



Netherlee Primary School and Nursery Parent Council

MINUTES of Meeting on Wednesday 30 August 2023, 7pm at Netherlee Primary School Hub

Attendees

Parent Councillors: Harriet Boyle (HB); Gillian Gray (GG); Emma Anson (EA); Michelle Borland (MB); Victoria Pearson (VP); Adam Capek (AC); Felicity Rose (FR); Mike Law (ML)

PTA: Katie Docherty (KD); Handri Cronjé (HC)

Parent Forum: Fiona Clark (FC); Louise Macleod (LM); Ozgur Eren (OE); Conor McCarthy (CMC), Jenny Gillan (JG)

School Staff: Yvonne Donaldson (YD); Julie Roberts (JR); Lynn Sweeney (LS); Jennifer McCann (JMC); Jackie Toman (JT)

ERC Councillors: Katie Pragnell (KP)

Apologies

Parent Councillors: Rory McCoy, Martin Whitehead, Fiona McMillan and Katy McNair

1. Welcome and Introductions

HB warmly welcomed everyone to the meeting, noting our common interest in the children of the school. HB explained that there are 3 co-chairs (HB, EA, GG) who had decided amongst themselves that HB would chair this first meeting of the new school term. Each attendee in the room introduced themselves. Forms were circulated for parent councillors to update their contact details and confirm whether or not they wish to be included in the parent council Whats App group.

2. Minutes of previous meetings

The minutes of the last parent council meeting on 7 June 2023 and AGM of the same date were proposed by AC, seconded by ML and accepted by the Parent Council as accurate records of those meetings.

3. Head Teacher Report

Return to School - YD noted that at last (since COVID) this feels like a normal school year. All school assemblies are now entirely in person with no virtual element. P7s have received their new ties. The pupil parliament and councils are now up and running. The buddy system (whereby P7s support P1s) is set up. JMC added that nursery children have settled well and parents and carers can now enter nursery buildings at drop off and collection (as pre COVID).

Rights Respecting School – Netherlee has been re-accredited as a UNICEF Gold Rights Respecting School and YD explained that “Fantastic Friday” will now be called “Fun 31”, with reference to Article 31 of the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Connect membership - YD updated that the membership of Connect (the organisation which provides insurance, advice and training to parent bodies) was previously paid by East Renfrewshire Council but this was one of the expenses that was recently lost in the Council cuts. It has been agreed that funds raised by the PTA will cover this cost. HB noted that the Connect newsletter has been forwarded on to PC members and highlighted that they are running training events for members of parent bodies.

Staffing – YD recapped that the vacancy from (former principal teacher) Mrs Wharton's departure had been temporarily filled by Mrs Linn during the previous school year. It is always advisable to wait until the new term to find a permanent replacement as there is always a chance that staff allocation may change. Staff allocation has remained the same and Mrs Jackie Toman (JT) has joined the school as principal teacher responsible for p2 and p3. JT explained that she came directly from Eaglesham Primary School and also previously worked at Busby Primary School. JT stated that she is happy with the move and is especially excited about Netherlee's great reputation in music and Linn Park being on the school's doorstep. Using part of the school's pupil equity budget that enables headteacher discretion, Mrs Linn has been retained as "Acting Principal Teacher for Equity and Support". JR provided further explanation of this role – it includes some numeracy and literacy support but mainly involves nurturing type work and trying to remove any barriers faced. The concept of the new role was positively received by the meeting. HB queried how children would be selected for this. YD and JR clarified that individual children (and parents where this is helpful) in need of Mrs Linn's support will be identified through the school's data (eg based on Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) and from any information the school receives about events/circumstances at home. AC queried whether there was any intention to make this a permanent role. YD explained that this would depend on the budgets for future years.

