



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH  
Moray House School of  
Education and Sport



## **Creating a pupil-led research community between Newbattle High School and University of Edinburgh**



**We wish to thank our team of pupil researchers involved in this project for their outstanding work and achievement:**

**Breagha     Annie     Dylan     Kieran     Katy**

**Millie     Maisie     Antoine     Katie**

**Thanks to our team of staff researchers for their commitment and expertise:**

**Mark Davidson     Heather Lyle     Ewan McCabe**

*Data collected through this research community informed the Scottish Government-funded Scottish Attainment Challenge project, "Reconceptualising attainment through shared learning spaces, which promote achievement, health and wellbeing".*

## Research Collaboration with Newbattle High School

Shared learning involves teachers, pupils and others co-creating flexible, shared learning spaces, which are physically, cognitively and socially 'fit for purpose' in that they encourage a shared sense of value and connectivity otherwise not possible. These shared spaces embrace agile learning and genuinely co-construct learning with other spaces bringing 'the outside in, and the inside out', across physical, virtual and temporal boundaries.

As part of our project, a Shared Learning Space (SLS) was developed in Moray House School of Education, University of Edinburgh, connected with other innovative spaces within and beyond the university. The purpose of SLS is to enable student teachers, pupils and other participants to explore different concepts of networking physical, shared, virtual, and hybrid spaces, alongside measuring their impact.

A series of three shared learning events were organised between the University and Newbattle High School in Edinburgh, a newbuild and Digital Centre of Excellence situated in an area of social and economic deprivation, taking place across several weeks. The events digitally connected the university space with a classroom known as 'The Cloud' in the Secondary School. In the first two events, the school pupils took turns presenting Science mini-lessons across the SLS to student teachers. The aim of mini-lessons was for the pupils to communicate how they like to be taught and the approaches they preferred. In the third event, two student teachers took up the challenge from the school pupils to present their own Science mini-lessons across the Shared Learning Space. The purpose of this was to enable the pupils to take on the role of experts and allow interaction and sharing with a larger group of student teachers (also actively involved in the lessons e.g. asking questions) on an equal footing, deconstructing the typical power dynamic between teacher and learner.

## Creating Shared Learning Spaces



### **The Pupil Research Team at Newbattle decided SLS could offer:**

- A space to share learning with people locally, nationally and internationally.
- The possibility for them to learn a wider range of subjects that are currently not easily accessible.
- Opportunities to learn with others via learning networks including universities, other schools and glocal communities around the world to co-design learning spaces.
- Learning about and with other cultures, languages, peoples and sharing their findings through the SLS.

### **What pupils told us:**

*"It turned out to be a lot easier and more fun to do than I expected it to be, because it was quite nerve wracking to think of presenting in front of all those people, and then it turned out to be a lot less intense."*

*"It seems like fun, like seeing from the teacher's perspective. And it seems that, because you're learning as well while you're teaching, you probably learn more doing it like that."*

*"You should be allowed to have at least one experience with [SLS], because it does build your confidence up. Like talking to people through the screens, and talking to people when you're doing a lesson. So all years should be at least allowed to try it. Because they'll need to do it when they're older."*

*"Public speaking's quite a big part of modern day society, so it could be used as a tool to build up people's confidence."*

*"It definitely felt as if [the student teachers] listened to what we've been saying. It's a good thing because it makes you feel like the lessons that we did prepare had impact on the student teachers, it's not just a lesson, it's a lesson suited to you."*

*"It's a valuable thing for teachers to be able to work in a different space. It's not giving you like barriers or restrictions. It's more just making you teach in a different way. You're having to think about what will work and what won't work. It's something different to get you thinking about how you normally teach and how that could be improved."*

*"It's like that feeling of when you're outside and you're playing and you're learning through that. Like you're learning on your own through experimenting, it's because it's a bit more independent. You feel more like you're teaching yourself in a way."*

### **Key findings from our research:**

- Participation in the Shared Learning Space created a platform for pupils to lead learning and learn independently, which increased their confidence and self-esteem as well as developing a sense of inclusion, value and ownership (of space and of learning).
- Engagement and interaction with pupils across the Shared Learning Space helped to develop student teachers' awareness of spatial literacies and how 'shared spaces' can be utilised to increase pupil agency and achievement.
- The Shared Learning Space project enabled 'borderless' learning otherwise not possible. It encouraged pupils and student teachers to engage socially and cognitively in a mutually respectful approach to teaching and learning, strengthening the relationship and understanding between them.
- The learning events in the Shared Learning Space used a range of technologies, thereby providing borderless authentic deeper reflection about quality learning with pupil voice at the core.

### **Project Team**

**Principal Investigator: Professor Do Coyle**

**Research Assistant: Ramone Al Bishawi**

**Research Assistant: Jonathan Hancock**

