



NETHERLEE PRIMARY SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL
Minutes of the Netherlee Parent Council
Meeting – 15th December 2021 @7pm Google Meet

Attendees

Parent Council Members

Tennant Stevenson (Chair)	TS
Adam Capek (Vice Chair)	AC
Jane Thomson	JT
Felicity Rose	FR
Harriet Boyle	HB
Emma Gibson	EG
Justin Haccius	JuH
Joanna Haw	JoH
Mike Law	ML
Richard Owen	RO
Victoria Pearson	VP
Martin Whitehead	MW
Nav Bakhsh	NB

School Staff

Yvonne Donaldson (Head)	YD
Julie Roberts (Depute Head)	JR
Lynn Sweeney (Depute Head)	LS

East Renfrewshire Councillors

Cllr David MacDonald	DM
Cllr Annette Ireland	AI

Observers

Alistair Haw

Opening

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Attendees

Apologies were noted from Parent Council members: Carole Chalmers, Fizza Kaneez and Fiona McMillan, Mike Law, Harriet Boyle and Cllrs Annette Ireland and David MacDonald had advised that they would be late to the meeting.

Martin Whitehead and Nav Bakhsh are parents who asked to participate as observers.

Membership Update

The Chair updated that there had been no new membership requests since the last meeting. The Chair asked if any of the observing parents had any interest in joining the Parent Council as members. Martin Whitehead and Nav Baksh both said they would be happy to join by self nomination and were warmly accepted as new members of the Parent Council.

Approval of Minutes

The Chair asked if there were any comments on the previous minutes dated 20.10.21. There being none, the Minutes of the previous meeting were accepted, proposed by the Chair and seconded by JT.

Traffic Management

The Chair noted that traffic management is an issue that the Parent Council has been involved in since around April 2021. Letters have been sent to East Renfrewshire Council (ERC) and responses received. The Parent Council have recently received an email from MP Kirsten Oswald (who was copied in on our last correspondence to ERC) and she is asking to be kept informed.

The Chair remains deeply concerned about the risk and impact of a child being injured on the road.

The Chair also expressed concern about the absence of a school crossing patroller at Linnpark Avenue. YD clarified that she understands that ERC are trying to recruit someone but have not been getting much interest. JT suggested that we could try to help spread the word by mentioning this vacancy in the Parent Council newsletter and on the Netherlee Neighbours Facebook group. The Parent Council agreed that these were good ideas.

VP was asked to provide more information about the current road safety situation. VP noted that we recently received results on the survey of the Parent Forum on road safety issues and thanked those who were involved for their input on this, particularly JT who did a huge amount of work and has circulated a very useful summary of the results. We had 130 responses and about two thirds of those parents are concerned about traffic speeds. Additionally, a significant number of people were concerned about other kinds of dangerous driving. Following the survey results, we sent our most recent letter to ERC on 26 November 2021 (a draft of which had been circulated to PC members beforehand) and await a response. VP is under the impression that ERC have no funds for it in this financial year in any event but is hopeful that we might get improvements eventually one way or another.

VP is also wondering whether the Parent Council can do more work together with the school and perhaps the wider community to encourage more responsible driving – she understands that East Renfrewshire schools benefit from an allocated police officer (sometimes referred to as a “campus cop”) who might be able to offer some guidance and support if we wanted to do a road safety awareness campaign and discuss any other options.

YD noted that the school already do work with the pupils on road safety issues and that she would ensure that this was a focus going forward.

RO expressed an interest in what’s happening with “bikeability” and whether that can be linked in to road safety. YD said she would respond to this in the HT Report section of the meeting.

Communications Group Update

JT was asked to provide an update on behalf of this Parent Council sub group. JT confirmed that they have recently done the road safety survey, as already discussed. They have also been assisting the school on website development. They have given feedback which was well received and had a very productive meeting with the school. There is set to be a further meeting on this in January. There is a parental survey planned and it has been suggested that perhaps a PC representative could come to the planning meeting for that. YD stated that she is very much open to that suggestion. This work would be starting in springtime.

School Report

Bikeability

YD invited JR to respond to RO's earlier question on bikeability.

JR advised that they did bikeability on the back streets of Netherlee with P7s and road safety came into that. They are now doing it with P6 and hopefully also the current P7s as they missed out on this last year. They may try to do two 'shifts' within the summer term. JR confirming that they have also managed to get bikes for any children who didn't have them so that everyone that wishes to participate can do so.

YD adding that P5 do bike awareness which involves bike balance etc and is like an introduction.

