



Newton Families Together Meeting 26.10.21

Headteacher's Report

Learning and Teaching Term 2

Contexts for Learning

- P1 – Deep Sea Detectives**
- P2- Powering our Planet**
- P3 – Poles Apart**
- P4- Fashion Wear**
- P5- Endangered Rangers**
- P6- Space**
- P7- Peace and Conflict**

All parents will receive an updated Sharing Learning Leaflet explaining what the children will be learning in Literacy, Numeracy, Health and Wellbeing and other contextualised learning on Friday 29th October.

School Partnerships Term 1

Forth Valley Welcome – P5 had a visit from a person who works with Forth Valley Welcome who invited Bilal a Syrian refugee, who had been in the country for 4 months and who was able to talk to the children about his life in Syria and his journey to Scotland. Bilal really enjoyed meeting the children and brought the children's learning last term to life and they were able to ask many relevant and interesting questions.

Start Up Stirling – We have continued our links with Start Up Stirling through our Harvest collection. This was very much appreciated by the charity.

Active Schools – John McCallum, continues to work with small groups on a Friday and DHS Sports Leaders are working with P5 each Wednesday. Last term they worked with P2 outside.

Tesco Dunblane – supported P3's enterprise context by donating the ingredients for their pizza boxes and P3 are keen to thank parents for their support too.

RHET – are supporting our virtual Farm Visit for children in P1-3 in conjunction with our 'Climate Action Fortnight'

Young Carers – Support worker in school every week to support children

Rookie Minds – School Counsellor is in school every week to support children

Parental Partnerships – Mrs O'Halloran and Mrs Gallagher spoke to P2 about their jobs, Mr Baldwin is coming to school on Thursday 28th October to speak to the children about his job and role in COP26. Pamela Mackie (Rubber Chicken Theatre) worked with P5 to create Syrah Willow a walking puppet through connections with 'The Walk Art Project' who have created a 3.5 metre puppet called 'Little Amal' who is currently making a journey from Turkey to Manchester to raise awareness of child refugees. Mr Brown (Mrs Brown's husband) spoke with P2 about his job as a police dog handler.

Staffing

School has been allocated further money from Scottish Government for staffing to support COVID Recovery. We have been able to afford teachers for 2 additional days from now June.

Mrs McNally (Acting PT) will work with children to focus on Literacy and Numeracy and will work with groups or individuals who require additional support. In her role as Acting PT, Mrs McNally line manages our Support for Learning Staff. We are currently operating 2 SLAs down due to recruitment and long term absence.

Mr Edwards will work an additional day at Newton. Mr Edwards is working with the local authority one day a week and will be in Newton 2 days. He will continue to support Digital Pedagogy.

Last term Newton PS were given an additional teacher to allow SLT not to be class committed during Covid Recovery and to support staff short term absence and PCR testing etc. We are awaiting confirmation that this additionality may continue this term or be offered to another school

Covid Recovery Plan/School Improvement update

Learning Teaching and Assessment - Literacy and Languages

Literacy group have completed work on Reading at Newton, though we will continue to develop our reading culture by striving for our Gold Reading Award in partnership with the Scottish Book Trust.

Literacy Group are currently researching resources to replace our 'Literacy World' Resource at First/Second Level.

Parent 'How To' Reading Guides for Early/First and Second Level have been shared with parents and are on Google Classroom and our Website to support parents to understand how we teach reading at Newton and how children learn.

Group focus is on raising attainment in writing and to work on updating and refreshing Newton's Writing Framework for staff

In due course, share with parents how we teach writing at Newton and how our programmes are designed, organised and structured.

Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths through Play and Learning

Thank you to Miss Kenny who applied to the 'Maths Week Scotland Small Grants Fund' on behalf of Newton PS. We were awarded almost £900 which has been bought to support challenge boxes to challenge able learners.

We are keen for children to foster a love and enthusiasm for Maths and Numeracy to develop confidence and curiosity, while at the same time promoting life skills that children can apply to different contexts in their life and learning.

Our aim is to have Creative Problem-Solving boxes for each year group with a variety of STEM and outdoor learning problem solving experiences. As a whole school, we want to extend and challenge our learners by encouraging and developing their reasoning and problem-solving skills; utilising our able learners to lead learning opportunities within our school.

Staff working at Early Level and the beginning of First Level are familiar with Newton's 'Play Framework' and although all staff have had an opportunity to see and read this before restrictions, we are keen to ensure this Framework is used as the foundation throughout the whole school to encourage learning through play.

This is also something our 'We Count' Pupil group are keen to be involved in and children have shared that they are keen to have more access to lego, knex, playdough and have more opportunities to make and design from scratch as well as to follow instructions to create an end product. Through this children will discuss how they have problem solved, worked collaboratively, supported each other etc.

We have a wish list from staff and pupils regarding resources and staff are keen to create challenge cards with a view to the children creating these for each other. This links very closely to world of work opportunities particularly in STEM careers.

Staff will have opportunities through observation and discussion to facilitate, extend and support learning and analyse children's play to progress learning.

Assessment

We currently have an improvement planning group focusing on our Assessment at Newton Framework following feedback from parents about 'How my children are assessed' We are keen to share with parents a 'Guide to Assessment at Newton' which will be created alongside our updated Framework.

Digital Learning and Teaching

All children now have digital learning journals. Staff and children trialled the online journals last term and although there are a few things to still iron out children should be proud of them and will hopefully be very keen to share them with parents. Parents can access the Learning Journals via Google Classroom at any time and we intend to share guidance and purpose of the Learning Journals with parents, hopefully before parent consultations in a few weeks.

Connectivity continues to be a concern. We have been made aware of the process Stirling Council is going through to rectify this.

Diversity

All staff within the Dunblane Learning Community attended two training sessions on 'The Black Curriculum' to support our continued focus on diversity at school and learning community level. Diversity is threaded throughout our contexts for learning however we have worked to help and support staff to be equipped and more confident in teaching diversity related contexts and to ensure this is planned for within learning and teaching. We are keen to continue more direct work with learners and families around Diversity related learning.

Staff Wellbeing

As we begin to emerge from the global pandemic, we feel it is important to focus on how the Nurture Principles and Relationships are at the heart not only in supporting our children but in looking after our own wellbeing and self-care. Staff have had an optional opportunity to sign up to a session 'Life will see you now' with the inspirational speaker Gavin Oates from 'The Tree of Knowledge' and this week all staff will have a workshop with Claire Lavelle from 'The Hive of Wellbeing'

Nursery Works and 1140 update

Our Nursery works started on the 11th October and should continue for 10 weeks. The nursery children still have some access to the garden and are meeting with the builders to ask questions and see the progress the nursery is making.

Linda Kane
October 2021