

Newton British School Newsletter



NBS Mission Statement
An international community of learners; striving for excellence and celebrating success.

**December
2010**

As the temperature falls, World Cup Fever takes over...

The Usual Suspects

View from..

Focus on?

Future Events

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Welcome to the second edition of Newsletter. In this edition we look back at the first term of 2010 / 2011. We have had a fantastic first term with lots of hard work from children and staff. Lots of fun has been had as well, as is always the case when



you are surrounded by children. This edition is not just about looking back though. We look forward to exciting times at Newton and also in Qatar. The view this term is from one of our new staff as we get a handle on living in Qatar from fresh eyes. Mrs Gray also writes her regular column and we look forward to that as she has now completed her first term as our Principal. We have a new section in this edition as well. Mr Rooney will be out and about in each edition interviewing a member of the Newton staff, this time it was Miss Diane, our Librarian's turn. As promised in the last edition we talk to the Head Boy and Head Girl as we find out how they are getting on in their new roles. The excitement continues as we tell you about the exciting new Parent Teacher Association (PTA) which has been set up and a Chairperson appointed. We are also looking to the next term. We have the next big event at Newton when we return, Winter Wonderland and already we are in the middle of activities that should make the event a fantastic one to attend! More about this later in the edition. As you can see we have lots to tell you as well as the usual features. So sit back and enjoy this edition of Newsletter and don't forget to tell your friends all about where they can download their copy at the weebly-website—www.newtonbritishschool.weebly.com

The Principal's Column

Dear Parents,

I cannot believe that we are coming to the end of term – how time flies when you are having fun!

I would like to take this opportunity to review some of the wonderful things that have been happening this term. We have celebrated International Day and Book Week – two events that supported pupil learning as well as being great fun.

All pupils have had standardised base line assessments, assessing spelling and reading ages. These were completed so that staff can track and monitor pupil progress more effectively.

The end of term assessments were also standardised across

Primary (Years 1-6). You will have received a letter explaining the levels of the National Curriculum which are being used to assess your children this year. You will also have received some child speak level descriptors which will help you as parents see what your children can do and see what they should be aiming for. Teachers are going to be setting targets in class so children have goals for their learning. A workshop on these levels will be held in January for parents.

Although a lot more is needed, we have started to make an improvement to the outside area. Basketball hoops are installed as well as a few four square courts. We have ordered and will be receiving after the winter break some hand holds which will be used to make a traversing wall for pupils. This type of wall is very popular in a lot of playgrounds in the UK. In addition to this we are having new computers, data projectors and internet access installed in each classroom. This will open a new world of teaching and learning for all our pupils.

We have also set up and elected members of an executive committee for the PTA. I have been delighted by the parental support and look forward to handing over the reigns of this committee to the elected parents. We are also endeavouring to set up a website to improve communication between home and school and also to promote the school within our wider community.

Finally I would like to thank pupils, parents and staff for the welcome I have received at NBS. Have a great holiday; 'Merry Christmas' to our families who celebrate this festival and I look forward to welcoming you all back to school on Tuesday 4th January 2011. Special thanks must go to the staff for their hard work this term.



Diary Dates

These are the special dates for next term, why not print this page off and then cut them out and stick them on the fridge so you will never forget any of the exciting events that are happening at Newton British School.

14th December 2010 Reports to Parents

15th December 2010 Parent Meetings

4th January 2011 Return to School for Term 2

12th January 2011 Winter Wonderland

30th and 31st January 2011 School Photographs

13th February 2011 Health Week

16th February 2011 Sports Day

16th February 2011 Half Term

ICT New Stuff by Mr Clarke

As part of the professional development of staff at Newton British School, I was able to visit Qatar Academy at the end of November. This was an organized workshop. The purpose of the workshop was to explore the use of a Wiki. The whole event was very exciting as the workshop looked at how children can push their learning forward by being encouraged to create their own work space on the world wide web. A wiki is part of the network Wikipedia and so in terms of safety for children it is excellent. Wikipedia does not allow advertising or spamming from any of its websites and so children cannot be exposed to social pressure as they work. The workshop



focused on interactivity through activities which have been designed specifically for wikis. As part of the process, I had to design some online content for children from Year 10 at Qatar Academy. The children then judged the work; there is nothing like having your work judged by children. As we all

know Qatar Academy is at the cutting edge of education in Qatar. I sat in their ICT suite and thought I am sure this technology can be used in Newton British. So when I then returned to work on the following Sunday I had resolved that Years Five and Six were going to use wikis. That afternoon I set up a new wiki. There is a link to it on the school website

