أكاديمية نيوتن البريطانية
NEWTON BRITISH ACADEMY

NEWSLETTER

September – October 2026

A Message from the Principal

I have always said that it is a privilege to be the Principal of Newton British Academy Al Dafna. Reflecting on the first half-term of this academic year, I am reminded of just how fortunate I am to work alongside such a committed and diverse school community.

What makes our school special is the contribution of everyone within it: our dedicated staff, including teachers, teaching assistants and leaders; our children, who bring energy, enthusiasm, respect and courtesy into school every day; and our supportive families, who place their trust in us and play an important role in shaping the culture of our school. These relationships underpin our shared values and help create an environment in which children feel safe, supported and motivated to learn.

We continue to celebrate the diversity of our international community, with 60 nationalities represented among our pupils. Together, we remain committed to our mission of being an international community of learners striving for excellence and celebrating success.

The first eight weeks of the academic year have provided plenty of opportunities to bring our community together. We began by welcoming many new families at an event on the Thursday before the start of term. This was followed by our Meet the Teachers event and our first parent coffee morning, which focused on the teaching of reading. It was particularly pleasing to welcome 166 parents to this session, where families had the opportunity to learn more about our approach to reading and experience a live lesson. Children love sharing their school experiences with their parents, and these opportunities remain an important part of building strong home-school partnerships.

Continuing our focus on reading, we have held our Crescent Book Sale and unveiled our new Jungle Library for EYFS children. This is a valuable addition to our learning environment, making excellent use of available space while providing an inviting area to encourage early reading, storytelling and a lifelong love of books.
We have also welcomed several new teachers, all of whom have quickly settled into school life and become part of our community. For some, this has also meant adapting to life in Qatar for the first time, and I am pleased to see how readily they have embraced this new chapter.

As you turn through the pages of this chronicle, you will see the relationships developing across the school and the many ways in which our children are engaging with their learning. Our emphasis on character education continues through our weekly virtues, providing regular opportunities for children to reflect on what it means to be a good friend, a responsible citizen and a considerate member of our community.

We have also appointed our Year 6 prefects and conducted our Student Council elections. It is encouraging to see children embracing opportunities to take on additional responsibilities and develop their leadership skills. My thanks go to our teachers for supporting these processes. Remember, we can all be leaders – and, in fact, we all are leaders. Through our everyday actions, we model our values, influence those around us and demonstrate what it means to be respectful, responsible and enthusiastic learners.

Our weekly assemblies have been another highlight of the half-term. It is always lovely to see parents joining us to watch their children contribute through performances, presentations and celebrations of their learning. The themes, often linked to our weekly virtues, provide an opportunity to reinforce important messages and bring our community together.

The photographs throughout this chronicle capture the vibrancy, creativity and enthusiasm that are embedded across our curriculum. Our provision remains broad and balanced, encouraging children to be active, curious and creative. We want them to think like musicians, scientists, geographers and historians; to become poets, authors and mathematicians; and, above all, to embrace challenges and enjoy the process of learning. We want every child to feel confident enough to have a go, take risks and believe in their own abilities, knowing that they are learning in a safe and supportive environment.

Perhaps the most important message from these first eight weeks is that together we are stronger. The experiences and achievements captured in these pages are the result of a collective effort, and I am proud of the contribution made by our children, staff and families.

As we look ahead to the remainder of Term 1, there is still plenty to anticipate. Our forthcoming calendar includes British Values Day, World Children's Day and Philosophy Day, alongside our much-anticipated School Fair on Friday 27th November. We will also begin our end-of-term assessments in December, before officially bringing Term 1 to a close on Thursday 17th December.

Finally, I would like to thank each and every one of you for your continued support, resilience, generosity and understanding. Your contribution makes a genuine difference to our school and, most importantly, to the experiences and opportunities we provide for our children.

It remains an absolute privilege to lead this community. Thank you for being such an important part of it.

Mr. Spencer
Principal







A Wonderful Start to the New School Year

Welcome back · new teachers · new families

Welcoming Our New Families

Our Senior Leadership Team welcomed new families, sharing an introduction to school life. New children met their teachers, explored their classrooms and looked around the school, feeling comfortable and excited for the year ahead.





