**NETHER ROBERTLAND PARENT COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 9th MAY 2023 AT 7.15PM**

**Present**

Alexandra Goldie, Natalie McMaster, Lorna Templeton, Cathy Hill, Ashley Newton, Jennifer Butler, Loree Thomson, Lisa Davidson.

**In Attendance**

Jackie Beveridge, Cllr Stephen Canning

**Apologies**

Mary Menzies, Evelyn Black, Kyla Richardson, Stacey Todd, Lauren Hussain.

The meeting opened at 7.30.

**Agreement of Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Proposed by Jennifer Butler, seconded by Loree Thomson.

The meeting began at 7.30, Alexandra and Natalie welcomed all in attendance.

**Matters Arising**

Any matter arising from previous minutes is referenced in later discussions.

**PC Meeting Dates / New School Year AGM**

Natalie highlighted that there has not been a Parent Steering Group meeting since the previous Parent Council meeting on 29th March. Given the stage we are at in the school session, Alexandra and Natalie proposed that there are no further PC meetings this school session with the next proposed to be the AGM which needs to take place as soon as possible at the start of the new school session. This is essential so key PC roles are filled and Parent Association ones to allow the bank accounts to be used and fundraising to continue to support the school.

Alexandra and Natalie highlighted the importance of involving as many people as possible in the AGM to fill the key roles but also encourage more parents at the school to be involved.

Alexandra suggested she would not be Chair for the August 2023 AGM as she will no longer have a child at the school. A date for the AGM will be identified and shared as soon as possible so that it can be shared with incoming P1 parents too.

Loree suggested that including the Parent Council at the P1 information evening could be beneficial. Jackie agreed and it was discussed that Loree would attend the event on 1st June to represent the PC / PA and encourage parents to sign up to participate.

Jackie raised the potential of the PC / PA hosting an information stall at Parents Night on 25th May. Natalie / Alexandra will arrange stall information with Jackie ahead of the event.

**Proposed School Term Dates 2024/25**

Alexandra highlighted that the proposed school date options for the session 2024/25 are available for consultation. There are two options to choose from and feedback should be provided by parents directly to the Council. It was noted that the key difference between the options relate to the in-service dates.

**Old ECC Update**

Since the last PC meeting, Natalie reported that there has unfortunately been little progress with the Old ECC building. Natalie outlined the emails she has sent to the Council on 19th April and 2nd May to get an answer on the budget status. Emails have not been replied to with the second email replied to on Friday 5th May stating that the Council is waiting to find out about budgets and that they would be unable to provide an update prior to the PC meeting.

The mechanical / electrical survey is urgently needed to establish if the old ECC is a viable option for the school. Natalie expressed frustration at the lack of replies and Cllr Canning emailed key contacts during the discussion to seek answers about the building status. He pledged to follow up to try and progress the conversation. Cllr Canning has committed to find out who would be able to undertake the mechanical / electrical survey on behalf of the Council.

Alexandra thanked Cllr Canning for his support to move these issues on and agreed that all three local councillors would be kept updated via email on progress or any issues with the old ECC building.

Loree asked if the Council is aware of the ASN capacity needs at NRPS. Jackie replied that they are aware and that the school has good visibility of the needs of children joining the school well in advance of the new school year.

The old ECC offers NRPS significant opportunities to be a flexible learning space that offers benefits to all children at the school. Those in attendance agree that efforts to retain the space should continue.

**Parents Association Update**

Cathy shared the following update on the PA’s recent fundraising activities for the school:

* Spring Disco was a success with £400 profit generated from the event.
* New sand for the school sandpit has been ordered and paid for by the PA to top up the school sandpit. This is being delivered on 12th May.
* The PA has purchased Stewarton Academy ties to gift to all P7 pupils.
* Tea towel ordering is open until 24th May. An update on funds raised will be provided at the next meeting.
* The birthday fun day on 23rd June will not involve any fundraising activities.
* Currently the PA has £5800 in the bank with £4000 ring-fenced.
* Volunteers to help will be needed for the birthday event as the PA has been organising lots for the 50th birthday celebration.

There was some discussion around PA funds being used to support the refurbishment of the old ECC building. This followed on from previous discussion at the March PC meeting and was supported by those in attendance. Loree suggested that Stewarton Initiatives funding may be open to the PA. Cathy noted this for further investigation.

**Headteacher Update**

50th Birthday Celebration: Jackie thanked the PA for their support and noted that the formal birthday preparations are underway with P5C designing invited that will be sent to the invited guests. These guests include former and long-serving staff, local councillors and other notable guests. The children are creating displays about the history of the school. It is very much a celebration with lots of stories, photos and mementos submitted by the community for inclusion.

Lunch will be provided for invited guests while children will receive a celebratory cupcake from catering. The party will also be featured in the Bonnet Guild programme.

A community coffee morning will be held on Monday 26th June where the exhibition will be open to the community, details are tbc for this.

Property Pledge: The request for upgrades to the space in the school is at a similar stage as the old ECC building. Emails have not been replied to and budgetary constraints highlighted. The hole in the wall has been fixed and the ceiling. The room is functional but would benefit from aesthetic improvements.

School App: There have been 300 downloads of the new Safer Scotland school app. The next update to the app will be the roll out of a functioning Outlook calendar. This will be carefully monitored with only key staff able to update it. Key school dates will be added, and the calendar will be downloadable. Children from the digital group will be on hand at Parents Night to demonstrate the app to parents and show off key features.