School and Nursery Improvement Plan (SNIP) – YD explained that views had been gathered towards the end of the last school term and an improvement plan has been formulated. A full version of this is now on the school website and LS has been working with children to develop a pupil version. LS presented an on-screen version of this. LS explained that there is a focus on equity and putting support in place to meet the needs of different children. Talking and listening is strongly linked to the pupil parliament. With regard to maths, although attainment in this area remains consistently high, it has been identified that the attainment gap between boys and girls slightly widens as you move through the school. Some children are lacking the resilience for problem solving. YD added that the school has been considering the cost of the school day for quite some time now and last year there was a focus on different types of diversity. LS reported that the diversity focus will continue and the school are keen to involve parents and carers. JMC explained that they are keen to bring different generations together. They have good links with Linnpark Court (sheltered housing). YD explained that community will be a big focus going forward. One of the findings from parent/carer questionnaires were that the Parent Forum were keen to utilise the school's location (especially proximity to park and shops) and p5 children have already been visiting Linn Park. Mr Bryce and Mrs Linn will be looking at community learning, utilising links with local businesses. If there are any questions about the SNIP, please get in touch with the school.

Future Discussions – YD emphasized that parent council meetings are meetings of parents and the school's leadership team are keen to provide information on a variety of topics, as directed by parents or in response to parents' questions. HB noted that she thought the update from children at a previous meeting was good so could maybe have something similar again. FR noted that she is not clear on what children actually get in terms of their learning of modern languages and it would be good for this to be covered in a future meeting.

4. PTA Update

KD and HC provided an update on behalf of the PTA.

Rather than having their own regular meetings, the PTA will in future be enlisting helpers for individual activities and reporting a general update within PC meetings. This makes sense as it reduces demands on potential PTA volunteers and school staff and is more efficient. The PTA's constitution will be changed to reflect this.

Last Year - the PTA ran quite a few events last year and raised some reasonable funds, which help with non-core activities in the school, including things like SumDog subscription, new playground markings, equipment, and events/activities such as the “colour dash” as part of Sports Week and the “Animal Man” visits. However, the PTA are struggling for numbers who are able to commit as regular members. Last year they did a call out for parents to help with specific events.

This Year - they are planning 4 key activities (1 per season), although there will also be smaller things throughout the year. These will be notified by the school in the Friday newsletter and Whats App and anyone who can assist can get in touch. This means that people who may be willing only need to commit to one particular event rather than to regular meetings covering all PTA activities. The PTA are keen to engage families beyond just parents eg grandparents, aunts, uncles etc and foster a community feel along the lines of “for our school”. They are keen to maintain the involvement and sense of belonging created by the diversity event and to continue this positive focus on heritage. In terms of fundraising, AC suggested that there might be higher levels of giving if the PTA are able to share what activity donations are being sought for, so people can identify clearly where their help is going. KP expressed interest in attending/participating in the school’s events. As a councillor, KP is not always aware of these because she doesn’t get the school newsletter. VP will share contact details for all local councillors with the PTA so that they may be invited to events.

Uniform Sales – uniform sales achieve only a very slim profit margin. As well as badged clothing items, iron-on school badges are available at cost. HB suggested that people might hold off buying uniform elsewhere if they know in advance when PTA sales will be happening. HC plans to have uniform sale dates put on the school calendar. FR highlighted that sometimes school places are allocated at very late notice so it would be useful if these parents could access uniform from the PTA outwith usual sale times. HC noted that they can’t really hold stock but occasionally have a few things. YD noted that although it doesn’t achieve any fundraising, the recycled uniform rail is very successful and a good option for families outwith PTA sale times.

5. PC Cluster Collaboration

HB noted that forging links with Williamwood parent council and the Williamwood cluster primary parent councils had been suggested in the previous PC meeting. YD noted that there is a lot of commonality among the cluster primary schools’ focus and there is a Cluster Improvement Plan which will soon be added to the school’s website. All cluster schools are currently focusing on our community.

It was agreed that the Chairs should take forward creation of links with other parent councils, as discussed.

