

Nick: Hello. It's me, Nick Evans, and welcome to another episode of the Innovation in Apple Professional Learning Podcast. Today I have another special guest willing to share their knowledge and experiences with you, our lucky listeners. It's my absolute pleasure to welcome Dr. Steve Bunce. Hello Steve.

Steve: Hello Nick and hello everyone!

Nick: Hi Steve. Great to have you with us, thank you so much for joining us. Over the next I'm going to say 15 minutes or so, we're going to kind of dip into your knowledge and experience if that's OK?

Steve: Great stuff.

Nick: OK, so just by way of a quick introduction for those listening Steve, let me start by saying you are an Apple Professional Learning Specialist, you are an Apple Distinguished Educator and amongst other things, you are an author and you have worked at various schools and educational settings at senior levels and you've coached a mentored educators along the way to implement in sustainable change and to innovate with technology. More recently the thing I'm more interested to find out more about is you work closely with Falkirk Council on the Connected Falkirk Project.

Steve: Mm hmm.

Nick: I think it's safe to say you're a busy man!

Steve: Yep, yep it certainly keeps me very busy!

Nick: I wonder Steve, enlighten us. Tell us a little bit more about your professional background and maybe a little bit about your Apple journey to date.

Steve: Well, thanks, Nick. Yes, I studied like everyone as a teacher, and we we worked in the classroom and then as technology started coming more and more to the fore, as we got more access to projectors and computers, I really sort of, I could see the benefit of that and got more and more interested in working with other teachers around that. I started working across the local authority around Northumberland, around schools there working with other teachers. That really broadened in my experience, because often when you start off, you're in your own school and you don't get to see what other schools and other educators are doing. So that really sort of brought me on a lot and in some ways I was meant to be going out, you know, working with other staff and developing them but actually I think I learned the most from actually visiting all those different settings and seeing what went on. Following on from that, I worked with the Open University on a project on teacher professional learning, and it was while I was doing that project and working across the north east of England was when the iPad came out really, and prior to that I'd been using my Mac and doing lots of things with my Mac but it was the iPad that really sort of sparked this change. That's when I became an Apple Distinguished Educator. You could see that

there was this massive sort of change coming with all the access to technology and again, that was a huge step forward in terms of you know, the community of people you're talking to, the ideas that would be shared, all the different experience of how to start to implement this and deploy this across schools, which then led into the Apple Professional Learning. So again, with all of those things, if you're an Apple teacher, then fantastic. If you're thinking about applying next year, to become an Apple Distinguished Educator do definitely look into it because as ever, it's this community we're all part of and where we learn so much from each other. That's led me all the way through here to where now I'm working with Falkirk Council and their local team as a team across the different schools as they're putting iPads out across the whole authority.

Nick: Great, and wise words there in terms of trying to join the community. I noticed only recently over 1 million people are now in the Apple EDU community which is absolutely amazing! Yeah, fantastic. Lots of people there to share wealth and experience. So, for those of you listening to home or for those who've managed to escape, a bit of madness of life, for 20 minutes on your walk or wherever you might be listening to us, don't forget you can join in the conversation on Twitter by using the hashtag #I2PD. You can also follow myself and Steve and I'm sure we'll try our best to respond to your tweets as they come through. So Steve, as we've mentioned, there's a lot of work you do these days in coaching and mentoring capacity, I suppose a lot of the work pre-pandemic probably would have been face to face in a face to face environment. That was the way the world was back then. Pretty much everything we knew, I suppose, and as we know since COVID, we've all had to adapt and we've all had to change. I wonder if you could tell us the impact COVID had on you in terms of like what impact did the restrictions have on you and the projects you were involved in, and particularly in Scotland, as we've mentioned, the Falkirk project, and then how did you overcome these restrictions whilst maintaining this consistent support for the people you were working with?

Steve: Yeah, so my role is as a professional learning specialist and I was working with the team at Falkirk, so they had a team which they had established to roll out their deployment and support teachers there. My role was to work with that team as well. As you say, things changed dramatically, went from being face to face wherever I go and being in a school where you have a group of teachers either for professional learning sessions or where you'd be working with smaller groups of teachers and children. I did a lot of modelling in the classroom where we worked together as a teacher, with a teacher and I'd go into the classroom and do those lessons so that stopped very abruptly two years ago. Back around March 2020, and I'm just starting now to start going back out into the classroom to do some face to face sessions and modelling with the teachers. Also we're keeping on board some of that hybrid working. We started working via Teams in this case, so we use that as the communication tool to do some live lessons directly into the classroom or directly to the teachers' schools for their professional learning.

