



## Newtongrange Primary School Curriculum Rationale Building Back Better

Scotland's curriculum – *Curriculum for Excellence* – helps our children and young people gain the knowledge, skills and attributes needed for life in the 21st century. While the COVID-19 pandemic has changed many things, our curriculum framework continues to apply. The core principles of Scotland's curriculum and the four fundamental capacities at its centre remain critical in putting learners at the heart of education.

Scotland's curriculum provides a high degree of flexibility, empowering individual settings and practitioners to make the decisions needed to provide a curriculum that is adaptable and responsive to the diverse needs of individual learners and reflecting the unique nature of their communities. This flexibility is vital as we build back better following two periods of remote learning within the last year, and should remote learning approaches be required for learners at any point in the future.

The Covid-19 global pandemic has had an impact on learning and teaching and 'school life' as we have previously known it at Newtongrange Primary School. Within the last and a half year, school has closed, opened, closed, opened again and still we face some uncertainty in the coming months as waves of the pandemic loom in some form or other. As a school we have tried hard to embrace the challenges as they have come and adapted to new and different ways of thinking and working, some of which we might keep when we come out of these times.

In August 2020 we implemented a Recovery Curriculum designed to support your child's return to school following the first lockdown. Our Recovery Curriculum was designed to recognise our children's recent life experiences as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, providing opportunities for them to establish and learn new ways of living and learning including:

- Supporting our children to build positive relationships with others.
- Supporting our children to manage their feelings and behaviours.
- Supporting our children to enjoy school and make excellent progress.
- Supporting our children's physical health and well-being.
- Supporting our children to understand the Covid-19 situation and how it has affected them and others.

We have however faced a second lockdown during this time and of course this has had a further impact on all of us. As a school community, we have taken some time to rethink or reimage our education offer to improve all children's attainment and achievement. We have consulted with our learners, staff and parents and carers, following a second lockdown and further period of remote learning about what skills and qualities we now want our learners to have by the time they leave Newtongrange Primary School and what learning experiences should be provided through our curriculum.

Building Back Better Learners Views- ELC Setting		
What has been great about our ELC setting this year?	What have you missed doing this year?	What do we need to do more of next year?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Playing with friends</li><li>• Building</li><li>• Playing outside</li><li>• Everything!</li><li>• The house corner</li><li>• Making new friends</li><li>• Playing with the Christmas tree</li><li>• Making models</li><li>• Drawing pictures</li><li>• It's been tidy</li><li>• Riding the bikes</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Playing on the other side</li><li>• Playing with some on my friends who are on the other side.</li><li>• Singing songs</li><li>• Missed some of the adults</li><li>• I missed Santa</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Making playdough</li><li>• Helping at snack</li><li>• Have lots of fun</li><li>• More blocks</li><li>• Pictures</li><li>• Dressing up</li><li>• Playing with the house</li></ul>





## Aspire

It is important that all our learners aspire to be the best they can be, to set high goals for themselves and to work hard to reach these. Our role, as staff and parents, is to encourage and support all learners to aspire to great things in their lives – both what they can do now and what they will do in the future.

## Believe

Our learners need to have faith in themselves and believe that they can achieve what they set out to do. They need supported to develop a positive mind set for this; to overcome the challenges on route. We endeavour to encourage all learners to be confident in their abilities and work together to achieve their best.

## Achieve

Every learner can achieve. We are determined to empower our learners to achieve the very best they can. We do this by providing excellent teaching, high quality resources and carefully planned learning opportunities. By working together, we do whatever it takes to help ensure every learner succeeds each and every day.

Our vision at Newtongrange Primary School is underpinned by our set of core values:

*Kind Fair Hardworking Confident Respectful Responsible*

Every child at Newtongrange Primary School is entitled to a curriculum which is:

- Promotes their health and wellbeing, encouraging self-esteem and a respect for diversity and fairness in life.
- Challenging, building on knowledge, understanding and skills to ensure progression.
- Coherent from ELC through to the end of their primary education, with smooth transition onto high school.
- Developed on sound learning and teaching practices, informed by research, and including well planned learning experiences which are active and engaging.
- Based upon developing skills and competences for learning, life and work and an ability to make informed choices about their health and wellbeing.
- Real and relevant now and in the future.

