

# GHS



## Learning and Teaching Newsletter Session 2019-2020



# Welcome to our L&T newsletter

Welcome to our first Learning and Teaching newsletter. This newsletter will hopefully give you an insight into some of the learning activities that have taken place in Gleniffer High School during the session 2019- 2020.

We will also take this opportunity to highlight some of the other activities that have taken place this session which has had a positive impact on pupils' learning. Staff have undertaken their own professional learning which they have then utilised within their classrooms and within our school community.

This newsletter will focus on four areas-

- Practitioner Enquiry
- Inter Disciplinary Learning (IDL)
- Learning and Teaching Reviews
- Career Long Professional Learning

We hope you enjoy reading our newsletter and if you wish to send us any feedback on it, please send it to [glenifferhighenquiries@renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:glenifferhighenquiries@renfrewshire.gov.uk)

Lisa Chalmers  
Head Teacher



# Practitioner Enquiry

This session we welcomed four Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) to Gleniffer High School. Dr Winter joined the Science team and taught Chemistry. Miss Lambie joined the Humanities faculty and taught Modern Studies. Miss Collins joined the Music department and Miss Rudie joined the Art and Technical Faculty where she taught Technical.

Having Newly Qualified Teachers in Gleniffer High School is a real privilege. Although new to the teaching profession they bring expertise from industry and help invigorate their departments with new and exciting teaching methodologies from their Initial Teacher Education providers.

Each NQT needs to undertake a practitioner enquiry as part of their route to becoming a fully qualified teacher. The main focus of practitioner enquiries is learning and teaching, and Miss Lambie from the Humanities department shared hers with us.

## **Practitioner Enquiry (P.E.)- Miss Lambie**

My P.E. was all about developing political literacy through mock class elections. My premise was really to see if mock class elections do help pupils with this or are they just a bit of fun? For my methodology I collected mostly qualitative research generated from classwork, homework, Assessment is for Learning 'exit passes', and completion of 'Democracy' word bank/definitions. I also generated quantitative research in the form of a feedback form using the Likert Scale.

My P.E. looked at not only the actual class election itself but the preparation for it - teaching and learning of key concepts related to 'democracy.' The hands-on learning experience in the class election was fruitful - pupils had the chance in their political parties to stand up, make a speech, hold up their election material and take questions from the other parties.