Nick: Great. So you mentioned live lessons, I'm sure that'll give some of our listeners some of the shivers and I said at the start of the pandemic, I take my hat off to any educator who's had to teach through the pandemic. I'm sure we'd all agree what an amazing job they've done playing their part, keeping the nation going and keeping us all together and educating

our youngsters. I left the classroom several years ago and to be honest, I couldn't think of anything worse than having to do what our educators have done out there. So a big well done to everyone. But, I wonder if you could give us a little flavour as to what those live, remote lessons look like and how they felt like and how did you facilitate those? So you mentioned Teams could you give us a little bit more information?

Steve: Yeah, sure. So when we think about what would be a useful thing to do, something we could facilitate in the classroom that would be interactive and would yes, it would use the technology, it would use iPads in there, but we didn't want it to be you know, this is going to be 100% of the lesson time is you're going to be doing this. I'm going to lead you to you do this, then you do this afterwards. It had to be like a lesson that you could get the children thinking, get them discussing, and then using the technology at the appropriate time. As you do with your pencil case, when you pick up the ruler when you need a ruler or a pencil, if you need a pencil instead of a pen. So the inspiration came from the Apple Resources during code week, back in October. There was a new resource came out called the Inclusive App Design resources and they were really great because what it does was it thought about how we can think about designing a new app? How can we really make it inclusive and accessible? So thinking about, you know, for different groups, thinking about for different abilities and different ages and all of those things or different countries and especially highlighted by Ukraine, a number of children think about, you know, people from Ukraine coming to the UK and how can we make them feel included? and also how can it be accessible? So we already knew there's lots of accessibility tools built into the iPad but what could we highlight in terms of simple things like maybe using large icons or higher contrast colours and things? So the resources were there to stimulate the idea of making an inclusive and accessible app and to make it quite quickly. So after using those resources with other Apple Professional Learning Specialists, I then adapted those for these live lessons to take the children through coming up with a real world problem that they cared about, trying to think of an app which might try and help towards that problem, and then they would go through the process of then, well, what would be all the features it would make? Probably in one lesson they would get to the point of actually making the app icon and that they could then talk about. All of those things just give them a voice, something to talk about. They can go off and tell another teacher and go off and go home until people say, "For this problem I care about, this is my app idea, this is what the app icon would look like." So it just gave them a voice and a start of how to get going.

Nick: Yeah, great. I'm going to pick up on some of those resources later because I think we're going to want to pinpoint those to some of our listeners. You mentioned there, kind of, the home learning or the hybrid learning model I suppose, that's something we've all had to try and adapt to over the last year or so, two years. What would you say is the main difference between the live lessons you described there than if you were doing them in person? Are there any benefits of doing it in this kind of 'New way of working' I suppose?

Steve: Well, yes, I think I was actually quite surprised because when we came to the point of actually trying to do this, if you'd asked, you know, a couple of years ago for, you know, every member of staff to be able to, for example, log in and connect via a video camera with microphone and, you know, have everyone access it, that baseline wasn't there. You'd have

some in school capable of it and others who just hadn't had that experience. Because our experience was jumping in the deep end of having to go to using video and meetings like this, there was that sort of baseline of ability or understanding at least. So we knew at least the lesson could be run and it could happen. But more importantly, what surprised me was I think when I'm in the classroom, I think the teachers will often take a back seat because they think, oh, well, I'm running and facilitating activities and they yes, they'll still support the children. They'll probably go around and help those children who need support, but I think less so of a teaching role than when, you know, when I'm leading the lesson but the strange thing was well, because it was a video, then I could, you know, I could describe the activities, I could give questions, I could try to facilitate what was happening. But their role was absolutely vital to being the teacher in the room, you know, running the lesson and, you know, directing questions, responding to questions, you know, it just made it much more of a partnership rather than me taking over and saying, OK, I'll do all this and them taking more of that backseat I think. So again, not everything, not everyone. But again, I think that just was a genuine benefit I spotted across the lessons that we did.

Nick: Yeah great, and that's kind of the part of being an APLS, sharing your knowledge and experience. That's part of the kind of coaching experience, I suppose, getting everyone to be involved in that process. Very quickly though, Steve. I'm conscious. I want to get as much out of you in the very short time I have. In your opinion, is there room for us to continue with this kind of online learning post-pandemic or should Apple Professional Learning return to a face to face approach?

Steve: That's a good question. So, I'm really in that mix at the moment of doing some schools face to face and some online. I think I've seen not just those lesson benefits, but actually sometimes when there's been sessions after school, the benefits of teachers just being able to, you know, finish today, sort themselves out, get a cup of coffee, whichever, and then maybe sit with a colleague also in the classroom and then have, you know, some sort of, you know, professional learning. Compared to, you know, in the past model where potentially they now need to finish a day really rushed to get in the car, drive to a particular place and, you know, we have some professional learning there or again, it would be maybe if it was in their school, they'd have to come after school to try and gather together somewhere. I think they've seen some benefits in lots of teachers being able to just do it from where they are in their classrooms and ideally with some colleagues around them. And also there's been benefits there where some teachers, for example, are either, you know, splitting their time, the part time, they can still come along when it's not there, they're not in school, for example there's been benefits there. Back to the lessons, I think that benefit I think of that, even though we do plan and we do sort of prepare our coaching and working together, that the fact that the teacher has that role much more, I feel it just makes me know that they're vital to that lesson. Right when we're teaching together, team teaching. Often I have said, you know, team teaching in the past we have to work together and yet people still do then sort of deflect to, letting me take over and I'm trying not to take over. I'm trying to share it out, and we've organised it all. I still think that that hybrid model has a place in that place in that part of the teaching.