## The Rationale for our Curriculum

Our curriculum aims to ensure that each and every Newtongrange learner develops the knowledge, skills and attributes that they will need if they are to flourish in life, learning and work, now and in their future. The purpose of our curriculum is encapsulated in the four capacities; to enable each child to be a successful learner, a confident individual, a responsible citizen and an effective contributor. The attributes and capabilities of the four capacities are outlined below.





<p><b>Successful Learners</b> <b>with:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>enthusiasm and motivation for learning</li> <li>determination to reach high standards of achievement</li> <li>openness to new thinking and ideas</li> </ul> <p><b>and able to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>use literacy, communication and numeracy skills</li> <li>use technology for learning</li> <li>think creatively and independently</li> <li>learn independently and as part of a group make reasoned evaluations</li> <li>link and apply different kinds of learning in new situations</li> </ul>	<p><b>Confident Individuals</b> <b>with:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>self-respect</li> <li>a sense of physical, mental and emotional wellbeing</li> <li>secure values and beliefs</li> </ul> <p><b>and able to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>relate to others and manage themselves</li> <li>pursue a healthy and active lifestyle</li> <li>be self-aware</li> <li>develop and communicate their own beliefs and view of the world</li> <li>live as independently as they can</li> <li>assess risk and take informed decisions</li> <li>achieve success in different areas of activity</li> </ul>
<p><b>Responsible Citizens</b> <b>with:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>respect for others</li> <li>commitment to participate responsibly in political, economic, social and cultural life</li> </ul> <p><b>and able to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop knowledge and understanding of the world and Scotland's place in it</li> <li>understand different beliefs and cultures</li> <li>make informed choices and decisions</li> <li>evaluate environmental, scientific and technological issues</li> <li>develop informed, ethical views of complex issues</li> </ul>	<p><b>Effective Contributors</b> <b>with:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>an enterprising attitude</li> <li>resilience</li> <li>self-reliance</li> </ul> <p><b>and able to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>communicate in different ways and in different settings</li> <li>make informed choices and decisions</li> <li>work in partnership and in teams</li> <li>take the initiative and lead</li> <li>apply critical thinking in new contexts</li> <li>create and develop</li> <li>solve problems</li> </ul>

## Our Curriculum Design

Our curriculum rationale explains everything that we want for the learners of Newtongrange Primary School and how we plan to achieve this. It has been developed following consultation with our whole school community involving children, parents, staff and partners to understand what we are hoping to achieve.

Our curriculum aims to provide learners with a wide range of learning experiences that will support them in their physical, emotional and mental wellbeing. Central to our Curriculum Rationale is our commitment to continue to develop an ethos where our learners are safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, responsible, respected and included.

Our Curriculum Rationale delivers the 7 principles of curriculum design and supports children's development of skills and knowledge across all areas, takes account of the school's local circumstances and is rooted in local and national advice. It is a flexible framework and a working document which allows capacity for teams and individual teachers to introduce well-considered innovations to meet the identified needs of all learners. Our staff team will undertake a cycle of continuous review and improvement to ensure it is fit for purpose.

To deliver excellence in learning and teaching, our curriculum aims to ensure learners become more confident in their abilities and are actively engaged in their own learning, including decision making.



We have organised our curriculum experiences under the 4 contexts for learning as highlighted by Education Scotland.

- Ethos and Life of the School
- Opportunities for Personal Achievement
- Curriculum areas and subjects
- Inter Disciplinary Learning (IDL)

## Build Back Better Rationale

*Every interaction matters  
Every Lesson Counts  
All feedback has an impact*

Throughout the Build Back Better phase, the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of our children, staff and their families will be a key priority. We know that good health and wellbeing is vital to ensure that our children engage effectively in their learning.

When considering how to prepare and plan for our Build Back Better phase at Newtongrange Primary School, we begin by recognising that gaps within learning have developed for many children and that curriculum needs differ for learners in comparison to pre Covid.