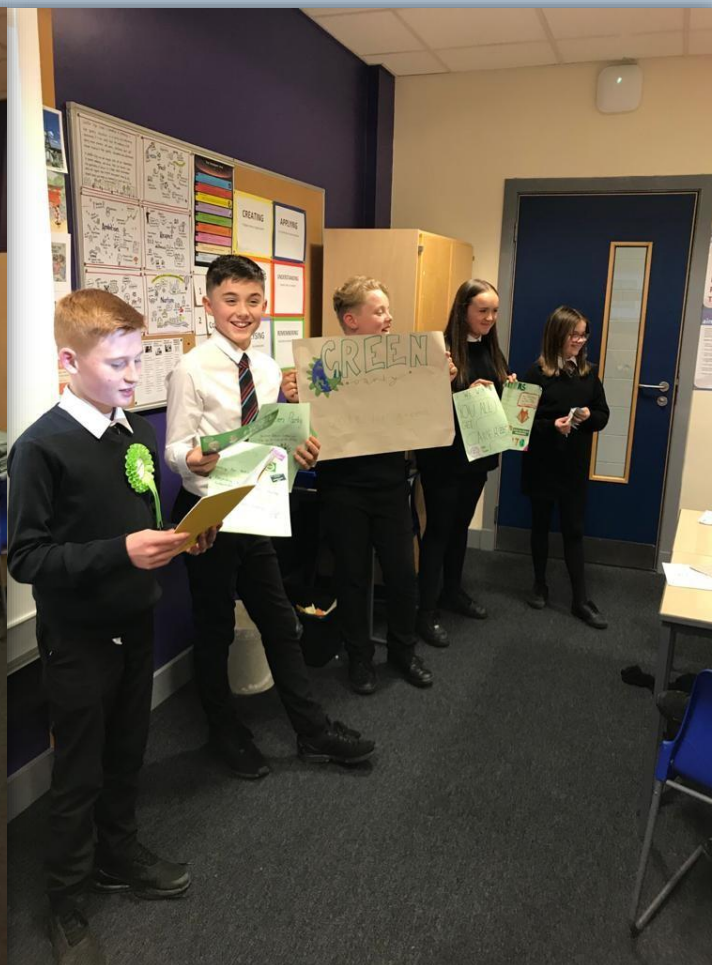
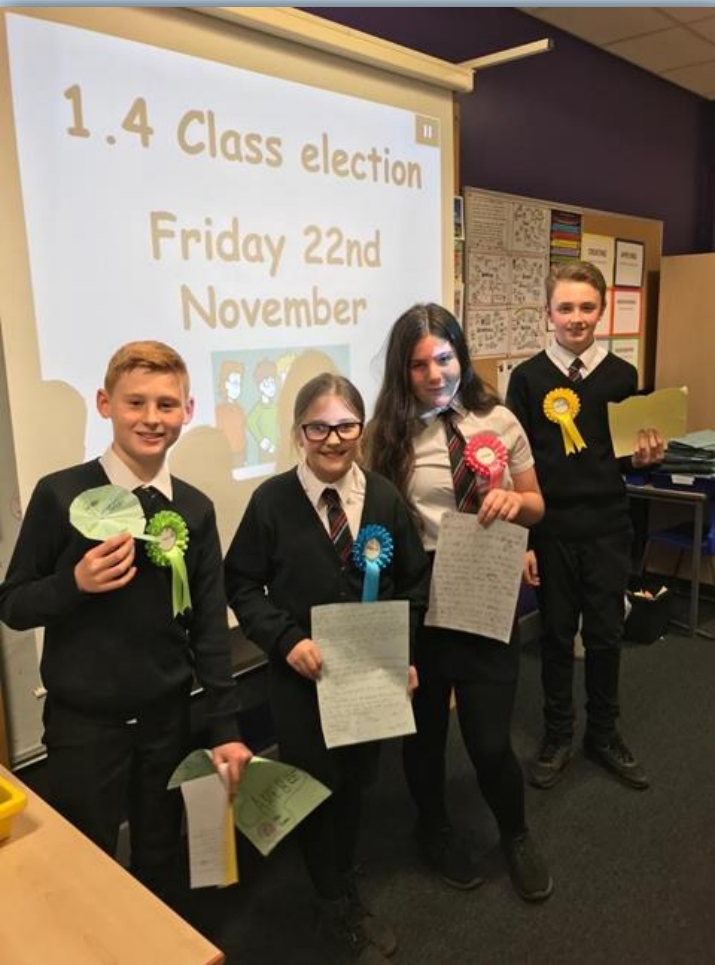
The feedback form: 84% of the class said that they found the class election to be "very useful" in helping them understand democracy, elections and voting with one stating that they "now know how the process worked." Overall it highlighted that yes, class elections do help to develop political literacy amongst pupils, but there is still progress to be made. Pupils also need the opportunity to further delve into these concepts throughout their learning (through visiting Scottish Parliament/taking part in more debates for example). Pupils will have the opportunity to continuously revisit the key concepts in S1 and beyond. It is equally important that they continue to challenge assumptions about key concepts and also develop HOTS.

As a practitioner, it is important for me to continue to check and consolidate pupils' understanding of these key concepts. It is also important for me to frame these concepts in such a way that they do not sit in isolation, as stand alone ideas but connected to a wider picture, engendering CfE's "responsible citizen" capacity in my teaching. I will continue to include mock class elections in my teaching and learning. I would spend a little more time teasing out and reviewing key concepts before the election takes place to ensure that every pupil understands the reasons why we are holding one.