A Wonderful Start to the New School Year

It has been wonderful to welcome our children back! Over the first two days we focused on reconnecting, building positive relationships and helping every child feel happy, safe and settled. Teachers established clear routines and expectations and created a positive environment where children are ready to learn.









Year 1

There were lots of smiles as the children celebrated their very first day in Year 1! Everyone settled in beautifully and began making new friends.

To celebrate the new year, the children created colourful butterflies for the classroom door, exploring colour mixing and printing with paint rollers. Just like our butterflies, every child in Year 1 Red is special – and together we make a bright and beautiful class!





Year 2

Year 2 have had a wonderful first week of learning. They settled into their routines beautifully and showed great enthusiasm each morning, especially during reading tasks. The class also had lots of fun practising their hula-hoop skills and cheering each other on.






Year 3

Year 3 has made a fantastic start! Everyone has settled in well and enjoyed class bonding activities that build a positive classroom community. The children have made a brilliant start to the Year 3 curriculum, showing enthusiasm, hard work and a positive attitude.





Year 5

Mr. Gibbs in Year 5 Blue has created a wonderful reading corner – a calm, safe and creative space for children to relax, explore books and develop a love of reading.



A Wonderful First Week in EYFS!

A special welcome to all our new children and families joining our EYFS community. The children have settled beautifully, getting to know their teachers, making friends and exploring role play, construction, creative activities and small world play.

We have also been learning our school expectations of Ready, Respectful and Safe: listening, sharing, taking turns, using kind words, caring for resources and making safe choices.









Learning Gets Hands-On

Year 1

Year 1 enjoyed their first practical maths lesson! Using counters and ten frames, the children built, recognised and recorded numbers in different ways, explaining their mathematical thinking with confidence.

Year 1 also visited our provision area for the first time, exploring sensory play, small-world animals, construction and imaginative role play – working cooperatively and sharing resources.

In History, Year 1 began the unit ‘How Do We Make History?’ The children brought in special photographs, shared childhood memories and learned the words past, present and future.



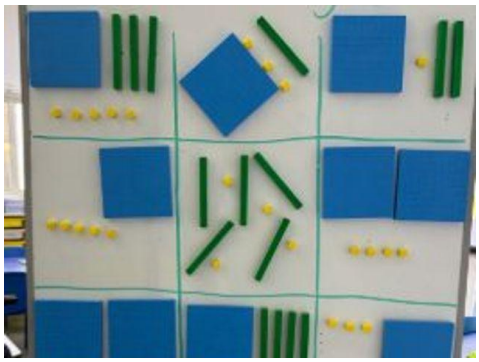




Year 4

In maths, Year 4 developed their understanding of place value up to 10,000 using Base 10 equipment, partitioning numbers into thousands, hundreds, tens and ones in flexible ways.

In English, the children used story maps with pictures, actions and key vocabulary to learn and retell our model text with growing confidence.





Year 5 – Art and Design: Bridge Design Challenge!

Year 5 investigated beam and arch bridges, discovering how shape, thickness and layering make structures stronger and stiffer. Then they became bridge designers, testing how many blocks their bridge could hold before it collapsed! Sometimes the best ideas come from testing, adapting and trying again.







Year 6 – Spy Gadget Challenge!

Year 6 kicked off their new Talk for Writing persuasive unit by designing an original gadget to help a secret agent on their next mission, then preparing to persuade others that their invention was the ultimate spy essential. Perhaps we have some future inventors and secret agents in Year 6!



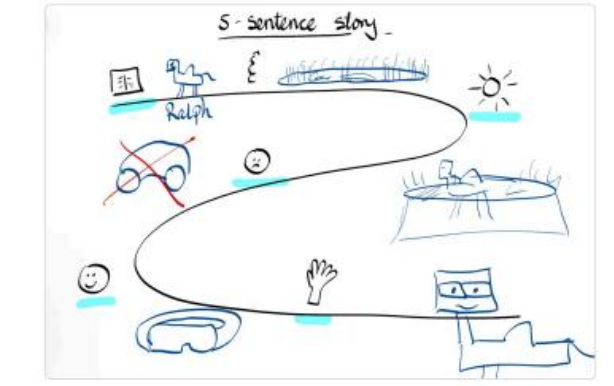




EYFS Talk for Writing Training

Kids enjoyed a twilight training session on Talk for Writing in EYFS, focusing on invention throughout the whole writing journey and giving children regular chances to orally explore, create and invent their own stories.