Homework Policy

JR updated that she and LR have been working with ML, FK and VP. They have just finished putting a survey together and they intend to send this to members for comments in early January before it goes out to parents.

The Chair took this opportunity to commend the school on the moral support provided by his daughter's class teacher and fellow pupils in relation to a presentation to the class which had been set as a homework exercise.

Equality/Diversity Group

JR and Mr Bryce (principal teacher) lead this group and AC and FK input on behalf of parents. They are looking for a new parent volunteer now that Handri Cronje (who was a member of this group) has left the Parent Council. In particular, the group are currently looking at the cost of the school day.

JR advised that a group of P6s has been set up who are talking about issues like family backgrounds and different types of costs (at a level that they can understand) and diversity issues. Work on this is ongoing and they are hoping to combine the work of the parent group and the pupil group.

FR suggested that it would be useful to share what kind of commitment was involved because this may influence parents who are interested to participate. JR responded that meetings are usually every couple of months (daytime) and currently virtual. In the chat function, NB stated that he would be willing to participate in the work of this group.

Questions from the PC

The Chair noted that he had put out to PC members the opportunity to ask any questions or subjects they would like to hear more from the school on. YD stated that some great questions had come in as a result of this.

Role of the Parent Council

YD explained that one question had been what the school sees as the role of the Parent Council and what makes Netherlee's parent body what it is. She said that an important role is encouraging parents to get involved with the school. It is important to ensure that the PC is diverse. They can do things like arrange information evenings (the school can now hold events) on matters that are of interest to parents (the school can support with contacts etc). YD explained that the PC plays an important role in communications (and this has been great recently). YD thinks it is important to remember that these meetings are meetings of the Parent Council and that the headteacher's report is only a part of that. YD also mentioned that this Parent Council have taken an important

role (along with a parent Jen Bannerman who has website experience) in giving feedback on the school website and it sounds like everyone is on the same page with regard to this.

UN Rights Respecting School

LS explained that a question had been asked about where the school currently is with its UN Rights Respecting School status. She explained that the last award was in November 2019 and they are working towards re-accreditation in November 2022. They work towards global goals and the school's values, house system and pupil parliament embody a human-rights based approach. They have whole school assemblies on these human-rights related topics. There is also the "rights respecting rhinos" group that is led by Mrs Wharton (principal teacher). Mr Aitken is also working closely within the cluster group, which is led by Alison Rhodes and linking between primary and secondary school initiatives. One of the issues they have been doing is raising awareness of differences and similarities between Scotland and Malawi. They have even managed to do some video calls to Malawi. They have also been involved with the Glasgow charity Refuweegee which welcomes refugees to Glasgow. Mrs Wharton is the school contact who leads all of this and a newsletter with further details will be coming out soon.

RO advised that his job involves looking at deprivation issues and asked if we are able to link in with more deprived areas closer to home e.g. are there any school twinnings more locally and not just with schools overseas? Netherlee Primary is keen to link with St Marks, or a similar school within ERC and YD is happy to further increase contacts. YD realises the importance of our children being aware that there is deprivation within Scotland and this is not only an issue in other countries. YD also believes that another important aspect that is important to be aware of is that there are financial pressures, as well as other pressures e.g. mental health within our own communities and she is very keen to work with more parents on this.

NB stated that his kids are new to Netherlee (P3 and P6). His own job involves mental health issues and being involved in outdoor activities is really great for mental health. It would be great to do a summer trip to somewhere like Loch Lomond. YD advised that Miss Bell (principal teacher) is the outdoor contact and the PTA are also really involved in this. NB is happy for his contact details to be passed on to them as he is happy to share ideas.

FR supported what RO had said earlier and thinks that our perspectives on inclusion are very important. There are lots of hidden issues and it is great if parents can be brought into the conversation on this. FR also asked whether the situation in Afghanistan has been discussed with the children. JR responded that they do a 'newsround' but also have to be wary that they don't scare children. JH agreed that he would be cautious about potentially dumping too many anxieties onto kids.

YD is very conscious of how challenging it can be for children whose families are struggling financially when surrounded by others who are not. YD also adding that she is aware of another project within the school where Mrs Linn's class were making blankets out of crisp packets to be given to homeless people in the UK which highlights situations here as well as abroad.

Toilets

The Chair raised the issue of school toilets, specifically the senior boys' toilets. There have been reports of dirty floors, doors not closing properly, overflowing basins. The Chair asked if the school would please explain about the system for monitoring toilets.