# Practitioner Enquiry



# Inter-disciplinary Learning

## S2 Forensics Week

### Forensics Week 2020

Forensics week is a staple of our S2 BGE Science programme, but this year several changes were made. Upon interviewing and getting feedback from last year's S2 pupils, it was clear that there was a desire for a more interactive and challenging experience. Using the ideas from the S3 pupils interviewed, forensics week went from an exclusively science activity to a cross-curricular event incorporating science, humanities and even some drama.

During Forensics week a theft was staged in Miss Chalmers' office, with several clues left behind and fingerprints from six members of staff – Mrs Futamata, Mr Giles, Miss Collins, Mrs Niven, Mrs Gillen and Mr M<sup>c</sup>Cafferty. The task presented to the pupils was to use the evidence collected at the crime scene and the police interviews conducted with the members of staff to figure out who had motive to carry out the crime and which suspect there was enough evidence to arrest.

In the run up to Forensics week, volunteers from across the S2 classes acted as our forensic investigators and our police officers. The pupils' acting and improvisation skills shone in the interviews and the recordings were shown in an assembly so that all S2 pupils got to share the experience.

Forensics week was run in two sections. The science part which was coordinated by Dr Winter and the humanities part coordinated by Miss Lambie.

In the science part, the aim was for pupils to develop problem solving skills, to work co-operatively and to learn some new experimental techniques. Pupils had five tasks to complete that were fully pupil led. There were three experimental tasks and two problem solving activities. Pupils were split into small groups and had a results booklet to record their results. One of the tasks was co-ordinated by the school technicians, Mr M<sup>c</sup>Cafferty and Mr Gorman, who also talked about careers in science.

With each activity, pupils had to organise themselves into different jobs and work together to complete the task within a time limit. The pupils then had to analyse their evidence each day to see if any suspects could be eliminated and to share their findings with other groups.

In humanities, the pupils' aim was to understand some of the motivations for crime in society and to understand the full context of why crime happens. Pupils worked in pairs to analyse the interviews that our suspects had given to determine if the staff members had social, biological or economic motivations





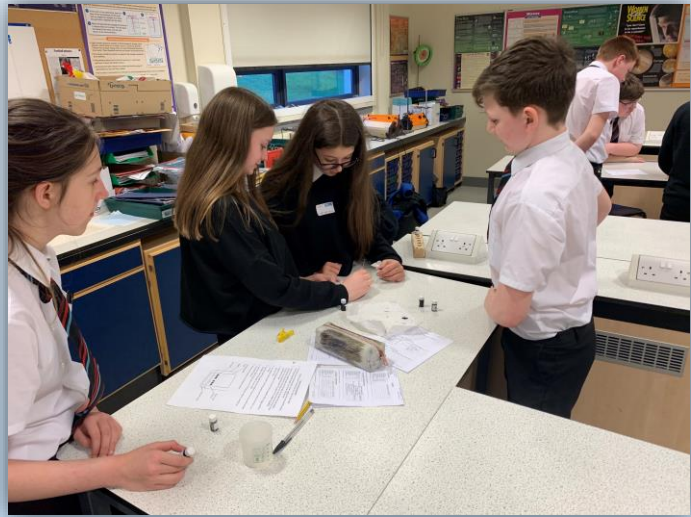
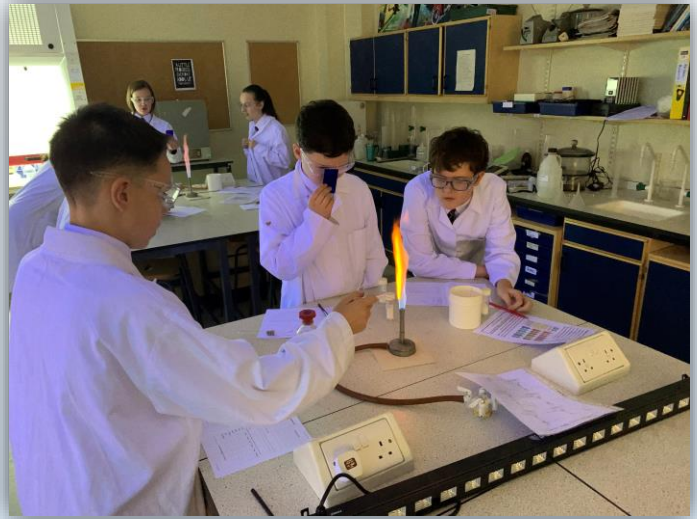
# Forensics week continued

for potentially committing the crime. Within humanities pupils also analysed DNA evidence at the end of the week to see if their results matched with the police's prime suspect – Mr McCafferty!!!