6. Parking – Clarkston Road

HB introduced that there are now new yellow lines close to the school but there are still issues with wrongful parking. This has recently been highlighted on the “Netherlee Neighbours” Facebook group and a local councillor has shared a telephone number that can be called to notify East Renfrewshire Council parking attendants if someone is parked where they shouldn’t be. HB asked if the Parent Council think we should share this number with parents. It was agreed by the Parent Council members present that the telephone number would feature in the next parent council newsletter.

KP updated that East Renfrewshire Council are currently working to make streets safer around schools. A plan is in the works but will be tailored to each school depending on the specifics of each particular location. The whole of Clarkston Road is also under review by East Renfrewshire Council.

7. Mobile Phone Community Action

GG noted that anecdotally, some parents have been heard expressing concerns about the school not allowing mobile phones, which is not something that has ever been said. There was discussion of an idea proposed for consideration by a parent, not by the school. GG suggested that as Rory was not in attendance, the idea will not be progressed at present but can discuss again if Rory wishes to re-introduce it at a future meeting.

8. Communications - Constitution Review

HB noted that we had previously discussed creating a communications role which would require an amendment to the PC constitution. The parent council are happy to go ahead with that. HB will progress this.

HB has identified that the link to the constitution on the website is not currently working. YD will have this addressed.

9. Communication to PC Members (What's App and Minute Taking Volunteers)

HB informed about the Parent Council What's App group. Members can choose whether or not they wish to be included.

AC kindly offered to take parent council meeting minutes at the November meeting and MB will take minutes at the January meeting.

10. Membership Updates

YD clarified that parent council meetings are open to all parents but where there is a decision to be made, only parent council members can vote.

VP updated that Katy McNair has been in touch and unfortunately will have to resign her place on the parent council as she is unable to attend meetings on Wednesday evenings. The parent council therefore currently has 13 members remaining¹. An updated list will be provided to the school to be posted on the parent council page of the school website.

HB notified that according to the parent council constitution², if a member misses 3 meetings without notification, this would usually be regarded as a resignation. Members are therefore encouraged to let us know (preferably via the Parent Council's email) if they are unable to attend meetings.

HB asked anyone that becomes interested in membership to let the Chairs or Secretary know. FR suggested that it is good to get people interested as observers at a few meetings and they can then decide if they want to become members.

11. Any other Business (AOB)

Renfrewshire Educational Trust - KP provided a reminder to the school's Leadership Team about the availability of the Renfrewshire Educational Trust, managed by Renfrewshire Council but which East Renfrewshire and Inverclyde also collaborate on and which is available to NPS. This fund can help with things like school excursions, music, school leaver costs and can help towards achieving equity.

Lochgoilhead trip – FR asked about the information meeting for the P7 trip. JR responded that information will come out from the school this Friday. There will be an information evening that parents and children are welcome to attend.

Twitter – FR notifying that there is something wrong with the school's Twitter when accessing from the website. YD will get this checked out.

12. Close

HB thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting.

(Next meeting planned for **7pm Wed 22 November 2023** in School Hub)

¹ As at date of meeting PC members are noted as Emma Anson, Naveed Bakhsh, Michelle Borland, Harriet Boyle, Adam Capek, Gillian Gray, Justin Haccius, Mike Law, Rory McCoy, Fiona McMillan, Victoria Pearson, Felicity Rose and Martin Whitehead

² See 3.9.3 of PC constitution

ACTION POINTS

Action	Assignee	Notes
Send approved minutes and updated member list to school	VP	
Put parking attendant tel no. in PC newsletter	EA	
Give ERC councillor details to PTA	VP	
PTA uniform sale dates to be added to school calendar	HC	
Add communications role to constitution	HB	
Make contact with Williamwood cluster parent councils	HB, EA, GG	
Advise school Leadership Team on any aspect of SNIP we want further info on	HB, EA, GG	
Follow up on suggestions of modern languages update from school Leadership Team and student update for future meetings	HB, EA, GG	
Follow up on discussion of school reports, as discussed in previous PC meeting on 07/06/23	HB, EA, GG	