Through our planning, we will ensure that:

- Regular opportunities will be provided to continue to build relationships and resilience.
- Each of our learners will have a recognised key adult within school who can talk to them and support them with their wellbeing.
- The benefits of play and outdoor learning are recognised, including opportunities for our learners to be physically active, to enjoy and learn about their natural environment, and to relax.
- High expectations is promoted by all, including the continued belief that our learners can achieve academic success. We will make all of our expectations clear, break tasks down when required to do so and provide supportive and clear feedback to check that our learners are on task and have understood the task correctly.
- We will use data to inform our curriculum planning with particular focus on improving literacy and numeracy attainment.
- Relevant interdisciplinary linked themes will be introduced and provide learners with opportunities to apply their literacy or numeracy skills within different contexts.
- Opportunities for developing skills will be planned for to increase our learners' digital abilities and equip them for the uncertainties of the future.
- The Moderation Cycle is used to ensure that a variety of approaches to demonstrate learning, skills and, knowledge and understanding across the curriculum, will be planned for. For example, these could include reflective discussions, writing, observations and practical activities.
- Evidence of learning is collected and used to determine learners' achievements together with their next steps in learning.



## **Build Back Better Curriculum**

### **Literacy**

*'Literacy is fundamental to all areas of learning, as it unlocks access to the wider curriculum. Being literate increases opportunities for the individual in all aspects of life, lays the foundations for lifelong learning and work, and contributes strongly to the development of all four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence'.*

#### **Principles and Practice Paper, P1**

At Newtongrange Primary it is our vision for every learner to develop literacy skills which enable them to thrive, and prepare them for life, future learning and work.

In order to realise our vision:

- All staff will provide equitable, high quality experiences to engage, motivate and inspire all learners to meet their individual needs in Literacy and English.
- Our curriculum will ensure that our learners achieve their potential through clear progression in their learning from early years through to transitions to High School.
- All partners will work collaboratively to develop and enrich Literacy and English experiences for all our learners.

We have developed a Literacy Framework which details progression within and across levels for Reading, Writing and Listening & Talking. Our Literacy Curriculum Pathways help teachers plan, assess, and track achievement within and across the levels, as well as supporting effective moderation using the Literacy and English Benchmarks.

Increasingly during the Building Back Better phase, literacy is one of the core curricular areas prioritised when planning learning experiences across the week. There will be an expectation shared with learners that they will transfer learning in handwriting across all written work in line with our Newtongrange Presentation policy. Teachers will maximise opportunities for Literacy across learning where learners will learn through, and transfer their Literacy skills, across the Four Contexts of Learning.

We will also continue to build our Reading Culture through our whole school involvement with the First Minister's Reading Challenge.

We share our learning in Literacy with parents and carers and track the impact of interventions to ensure that every learner is successfully engaged in rich learning experiences leading to a literate future in the community they live in.

### **Numeracy**

At Newtongrange Primary School we aim to create a school with positive attitude and growth mindset to Mathematics and Numeracy developing learners with confidence in range of mathematical strategies, problem solving and mental agility.

We have developed a Mathematics and Numeracy Framework which details progression within and across levels. Our Mathematics and Numeracy Curriculum Pathways help teachers plan, assess, and track achievement within and across the levels, as well as supporting effective moderation using the Mathematics and Numeracy Benchmarks.



Mathematics and Numeracy lessons are a priority within our Building Back Better phase and we will focus on providing real, relevant, contexts for learning to contribute to preparing our children mathematics and numeracy skills for life, learning and work.

We share our learning in Mathematics and Numeracy with parents and carers and track the impact of interventions to ensure that every learner is confidently making progress within challenging learning experiences leading to a numerate future in the community they live in.

## Health & Wellbeing

In Newtongrange Primary School, Health and Wellbeing and Getting it Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) are our key curriculum drivers. Through these we create and promote a nurturing school, developing learners with confidence, resilience and a positive attitude to learning. Our school vision, values and Build Back Better aims create a community of Health and Wellbeing for all.

We promote Health and Wellbeing for all our learners with a particular focus on Mental Wellbeing, Social and Emotional Health, Confidence and Resilience. In our Newtongrange classrooms you will see positive approaches to the teaching of the Health and Wellbeing curriculum, first and foremost through positive relationships.

Within our Building Back Better phase, in addition to discrete Health lessons, Health and Wellbeing permeates the wider curriculum through:

- A relentless focus on the Wellbeing Indicators
- Building Resilience Programme
- Supporting learners to be able '*regulate*', '*relate*' and '*reason*' their emotions
- Our Rights Respecting School Approach
- Celebration of Success

We have a flexible nurturing approach for learners who require additional support with their social and emotional wellbeing and safeguarding and GIRFEC practices are in place for vulnerable learners.