www.newtonbritishschool.weebly.com and in their next ICT lesson the children did the same. The children are all part of wikispaces which enables them to access the school wiki. As we move through the process we will ask the children what they think. There is an online discussion forum running now which asks them for their opinions. The children seem to be enjoying the process and they already have some online content to work on. The idea that I had as I sat in Qatar Academy was that every year group would eventually have a wiki and this would allow everyone to be creative and expand their learning horizons. Initially I plan to pilot the wiki with Years Five and Six. I imagine that by the middle of term two myself and the children will have worked through any problems and discussed the solutions. This means that we can then have a wiki for every child from years one to six. Exciting times ahead so look out for updates in the next few weeks as we explore wikis...



The Rooney Interview



As we move forward at Newton and grow in size we are always striving to reflect our progress by creating new and exciting avenues. One such area is the Rooney Interview. This will be a regular feature in every edition of Newsletter. Mr Rooney, our excellent Year Two teacher, will interview a member of staff. This edition he has focused on the Library which this year is under the guidance of Miss Diane. The Library is going through some very exciting transformation and so it is an excellent place to start our new section. Miss Diane was able to take time out of her busy schedule to talk to Mr Rooney....

What has been the highlight of the year so far? ... The significant investment that has been made in increasing the literature in the library, by purchasing a large amount of educational and easy-to- reference books and media.

What do you enjoy the most about your new position?... I believe that knowledge is power for our children and therefore being in this position, I am primarily making it my focus to ensure that all kids at our school have access to our library books and to develop an inclination to read literature/books with enjoyment. This task can be challenging with youngsters and I really enjoy a challenge.

How do you get the children interested in books?... Books with lots of illustrations and easy to understand and relate to concepts are a favourite to both younger and older boy & girls. This maintains their focus and makes them want more. Class discussions based on the story are also thrilling for them as they love to be able to answer questions correctly, which goes with lots of praise and of course, a sticker. I am introducing a different variety of books by reading interesting extracts – this arouses their curiosity to want to read the whole book in this instance. For e.g. I am currently reading Roald Dahl extracts to Year 3s.

Are you planning any new strategies to expand the library?... Currently researching a book club ideology, which will have a self-sustaining mode to continuously introduce new books or themes into the library.

What has been your biggest surprise?... My biggest surprise was also one of my best moments I have experienced at school. This incident relates to a child's expression and string of questions that related to a story that was read to them. I found it difficult, but mostly amusing that I was not able to convince the class that Gruffalos are fictional characters and that they should not be afraid of one popping up from anywhere.

What are your favourite children's books?.... All books by Julia Donaldson and Alex Scheffler such as Monkey Puzzle, Room on the Broom and Gruffalo.

What was the best urban legend story that was introduced to the kids that taught a valuable life's lesson?.... The boy who cried wolf.

How should parents address their child when no interest in reading is shown? How should they encourage their kids to read more often?..... Younger children should start with simple books like Barney or Thomas or Princesses. This will encourage them to start reading. Having books of characters and topic they enjoy encourages more reading which applies to both young and old. If your child does not enjoy reading encourage other forms of reading such as newspapers, comics, magazines etc., anything of interest that will stimulate their interest. Never let your children watch the movie before the book is read. Often children don't want to read the book if they have watched the movie. This is no substitute. Rather motivate them with the movie if they read the book....

Thank you for taking time to see me... It was a pleasure, look out for the books for points campaign, which rewards children for bringing books that they have stopped reading into school.

Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

Newton British School has got a PTA, how exciting is that? The role of the PTA is to be a link between home and school. The members of the PTA work towards assisting the school management team and teachers. The role is very important and is an indication of just how much Newton is growing year by year.

The members of the PTA are made up of a mixture of staff and parents and the new members are:

Chairperson: Karolanne Pacheco

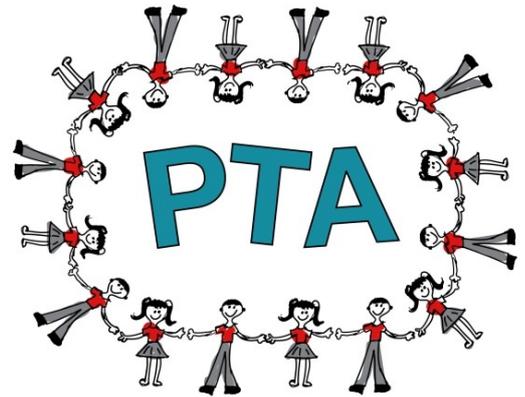
Treasurer: Soraya Amra

Secretary: Mary Buttigieg

Ordinary Members: Norzaimah Ismail, Nisar Latif and Asser Mohammed

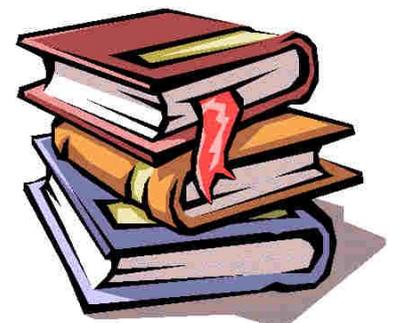
Staff Members: Jillian Stewart, Sean Mustoe, David Rucker, Lailla Shanab, Georgina Gray

The PTA will meet on a regular basis and we will keep you up to date with the progress that they are making as we move forward.



Book Donations for House Points

It is that time of year again. Out with the old and in with the new. What do you do with the books that you or your children have finished reading? At Newton British we would like to use them again in our library. With this in mind we are launching a scheme where children can bring their unwanted books into school. These books will be used in the library for a whole new generation of children who haven't read them. This will give the books a whole new lease of life and mean that instead of sitting on a shelf and gathering dust the books can be used again. In exchange for your generous donations every book that is brought into school will attract three house points for your child and your child's house. Thank you in advance for your support in this excellent activity.



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The view from...

This issue we get a view from Mr Hill, our Year Five teacher, he writes about coming back to Doha:

Well after a year away in the Emirates, I was pleased to discover that my old blue Hyundai Galloper was still parked outside Newton West Bay. Although it looked like an oversized sand dune, rumours that my car had been used in an *Indiana Jones* film were exaggerated. Imagine my surprise when a carwash refused to clean my car because it was “too dirty”! On the other hand, I was pleased to find that my favourite building in Doha, the Central Post Office, was still there. Who else thinks that it resembles a bee hive? I was pleased to see that the green parakeets still fly around the palm trees in the gardens of the zoo and was amazed at the new buildings along the Corniche; there is now a huge glass and steel gherkin which is fantastic.

So what are my thoughts after a term’s teaching at Newton British School? Well, having taught in the UK, Kenya, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Romania and the Emirates, I would definitely say that Newton British is one of the happiest schools I have ever taught in. There is a good mix of nationalities, with very positive relations between the teachers and the students, and the separate little villas give the school a village atmosphere. Year 5 Blue are hard working and well behaved children (well, most of the time!) and I think that we have had a lot of fun together, learning about some interesting Science topics, making guitars in Design and Technology, and discovering a little about the literary works one of my heroes, Mr Charles Dickens. It’s good to be back.



Head Boy and Head Girl

The Head Girl, Tharienee and Head Boy, Yehia have now been in their new roles for a term. We caught up with them to get their views on how they feel their first term has gone. They said that they had both enjoyed their new roles so far and had learned a lot about themselves. Both children said that they enjoyed helping lots of people around school, children and teachers alike. A big bonus for them both was the responsibility that they felt that were being given. They felt that they were making a valid contribution to the school. They felt that the work around the school was creating a modern school that was up to date and that they were proud to be part of. We at the Newsletter wish them all the very best as they go off on a well deserved break.



Now for the N E W S

The Dentist comes to Year Three

This term has been exciting in Year Three, not only have they been taking time to look at The Romans and design Roman chariots they have had a visit from a Dentist. As part of the Science topics which are covered in Year Three all the children look at healthy eating. As we know the effect that eating sweets and not brushing regularly can have on teeth is devastating. Who better to tell the children all about looking after your teeth than a dentist? The three classes were shown a presentation and then had their teeth looked at by a team of dental nurses. Inviting these professionals to the school to talk to the children provides an important resource in the teaching and learning for the children and the children enjoyed meeting them. Well done Year Three and don't forget to brush your teeth twice a day... at least!!



New Playground

The improvements in our school are happening all the time. You will have noticed that we now have colourful boards around the school. These are part of the plan to make all of the areas where children play more interactive. Mrs Gray is moving the project on. Teachers now have an external area where they can display the work that the children are working on in class. This is a very interesting way of showing other children about a new area of learning. We also have chalk boards where children can write and draw and play and these are proving very popular. In the Early Years department we now have painted snakes on the floor and I do know that Mrs Gray has further plans to develop the playground even more. So you really must literally, watch this space!