Leaders, Libraries & Rock Stars

Meet Our Prefects

During assembly we proudly introduced our new prefects and presented them with their badges. They are ready to embrace their responsibilities and become leaders of today!



P4C Peer Observations

Staff took part in peer observations and learned from one another. A huge thank you to Ms. Khan and M.s Naidoo for opening their classrooms and role-modelling effective practice.



EYFS Jungle Library

A very special thank you to Ms. Bernadette and Ms. Rachel for bringing our new EYFS library, “Jungle: Let the Wild Rumpus Start!”, to life. With story-inspired areas such as the Going on a Bear Hunt cave, Gruffalo corner and Hungry Giant, children can step into the stories they love.

This magical space supports language, vocabulary, communication, imagination and confidence, while creating joyful experiences around reading.






Year 4

Year 4 have been learning their new model text through actions and oral rehearsal, and creating story maps to remember the sequence, key vocabulary and language patterns. What fantastic storytellers!






Year 5

Year 5 have been preparing and delivering Student Council speeches. They will now cast their votes and elect the representatives they believe will make excellent leaders. We are so proud of their confidence and thoughtful ideas!



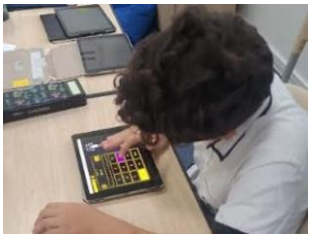


Year 6

Year 6 dived into a persuasive writing “book tasting”, rotating between tables to explore different persuasive texts. They spotted bold arguments, emotive language and clever rhetorical questions, then magpied the best techniques for their own writing.

Year 6 have also been rocking their times tables with Times Tables Rock Stars, building fluency, speed and confidence. Keep practising – you are true maths rock stars!






Dots, Coffee & Curious Minds

EYFS – Nurturing Curious Minds

Our EYFS teachers and Teaching Assistants have worked incredibly hard to create an exciting, thoughtfully planned enhanced provision. Children explore, investigate, create and discover, following their interests, making choices and taking ownership of their learning – building creativity, problem-solving, collaboration and independence.






Year 5 Science – Parachute Investigation!

Year 5 explored forces and air resistance through a hands-on parachute activity, learning about independent, dependent and controlled variables. In groups they designed parachutes from plastic bags, string, paper clips and modelling clay, predicted which would fall slowest, and tested how parachute size affects falling time.






Parent Coffee Morning – a Huge Success!

We hosted our first PTA Parent Coffee Morning, with **166 parents** attending. The theme was reading, alongside a book sale.

Alison Tansley, our Reading Lead, explained our guided reading approach in Key Stage 1 – including a minimum of three reads per week with an adult – and whole-class guided reading in Key Stage 2. Mr. Wilson showed how children use Bug Club and what teachers can see. Parents then joined their children for Lesson 2 to see reading taught first-hand.







Poems, Languages & Premier League

Year 1

Year 1 have been learning about part-whole models in mathematics. Using concrete objects has helped the children understand how to add and subtract.






Year 6

Year 6 have been investigating the conditions in which mould grows. They set up an experiment, made predictions and will observe the samples over time – thinking like scientists!





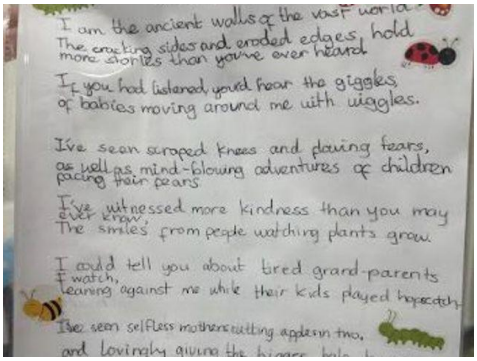
Spanish for Beginners ECA

¡Hola! Our Spanish for Beginners ECA lets children try a new language alongside the French and Arabic they learn at school. In the first session they explored where Spanish is spoken, learned to greet others and ask a name, played a greeting game and made “Me llamo…” name badges.