Natalie highlighted that the notifications are hard to access / find. Jennifer noted the difficulty in filtering notifications and finding relevant information. Jackie stated that the app is a work in progress but doesn’t have some of aspects of the previous app people were used to. Key static information such as the lunch menu are now on the school blog instead and this is something that will continue with other information to keep it accessible to as many parents as possible.

Parents’ Night: There will be a lost property stall to reunite people with missing uniform. Additional stalls for memories and the new anti-bullying / wellbeing messages. The booking system used previously for parents’ night was a free trial with the previous app. This year forms have been used to identify session preferences and followed by a clerical exercise to allocate times. These will then be supplied via paper slips to children.

Values: The STARS group has been working on formalising the school’s values and what they mean and how they understand them. The values were sent out for consultation and 98% agreed with them. Some suggested changes but the values are very much about the children’s views of what they think and feel about them. The values will be shared by pupils at Parents’ Night. The children have very much enjoyed the process.

P5 Swimming: Transport costs for P5 swimming is very high. Cathy raised that parents who cannot afford the £30 cost for the six-week block of lessons may not feel able to approach the school. Jackie responded that they would help parents if cost was raised as an issue by a parent. Jackie noted that NRPS is one of very few schools in East Ayrshire offering swimming and that this was in response to high demand from P5 parents asking about the possibility of swimming lessons. The transport costs have been unexpectedly high, and this is something that is an issue on other trips.

Alexandra and Natalie shared that transport costs have been raised at the parent steering group meetings with trip costs fluctuating wildly week to week in some cases making school trips unaffordable. Loree questioned whether the proposed P3 mosque trip had been cancelled because of transport costs and Jackie confirmed this was the case. Loree expressed disappointment that the costs had been too high. Jennifer and Ashley highlighted the loss of learning opportunities because of these costs and Cathy flagged the burden that there is on parents with more than one child in any year group when costs are this high.

Big Sing: P6 are receiving singing lessons each Monday and will be taking part in the Big Sing at the Grand Hall in Kilmarnock on 24th May. This has been funded by EAC including on the day transport.

Success Showcase: This has been chosen by the children as the new name for prizegiving. There will be five new certificates awarded per class in addition to the existing school awards. A new award of Outstanding Contribution to the School or Community has been created in association with the Bonnet Guild. This will be awarded to a chosen P5 pupil each year with a shield presented that will be handed back to the school after one year. Parents of children who are receiving certificates or awards will be invited to attend the showcase which is open to all parents. The certificates are in the design process currently for this whole school celebration of success.

P7 Trip: P7 will be going to Inverclyde again in 2024. This will be from 4th – 7th June. A three-night trip has been selected based on learning from this year’s trip and Lainshaw Primary pupils will be at the centre at the same time creating an opportunity for the P7 groups to get to know each other before joining the Academy. The school plans to issue pricing information ASAP to spread out the costs. Lorna and Cathy highlighted that parents are currently paying for many other trips such as the Belfast one and that knowing these costs is important.

Parking issues: Jackie thanked Lisa and Helen for their input on parking issues around the school. This is being progressed by the Junior Road Safety Officers who will work with ARA. The hope is to do a campaign and that the current JRSOs will help train the new P5 JRSOs in their role. Jackie highlighted that the school would continue to fund a classroom assistant to welcome pupils in the drop off at the start of the school day. Jennifer mentioned how friendly the CA is, and the positive impact on children starting their school day.

Learning Visit: There will be a parent-friendly report published of the learning visit, but Jackie shared that the feedback she received anecdotally reflected the positive, strong relationships across the whole school and that she was looking forward to receiving the full report.

School Hours: The consultation needs to go back to the beginning of the process and has not progressed since the last PC meeting. Jackie outlined the meetings she has held with the local childminder group and a clarification from the ECC on their opening hours which means that incorrect information had been supplied from previous meetings. Jackie asked the group if the consultation should go ahead now or next session. Lisa raised parents need to plan childcare and working arrangements while Cathy and Ashley noted that letting parents know sooner rather than later would be beneficial. Natalie noted that the tender for school transport may have already been issued and agreed which would impact when the school hours would be able to change. Jackie agreed to identify if the transport arrangements for next session have already been made and to feed back to the PC with her planned next steps.

Class allocations: The school will be moving to a 12-class structure with a planned new P1 intake of 52 new pupils (as of the meeting date). - 21 placing requests. There will be composite classes in the 23/24 school session and a composite class workshop will be held with parents. Jackie explained that composite classes are dictated by the school roll, staffing and there is a clear definition. Jennifer asked how pupils are identified for the composite class and Jackie explained that this is done using key criteria that she will develop. Alongside the criteria, wellbeing and key friendships will ben important consideration during the composite class process. The workshop will give parents an opportunity to share any concerns about the composite classes and learn how they work. The date for the workshop will be confirmed as soon as possible.

Class details will be shared with children at the bump up day on 28th June.

Alexandra, Natalie, and Jackie thanked those in attendance for coming, particularly Cllr Canning for being so engaged with supporting the school.

It was agreed to hold another meeting before the end of the 22/23 academic year to discuss the next steps for the proposed school hour change and discuss any concerns regarding the class restructure for the forthcoming academic year.

Date of this meeting to be confirmed ASAP.

**The meeting closed at 9.30pm.**