Nick: Yeah. I mean, I tend to agree with you there in terms of this definitely that place, the mixed approach or about the hybrid model going forward. I mean, in some instances for me, I don't think you will beat the face to face delivery. I think in some instances is definitely the right way to go and there's certainly a need for it. However, for me, the quality of the remote delivery sessions these days at teachers, whether it be training providers or other APLS that they're offering at the moment you know, that's hugely changed from where we were two years ago. So the quality of the delivery, the remote delivery sessions means that you can still get high quality CPD being delivered remotely, which makes it brilliant and convenient for everyone, you name it there's loads of benefits. So yeah, I would agree with that. Steve, we've mentioned projects you've taken part in and delivered over the last couple of years. Your Connected Falkirk. I wonder for all of our listeners out there, thinking things like that are great projects. You talked about your app build. If they want to get involved in something like that, are there any resources out there and can you signpost them to any websites in particular?

Steve: Mm hmm. Yes. Well, certainly we mentioned the Inclusive App Design Resources, and they're really fantastic in terms of really prompting us to think about, you know, different people and different aspects of what they need. Also what I've found is it's a great way of introducing people to getting thinking about apps and coding. Sometimes there's a lot of, you know, a lack of confidence around coding or some even a fear. Sometimes we go, well, I can't do coding. We're getting the teachers and again, across any subject it really does cross any subject you want to cover. The idea of creating an app based on a real world problem, I'd say fits into all those different areas. It really is a great way of getting teachers engaged in thinking about app design and getting them started on that coding journey too. So in the Apple Teacher Resource Centre Learning Centre, there are the inclusive app design resources. There's loads of details there. There's a downloadable keynote which can take you through as a journal and step the children through. So really, if you haven't seen them do have a look and if you have looked at them before, go and revisit them. Go and have a look at it again, see all the different ways you might fit that into your own teaching. But also other people's learning too.

Nick: Yeah, it's great. Thanks, Steve. That Apple Teacher Learning Centre, great resource now it's not just a place for you to go to build those foundational skills or to build up the Apple Teacher Portfolio, but it's somewhere with free resources hands on resources, as you said, for everyone to utilise. So please go and check it out. It's constantly being updated so you can really find ways in how that would fit into your curriculum. As well as the Apple Teacher Learning Centre. Steve, where else can people go to get more interesting ideas and keep up to date with your Connected Falkirk project? Well, I think there's different hashtags we can follow. There's the #ConnectedFalkirk hashtag, which you'll see, and there's people involved in the project, other APLS' like Kerry Abercrombie and Mary Jane and Gavin and Andy Old and a number of people who were involved in the project, which you'll see pop up, if you look for Connected Falkirk either as @ConnectedFalkirk or the hashtag.

Nick: Brilliant, and for everyone out there Steve, remind us of your Twitter handle or any other socials you want us to look at? Yes, well, I share my name with a boxing correspondent, Steve Bunce. But then what you find is often people will tweet me when

there's a big boxing match on. But just to find out, just in case you're confused, I'm not the boxing correspondent. I'm the other one. So please go check out @SteveBunce on Twitter.

Nick: Look, Steve, thanks so much for your time. I'd love to continue the conversation, some great tips to share. But before you go, do you have any final words of wisdom or key takeaways for our listeners at home? Anything you said today.

Steve: Yeah, I think the Apple EDU chat. So Apple EDU chat on a Tuesday night, there's lots of great subjects which are discussed and again, if you're looking for other people to follow, the educators who contribute to that are really knowledgeable about the Apple ecosystem, but also about general teaching as well. So Apple EDU chat on a Tuesday night is a great place to go again to find some further inspiration.

Nick: So there you are! Doctor Steve's top tips! Thank you very much Steve, thank you so much for your time today. It's been an absolute pleasure to speak to you.

Steve: Thank you, Nick.

Nick: Thank you to everyone listening. Don't forget, you can join in the conversation on Twitter using the hashtag #I2PD. Steve and I would love to hear your experiences of hybrid learning, remote learning. So please remember to tag us in your tweets at... Thank you very much for your time. Thank you as always for listening and join me next time for the next episode in the Innovation in Professional Development Podcast. Thanks so much. Bye now!