In creating our community where Health and Wellbeing is a key priority of our Building Back Better phase and school ethos, we are developing learners who are confident, resilient and have a positive attitude to learning. We share our learning in Health and Wellbeing with parents and carers and track the impact of interventions to ensure that every child is Safe, Healthy, Active, Nurtured, Achieving, Respected, Responsible and Included.

## Learning and Teaching

The curriculum in Newtongrange Primary School is delivered through the highest quality learning and teaching approaches. Teachers utilise a wide variety of teaching and assessment methodologies to engage all learners, measure progress and meet their individual needs.

The learning approaches allow all learners to work in a variety of different ways – as individuals, pairs, groups or as a whole class, as appropriate to the learning context. Learners help inform how and what they will learn and they are encouraged to respond to their learning through planned personalisation and choice.



## **Assessment is for Learning**

At Newtongrange Primary School we have clear approaches to assessing learner progress and achievement. Assessment approaches are matched to the needs of learners as part of the continuous process of planning for learning and teaching. Teachers use a variety of assessment methods to assess progress on an ongoing basis both as part of daily learning and teaching and at the end of topics or units.

## **Outdoor Learning**

Well-constructed and well-planned outdoor learning experiences can offer a breadth of opportunities to learn about different aspects of the curriculum in an engaging and relevant way. It enables children to extend their learning, make connections and understand the relevance of a subject taught in school to everyday life. The outdoor experiences also develop personal skills in areas such as communication, problem solving, working with others, creativity and thinking skills. These transferable skills are extremely important as they will enable children to adapt to opportunities and challenges in a rapidly changing world.

During the Building Back Better phase we would expect to see frequently planned opportunities for learning outdoors in all classes.

## **Information & Communications Technology to Enhance Learning**

During the Building Back Better phase learners will be taught the importance of on-line safety and how to keep personal data private. Learners will use school devices to access online platforms including Glow and Seesaw to support learning. In school, teachers will deliver lessons on how to use platforms to develop learners' skills in uploading assignments, accessing resources and behaving in an appropriate manner when using on-line resources. As part of Midlothian Council's 'Equipped for Learning' strategy, over the course of this session, every learner within P1-P7 will be provided access to individual device to support with their learning.

## **Interdisciplinary Learning**

Interdisciplinary learning is a planned approach to learning which uses links across different subjects or disciplines to enhance learning. It promotes the development and application of what has been taught and learned in new and different ways. It provides opportunities for deepening learning, for example through exploring an issue, solving problems or completing a final project. It is an important approach at all levels and can take place across all the 4 contexts of learning. When teachers feel it is appropriate to do so, interdisciplinary learning activities will be planned for using the relevant curriculum experiences and outcomes.

## **Partnerships with Parents/Carers and the Wider School Community**

We will continue to work closely with our parents and carers and our community. We will look for opportunities to involve them in the life and work of our school, to share achievements and to build links which enhance children's learning experiences and our school.



## Personal Support

For our children who require additional personal support, an emphasis on individual needs and individualised blending of resources and interventions will be important considerations. The emotional wellbeing of our most vulnerable children during the Building Back Better phase will require continued careful planning and we will work with our children, parents and carers to make sure that this is a priority along with other necessary support to engage in their learning.

## Commitment to Improvement

The Building Back Better rationale will ensure that the whole school community has a shared understanding of what we are trying to achieve. As a school, as we move forwards our Building Back Better rationale recognises the importance of taking quality time to evaluate and review curriculum innovation and learn from developing best practice. Actively sourcing good practice and continuing to have staff involved in strategic development at school, cluster, authority and SEIC level will allow for true reflection and the opportunity to refine and further develop a curriculum which will support our learners on their journey through life, learning and work.

At Newtongrange Primary School we are committed to improving and refreshing our curriculum, in line with feedback from stakeholders, current research, changes in society, key legislation and simply what we have found to work and not to work. Through our school improvement plan and GTCS professional update we follow the principles of HGIOS 4 - Looking Inwards, Looking Outwards, Looking Forwards on our journey of continuous improvement.

