeracy and Maths Policy to incorporate Concrete, Pictorial, Abstract, approach.***

Group have audited and refreshed resources in line with the CPA Model and have reviewed our numeracy policy. They have drafted an updated whole school approach to teaching numeracy using these approaches.

Implementing 'Numeracy Ninja's' Raising Attainment programme for a group of Learners in P4 (Miss Ingram)

Planned learning activities and ideas for teaching numeracy and number by participating in the NSPCC Number Day and National Numeracy Day in May.

Priority - Creativity & Employability – Digital Technology

- First and Second Level Digital Technology Teaching Pathways have been completed and work continues on development of Early Level
- PT's continue to discuss and consult with staff about the use of online journals and profiles for all year groups using Google Classroom. Teachers currently regularly update achievements and success in school with uploading photographs and comments to GC and it is hoped that as the use of this platform develops further children and parents will interact much more readily and use this platform to share progress in learning, read journal entries for interest and promote discussion, share achievements and successes and to discuss learning as well as for home learning purposes.

Nursery Works and 1140 update

Our Nursery works will go ahead during the summer holidays and are likely to go on until October. Our nursery will need to be decanted to a space within the school and we are in ongoing discussion with Stirling Council about the plans for our nursery which have not yet been fully agreed.