



## NETHERLEE PRIMARY SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Netherlee Parent Council

#### Meeting – 31 August 2022

<b>Members</b>	Adam Capek	AC	<b>Parents</b>	Rory McCoy	RM
	Jane Thomson	JT		Fiona Edward	FE
	Joanna Haw	JoH		Laura Hewitt	LH
	Martin Whitehead	MW		David Low	DL
	Victoria Pearson	VP		Michelle Borland	MB
	Felicity Rose	FR		Katy McNair	KM
	Tennant Stevenson	TS		Gillian Gray	GG
	Justin Haccius	JH	<b>NPS</b>	Yvonne Donaldson (HT)	YD
	Tennant Stevenson	TS		Lynn Sweeney (DHT)	LS
	Mike Law	ML		Julie Roberts (DHT)	JR
	Harriet Boyle	HB	<b>Cllr</b>	Katie Pragnell	KP

#### Welcome

AC opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the new school term.

#### 1. Apologies

Apologies were noted from Cllr Kate Campbell, Cllr Annette Ireland and Parent Council members Emma Anson and Fizza Kaneez. Harriet Boyle will join at some point in the meeting.

#### 2. Minutes of last meeting

Minor clarifications noted and minutes of June 2022 meeting (including AGM) were proposed by JT and ML and approved by the meeting.

### 3. Head Teacher's Report

- The new calendar is on the school website. This will be kept updated and the school will also email out if there are any changes.
- Pupil jotters will now be coming home once a month instead of 3 times a year so that parents/carers can see more regularly how the children are doing.
- The School and Nursery Improvement Plan (SNIP) will be going on the website and a more parent friendly version will hopefully be produced soon too.
- The school has a few accreditations up for renewal this year (all mentioned in the SNIP), including Sport Scotland Award and Rights Respecting Schools Award. The Pupil Parliament are also looking at an online safety award (covers digital safety, cyber bullying etc). There is also a group within the school looking at a Diana award (related to nurture, anti-bullying) and a new Education Scotland award - Young Leaders of Learning (10 P7s discussing an aspect of the SNIP and will be matched with a participating school outside East Renfrewshire, with an opportunity to understand how different schools do some things differently). Another group are involved in the Participatory Budgeting Group (an East Ren wide initiative).
- The school handbook is planned to be made more user friendly this year. PC member HB is working on this and school contact is Adrienne at the school office.
- YD noted that the PC have an open invitation to any school events - these can be good opportunities to engage more of the parent forum.
- A parent, Helen Cross, has been supporting the school in how they use outdoor spaces. Each stage has been allocated a space and there are lots of plans and designs e.g. p4 planting and harvesting potatoes and are going to make soup and will have a gardening club, p5 have entered the Greenbank Garden Bug Hotel competition. There are plans to make apple juice from some of the apple trees. The nursery gardens are also included in the plans.
- "Meet the Teacher" events will be running soon.
- There is a new homework policy. Varying views were voiced from parents within the meeting about how this has been received. Suggested that it would be useful for parents to be made aware that homework is not mandatory. Agreed within the Parent Council that this new policy has only been in place for a few days and that it is too soon to say too much - can pick up on this in a future meeting. Noted that the school are offering Q&A sessions in relation to homework. FR requested that there is an evening opportunity for this.

#### Questions to Headteacher:

Can/should children be bringing in a second pair of shoes to change into for PE? *Yes, if they wish and the school may actually end up requesting this.*

Re COVID, will windows still have to be kept open? *Windows are still opened at lunchtimes to ventilate. Still also following guidance on lots of handwashing.*

#### **4. Possible Industrial Action Affecting School Staff**

Noted that school is expected to be closed Tues, Wed, Thurs next week owing to industrial action. It is not teachers who are striking but schools still have to be closed for safety reasons. Some establishments in East Renfrewshire can remain open because they are in a different situation (private companies are involved). Staff are trying to organise work for children to do at home and this will come out on Friday if the strikes are still planned at that stage. Parents requesting that the school communicates the position to the parent forum as clearly as possible, especially as the situation around teaching provision on these days is difficult to grasp.