COBIS Poetry Competition – If Walls Could Speak

Our pupils took part in the COBIS Poetry Competition on the theme ‘If Walls Could Speak’. The poems are in and ready for our internal selection. Well done to all our young poets!


I am the ancient walls of the vast world
The cracking sides and eroded edges, hold
more stories than you've ever heard

If you had listened, you'd hear the giggles
of babies moving around me with wiggles.

I've seen scraped knees and flowing tears,
as well as mind-blowing adventures of children
pacing their years

I've witnessed more kindness than you may
ever know,
The smiles from people watching plants grow

I could tell you about tired grand-parents
I watch,
leaning against me while their kids played hopscotch

I've seen selfless mothers cutting apples in two,
and lovingly giving the biggest bite

House Colour Day

House Colour Day was a fantastic celebration of teamwork, school spirit and friendly competition. Students wore their house colours and took part in quizzes in their house teams.



Teaching Assistants Day

We celebrated our wonderful Teaching Assistants with special assemblies led by their phases, recognising the kindness, patience and care they bring every day. Thank you, our everyday superheroes!





TTRS Premier League

We are excited to introduce our new TTRS Premier League for Years 3–6! Each fixture lasts seven days, and classes compete against another class, with the winner decided by the seven-day average of correct answers.

Points: **3 for a win, 1 each for a draw, 0 for a loss.** Fixtures run for eight weeks, after which the class with the most points is crowned champion and receives a special trophy. Good luck to all classes!

Book Fair

Our Book Fair was a wonderful success, with children choosing books that sparked their curiosity. We hope they enjoy many happy moments with their new books!



People Who Help Us

EYFS – People Who Help Us

Our classrooms have been transformed with role-play areas including a fire station, a construction site and a veterinary clinic. Children have stepped into different roles, using their imaginations and developing communication and language skills.

We have also begun our Talk for Writing journey with initial cold tasks, giving us a valuable view of children's starting points.







Year 6

Year 6 Red were very pleased with themselves after solving Wordle on their very first guess! Well done, 6 Red!



Brotherhood Values Exhibition

We are delighted with the success of our Ikhaa Brotherhood initiative, which helps children develop kindness, cooperation, compassion, respect and positive friendships. Supported by our Arabic Department and coordinated by Ms. Dalia, it follows the Ministry of Education and Higher Education's "Together We Build a Kinder Community" initiative.

Our Arabic team created a Brotherhood Exhibition showcasing work completed at home and in school, celebrating that Brotherhood is not just a value to discuss but a way of life.





Wellbeing, Worry Boxes & Wonderful Writing

Celebrating World Mental Health Day!

Pupils from F1 to Year 6 raised awareness of looking after both physical and mental wellbeing. Children explored how healthy eating, physical activity and talking about emotions support mental health, made fruit smoothies and fruit salads, took part in the Daily Mile, and joined age-appropriate activities on emotions, worries and mindfulness.

A huge thank you to our staff and families for supporting this wonderful day!





Student Council – Making Our School an Even Better Place!

Our Student Council introduced Worry Boxes, giving children a safe space to share any worries. Members have worked together to design and create the boxes, showing creativity, teamwork and a real commitment to wellbeing.





Breast Cancer Awareness Month

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Our prefects handed out pink badges to all staff, a small reminder that awareness and early detection matter.





Year 1 – A Bear-y Delicious Adventure!

Year 1 made their own oat balls as part of our Goldilocks and the Three Bears Talk for Writing unit. Mixing, squeezing and rolling developed fine motor skills, and the children used their senses to describe textures, smells and tastes – lots of sticky fingers and happy faces!







Parachute Fun in Year 3 Red!

Year 3 Red enjoyed exciting parachute games in PE, developing teamwork, communication and coordination while having lots of fun.







The Six Thinking Hats Workshop

The Ministry of Education's online Six Thinking Hats workshop, based on Edward de Bono's strategy, encourages looking at situations from different perspectives. Year 6 students joined with Arabic teachers Ms. Huda and Ms. Tasnim and explored the six hats: White for facts, Red for feelings, Black for risks, Yellow for benefits, Green for creative ideas and Blue for organising thinking.