Following forensics week, a council of pupils were asked to give feedback on their experiences and it was very positive. Pupils liked that it was challenging and that they needed to look at all the evidence before they could find a prime suspect. The main thing they wanted to develop was to see if more subjects could get involved and also to have a greater role in planning the drama side – so that will be our goal for next year.

I personally would like to thank all the S2 pupils for their effort during forensics week – they worked effectively, collaborated well and behaved professionally. They also showed off some great communication and problem solving skills that they will definitely be able to apply to different areas.

Dr Winter.



# Learning and Teaching Review

As part of our quality assurance processes within school, each session we complete a review of the learning and teaching in three different departments. At the start of session 2019-2020 a review of this process took place. Several positive changes have happened as a result of this review.

A short life working party consisting of 16 teaching staff and 6 student leaders was created. Everyone worked together to review our quality assurance processes and bring about positive changes for our teachers and our learners. A draft policy was created and has been trialled with the three departments which were due for review- Science, Modern Languages and Music.

First change- the name of the department reviews has changed to Learning and Teaching Reviews. We felt that the focus should not be on teachers. It is on the learning in the department and the impact that it is having on the young people.

Second change- We felt it was important that pupils were given opportunities to have their say and indeed take a lead in the Learning and Teaching Reviews. Therefore, our student leaders were all trained in leading pupil focus groups to allow pupils to feel more at ease when discussing the learning and teaching in departments.


Third change- We felt it was important that Principal Teachers (PTs) had the opportunity to see the great learning and teaching that is going on in other departments and then share this with their own departments at their monthly meetings. Therefore, the Principal Teachers from the review cycle joined with the senior leadership team to observe the learning and teaching in the departments and helped feedback to the department on the good practice they saw.

Fourth change- Instead of a single period being identified for an observation, the observation of a lesson could take place over the space of a few days. This was due to the several points made by the working party. Previously issues arose throughout the school day which made it difficult for the senior leaders to visit at a certain time. Leaving the observations open over a few days allowed for more flexibility. Further to this the working party felt that sometimes teachers over prepared for their lesson and due to nerves didn't teach the way they would normally. Leaving the observation open allowed staff to focus on the teaching and learning that week.

Fifth change- Previously teachers would have been observed for a whole period. With the new policy observers would come to classes for no more than 25 minutes either at the start or at the end of the lesson. This allows for observers to see more staff and over a shorter period.

Sixth change- Staff would usually have a professional dialogue with a member of the senior leadership team. With the new system teachers are asked in total nine self-evaluation questions focusing on learning and teaching. In addition, teachers would not receive individual feedback on their lesson unless they specifically requested it.

Staff and pupils who have been involved in the Learning and Teaching reviews have felt that it was a very supportive experience and less stressful than the previous reviews.

Gleniffer High School	
	
<b>Learning and Teaching Review</b>	
Department: <u>xxxx</u>	

Learning and Teaching Review						
<b>Rationale:</b>						
Gleniffer High School is committed to providing a high-quality education in a caring and welcoming environment. It is our belief that the wellbeing of all young people promotes self-worth, confidence and self-esteem, leading to high quality attainment and achievement. In Gleniffer High School, we will engage with all stakeholders to promote wellbeing and to ensure that our learners have the opportunity to thrive in a stable school environment which will support their progress and prepare them for life beyond school and make our community a great place to live.						
In order for this to be possible, we need to collectively as a school and a community, self-evaluate, share good practice; create opportunities for robust professional dialogue and keep our learners at the heart of everything we do. Thus, ensuring that they have every chance of achieving their potential to leave school into a positive and sustained destination.						
Our system to self-evaluate and share good practice must employ a fair and transparent process to evaluate learners' experiences. Gleniffer High School's process will involve learners, class teachers, Principal Teachers/Faculty Leaders, Senior Leadership Team, and where appropriate parents/carers and partner agencies.						
The Learning and Teaching Review Schedule						
Month	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-2025
Sept	Science (Oxley)	HF&T	Maths	SLT	Pastoral	Business & Computing
Nov	Modern Languages	Business & Computing	English & Drama	PE	Science	HF&T
Feb	Music	Humanities	Support	Art & Tech	Music	Modern Languages

# Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL)

Every year members of staff engage in career long professional learning to continue. This engagement is to improve their own teaching practice in order to fully support the learners within their care and to further their own professional development.

This session saw Gleniffer High School create over 80 opportunities for teachers, support staff, parents, pupils and our cluster colleagues come together to learn together. This has strengthened our community ethos and continues to help us develop our strong working relationships.

Next session will see our programme take a different focus to move our CLPL learning online due to our current situation and encourage well-being in our staff and pupils. Mr McGonigal from our Music department has looked at courses that you may find useful.





# Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL)

## edX Courses

edX is an open online course provider created by MIT and Harvard University. It hosts online university-level courses in a wide range of disciplines to a worldwide student body, many of which occur no charge.

The Learning and Teaching Group would like to share a number of these courses with you that will not only accumulate towards your annual CLPL but support you, and your pupils, through online learning and promote positive wellbeing during these unprecedented times.

**Course:** *How to Learn Online* **Institution:** *edX*

*Designed for those who are new to e-learning, this course will prepare you with strategies to be a successful online learner. The edX learning design team has curated some of the most powerful, science-backed techniques which you can start using right away and on any learning platform.*



*This course will help you answer the following questions:*

- *How do I take notes during live or recorded instruction? What's the difference?*
- *What's the point of discussions and how should I participate in them to get the most value?*
- *What can I do if I have trouble concentrating or lack time to complete assignments?*
- *What is the ideal study environment?*

### **What You'll learn**

- *Self-care techniques that will help you maintain a healthy mind for effective online learning.*
- *Time management with the help of some common technology.*
- *Key learning strategies backed by research from edX partners.*
- *Build strong connections with fellow learners and your instructors.*
- *Setup your work area in order to focus and be a successful online learner.*

**Available here**

**<https://www.edx.org/course/how-to-learn-online>**



**Course: Mindfulness and Resilience to Stress at Work Institution: UC Berkley**

*Stress, anxiety, and burnout are rampant across workplaces today: 80 percent of workers feel stress on the job, and nearly half say they need help learning how to manage it. While many organisations may assume that intense stress is unavoidable, even admirable, research suggests that too much stress is toxic to our health and performance, leading to burnout and harming the culture of organisations as a whole.*

**Berkeley**  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA



Available Here:

<https://www.edx.org/course/mindfulness-and-resilience-to-stress-at-work>

**What You'll learn**

- How stress can impair our performance and well-being at work, and harm organizations
- The differences between healthy and toxic stress, and how to leverage healthy stress for success
- The benefits of mindfulness for helping you build resilience to stress



**Course: The Science of Happiness**

**Institution: UC Berkley**

*A free eight-week Science of Happiness course that will offer practical, research-backed tips on living a happy and meaningful life.*



**Available Here:**

<https://www.edx.org/course/the-science-of-happiness-3>

**What You'll learn**

- *What happiness really means and why it matters to you*
- *How to increase your own happiness and foster happiness in others*
- *Why social connections, kindness, and community are key to happiness*
- *Which mental habits are most conducive to happiness and how mindfulness can help*

**Course: The Foundations of Happiness at Work**

**Institution: UC Berkley**

*This course explains what happiness at work looks like, why it matters, and how to cultivate it. It begins by defining happiness and making the case that happiness at work improves the performance of individual employees and organisations as a whole, increasing innovation, productivity, engagement, retention, and the quality of their work.*



**Available Here:**

<https://www.edx.org/course/the-foundations-of-happiness-at-work>

**What You'll learn**

- *The personal, social, and professional advantages of happiness at work*
- *How to identify barriers and pitfalls to achieving happiness at work*
- *A series of research-backed, practical ways to boost happiness at work*
- *Strategies for evaluating levels of happiness within an organisation*



Course: Talk to Me: Improving Mental Health and Suicide Prevention in Young Adults

Institution: *Curtin University*

Poor mental health affects one in four people, and young adults are particularly susceptible. Do you feel confident approaching the topic of mental health with people you care about, or are concerned about?