Cllr KP noting that East Renfrewshire Council have been told they are facing £30 million cuts so really struggling and can't pay what they might like to. All councils are facing significant cuts. They are really encouraging COSLA and Scottish Government to get around the table on this.

#### **5. Jewellery and PE policy**

The possible exclusion from PE for children with piercings that cannot be removed was noted. The parent council agreed that this will predominantly affect girls (and possibly certain minority groups). Discussed that there is an apparent inconsistency if this is deemed acceptable within school playgrounds but not during PE.

AC thanked YD for communicating parent's thoughts on this to East Renfrewshire Council and obtaining an interim concession on this. Parents queried whether a waiver is possible? YD advising it is not. The risks posed by jewellery were discussed. Noted that some teachers have witnessed injuries as a result of certain jewellery.

AC will write to East Renfrewshire Council regarding this. Cllr KP will also take the issue up with the Director of Education and see what she can find out.

#### **6. Proposed block of flats overlooking P1 playground**

There is a planning application for a new development right beside the school on the site beside MacGregors where cars are currently parked and bins kept. This is for a shop on ground level and 2 levels of flats above with balconies overlooking the P1 playground. The school only very recently learned of this application and have referred the matter to the Education Department who have some potential concerns and are weighing up but likely to be making comment to the Planning Department.

The Parent Council noted that the current use of the site is not ideal, especially given risks from cars parking there but had concerns about aspects of the planning proposal, including casting shade on the playground and classrooms, health and safety concerns, adding to parking issues and impact on the children and potentially the smooth running of the school. It was agreed that FR would draft a comment to be submitted to Planning on behalf of the Parent Council.

#### **7. Cost of the School Day**

YD noted that this is something they are thinking about all the time. The uniform exchange system has been really successful.

Cllr KP noting that she is currently looking at a paper proposing that HTs could make awards of funds at their discretion which has gone to Cabinet for approval and would then go to full Council.

Queries on free school lunches - these are currently free for everyone up to P5 (inclusive) but the rollout of this to p6 and 7 has been postponed by the Scottish Government.

YD noted that the biggest school-related expense to parents is the p7 residential trip. They plan to go to Lochgoilhead as it is cheaper than Lockerbie but still has all the facilities and more. YD suggesting funding of p7 trip may be something PC wish to think about fundraising for.

Parents commented on the cost of the P7 hoodies, noting that they aren't worn for long. YD explained that historically these are not organised by the school but by parents however the school may look at managing/ organising this instead going forward.

### **8. Playground Painting Proposal**

AC shared photographs of painting within playground of Battlefield Primary School. Consensus by parents present and school staff that this looks good. YD noting that something like this is better done on the ground than on walls and can sometimes offer games for children to play. HB understands that the paint would cost around £800. FR suggested that when she was involved in something like this before they got Dulux to donate the paint. AC will forward the information on to our PTA.

### **9. Local Sports Classes Update**

The benefit of local sports classes had been discussed in previous meetings. It was agreed that AC should invite the East Renfrewshire sports coordinator for schools to a future meeting.

### **10. Communications Update**

AC noted that communications is an important part of the Parent Council's role and handed over to JT. JT explained that comms work has included the whats app communications, PC newsletter, monitoring school website, creating surveys, input to the Improvement Plan, flyers, representing the PC at meetings. In particular for the newsletter, JT, Emma and Fiona have been involved in this but help is now required if any other parents are able to get involved. KM volunteering to assist with comms activities.

### **11. AOB**

MW noted that there are a lot of issues with Parents Portal. YD advised that the school office may be able to assist if people are having difficulties.

AC asked if the school choir will be starting up again soon. YD confirmed that it would.

AC sought to clarify which PC members have done the training to go on appointment panel relating to senior staff positions, which requires to be renewed periodically. HB and JH are happy to do this.

AC thanked everyone for their participation and the meeting closed.

### **ADDITIONAL POINTS TO NOTE:**

- **Rory McCoy, Katy McNair and Laura Hewitt expressed interest in becoming Parent Council members**
- **Next PC meeting hoped to be via Zoom on Thursday 27 October 2022**