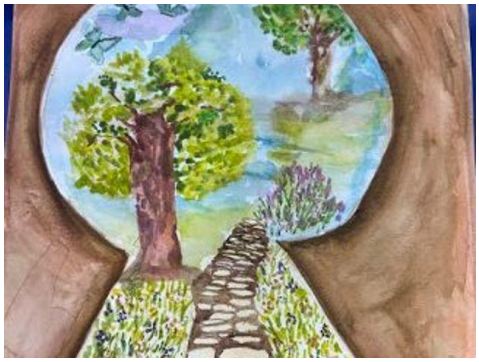


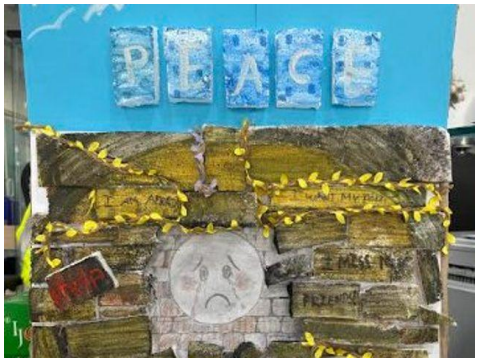


Remembering Dr. Jabr

If Walls Could Speak – COBIS Art Competition

Our pupils explored the theme "If Walls Could Speak" through thoughtful, imaginative artwork. One moving piece depicts a pupil inside her home in Lebanon during the war; another uses watercolours to show a key unlocking a peaceful, wild garden. We are proud of our young artists.

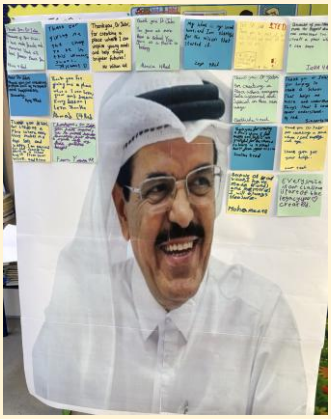




Year 4

Year 4 explored an exciting scratch art technique: bright oil pastels, covered with black acrylic paint, then scratched away with toothpicks to reveal the colours beneath – encouraging patience, precision and artistic expression.

Year 4 also celebrated and remembered Dr. Jabr, the founder of our school, writing heartfelt messages of gratitude displayed around his portrait.





Year 5

During P4C lessons, Year 5 honoured the late Dr. Jabr, co-founder of the Newton Group of Schools, reflecting on his belief in student voice, thoughtful questioning, respectful dialogue and good character, and how we can continue his legacy through kindness and respect.



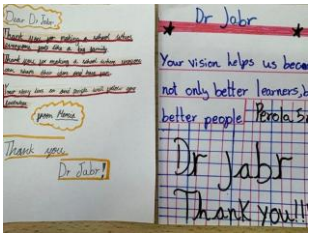


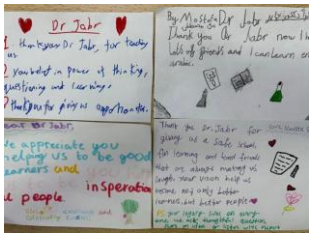
In Remembrance of Dr. Jabr, Founder of Newton Schools

Our students took part in creative activities to honour his legacy:

Creative art: drawing and colouring illustrations inspired by his stories. **Animated story time:** watching one of his stories as an animated video. **Cultural quiz:** a quiz about his life and achievements.

May his legacy continue to inspire generations to come.








EYFS – Remembering Our Founder, Dr. Jabr: A Legacy That Lives On

Foundation 1 and 2 learners honoured Dr. Jabr's memory through hands-on activities celebrating his vision of curiosity, critical thinking, Philosophy for Children (P4C), kindness and cultural diversity – from sensory investigations and frozen sea-creature rescues to dinosaur experiments and STEM challenges.

Children also celebrated kindness and belonging through collaborative artwork, family flags and a globe representing our diverse Newton community, all showcased in a special memorial display. Thank you to our EYFS teachers and teaching assistants.

Dr. Jabr's legacy lives on as our youngest learners continue to question, explore, think critically and grow into confident, independent learners.






Thank you for your wonderful support!