YD explained that there is 1 toilet in the boys' toilets that is broken and also 1 in the girls'. There is a leak. JR patrols the toilets regularly and there are day cleaners there throughout the day. However, in a large school you will sometimes get issues. Recently there was an incident of vandalism that was dealt with. The toilets haven't been done up (painted etc) in years: this wasn't deemed critical in covid times but hoping to get them freshened up soon.

Online Bullying

JH noted that we recently talked about online bullying and asked what the school's role is in terms of what's app groups etc? YD responded that the school's role is to continue to remind children of safe internet use. If the problem is of a serious nature, the school can pass it on and would cooperate with police if appropriate.

Remembrance Service Quality

JH raised that the quality of the recent remembrance service recording was not great. There may be something they need to change/fix. YD advised that no-one else has mentioned this to her before now but she has noted it.

Swimming

RO stated that P5s usually get swimming and wondered whether the current P6s who missed this last year will get the opportunity this year. YD will look into this and communicate with the relevant parents.

Traffic Management (further discussion)

As AI had not been present for the traffic management discussions (owing to another meeting) but had managed to join during the HT report, the Chair explained that the Parent Council suspect that funding is a big factor. The Chair asked when budgets are agreed within ERC. AI advised that the full budget is agreed in February. Each department will work on its own budget and these will be looked at. AI noted that it was hard to comment too much at present because she had missed our earlier discussions but that Jane Corrie from the Roads Dept is very approachable and could be invited to a future PC meeting. The Chair noted that the next full PC meeting is 16 February and will perhaps try to get a meeting arranged with Jane Corrie and other relevant people prior to then before ERC's budgets for the next year are finalised.

New Parent Pamphlet

The first draft of this did not quite address everything the school was looking to achieve – feedback has been received from the school and the draft will be modified. FR commented that a lot of it seemed to be P1 specific and it is important to bear in mind that new children (and parents) could join the school at any stage.

Artificial Sports/Play Pitch

The Chair is of the view that ERC don't seem to be taking this forward and is considering submitting all the information to Jackson Carlaw MSP.

AI advised that she has to be careful about her involvement on this issue because she sits on ERC's planning committee but that it would have to be put on ERC's capital plan in order for them to upgrade the pitch. DM queried why ERC were the applicant on the planning application for this.

AH stated that the PC asked ERC to make the application which may be why they don't know what to do about it now. He mentioned that there is a lot of background information that people had struggled to uncover from parties involved and they had to make Freedom of Information Requests in order to obtain this.

DM and JT expressed the opinion that it would not go ahead without a project manager. It was agreed that the Parent Council should formally vote on the options available, hopefully in February 2022. AC suggested that it may be appropriate to have a meeting dealing with this issue alone.

AOB

P7 Hoodies

FR explained that a group of parents (not the PTA) have been getting hoodies for P7s and she thinks this should be inclusive and affordable. YD advised that the school has no input on this. It was suggested to the PTA years ago that the school would look at it but the PTA wanted to deal with it at that time.

Extra Curricular Sports Classes at NPS

VP stated that various kids' classes used to be run at NPS, including athletics run by East Renfrewshire Culture & Leisure. These understandably ceased due to covid but seem to have resumed at other locations but not NPS – does anyone have any information on this? YD advised that letting has started up again and that the school was previously available as a venue. MW commented that a lot of the activities seem to have moved to Williamwood High as a venue which is obviously less convenient. It was agreed that the Parent Council are happy for VP to email ER Culture & Leisure to ask if classes will be starting up again at Netherlee. DM agreed that it is good to push for these activities. AI asked to be kept informed.

Chair Resignation

The Chair announced that he would be standing down from the position at the end of this meeting. He believes that the Parent Council needs drive from someone else. He thanked the Parent Council for the opportunity and stated his support for whoever takes on the role – he plans to stay on as a member of the Parent Council, just not in the role of Chair.

AC (Vice Chair) thanked the Chair for taking the initiative to get things up and running after the previous chair resigned. He confirmed that he will chair the next meeting but that he is not planning to put himself forward for the position of chair. He also noted that we are without a permanent secretary.

YD expressed appreciation to the Chair for stepping in because she was concerned at one point that we may not have had a parent council. Further thanks were also expressed to the Chair for his work.

Actions

Action	Assignee	Notes
Arrange meeting with Roads Dept	TS	
Share crossing patroller in PC newsletter and on Netherlee Neighbours (Facebook)	JT	

Modify draft of parent pamphlet	TS	
Arrange meeting to vote on pitches	AC	
Email ER Culture & Leisure	VP	