**'Talk to Me': Improving mental health and suicide prevention in young adults**, is a German-Australian collaboration developed in response to the growing need to provide young people and those around them with the knowledge, skills, and understanding to recognise, identify, and respond to mental health challenges in themselves and others.



Available Here:

<https://www.edx.org/course/talk-to-me-improving-mental-health>

### What You'll learn

- What mental health is, and the impact of stress on mental health
- Identify and explain contributing factors to suicide and poor mental health
- Strategies to increase mental fitness
- Understand why self-harm may be used as a coping strategy
- Recognise risk factors for mental health crisis and suicidality
- Understand the types of questions you can ask a person who may be at risk of suicide



Course: The Science and Practice of Yoga

Institution: *University of Texas Arlington*

*Concerned about how the digital age is impacting your well-being? Looking for ways to find balance? This course takes the ancient practice of yoga and translates it into modern day science with practical applications.*

*You will learn how to practice yoga on the mat as well as in your everyday life using aspects of yoga that are immediately applicable to you. Having taught yoga to thousands of people just like you, we have reduced the practice down to the nectar of what really works.*



Available

<https://www.edx.org/course/the-science-and-practice-of-yoga>

Here:

### What You'll learn

- How the digital age impacts your well-being
- Yoga postures and navigating a yoga class
- How to use yoga to find balance in your life
- Research findings on yoga
- Meditation and breath awareness



Course: Music for Wellness

Institution: BerkleeX

*You love music. You listen to music all the time. Maybe you sing, play an instrument, or compose music. You don't need to have musical talent to use music to enhance your well being, and even your health.*

*Learn simple techniques to enrich your mind, body, and spirit through music. The methods can be applied in your daily life, particularly when you are feeling down or stressed out. Developed by a board-certified music therapist and a vocalist/pianist/composer/recording artist specializing in Indian music, these strategies combine science with the wisdom of Eastern philosophy.*



Available Here:

<https://www.edx.org/course/music-for-wellness>

### What You'll learn

- The effects music has on the body and the brain
- Strategies and techniques for regulating emotions and stress by integrating music with ancient practices such as mantra and pranayama
- The scientific underpinnings that support the efficacy of ancient traditional practices used to promote wellness
- How and why music can help you to live a happier, healthier life



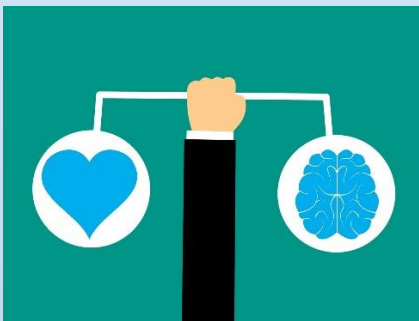


## Course: Empathy and Emotional Intelligence at Work

Institution: *UC Berkley*

*One of the key insights from the science of happiness is that our own personal happiness depends heavily on our relationships with others. By tuning into the needs of other people, we actually enhance our own emotional well-being. The same is true within organisations: those that foster trusting, cooperative relationships are more likely to have a more satisfied, engaged—and more productive and innovative—workforce, with greater employee loyalty and retention.*

**Berkeley**  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA



Available Here:

<https://www.edx.org/course/empathy-and-emotional-intelligence-at-work>

## What You'll learn

- Discover the psychological and biological roots of empathy, trust, and cooperation
- Understand how the skills of emotional and social intelligence support organisational happiness and productivity
- Develop research-based strategies for strengthening empathy and resolving conflicts constructively
- Learn how to lead with social intelligence

