



**Netherlee Primary School and Nursery Parent Council**

**MINUTES  
of  
Meeting on Wednesday 22 November 2023, 7pm  
at Netherlee Primary School Hub**

**Attendance:**

Parent Body Attendees: Emma Anson (EA), Michelle Jaffrey (MJ – PTA rep), Harriet Boyle (HB – chair), Victoria Pearson (VP), Michelle Borland (MB), Colin MacIver (CM), Felicity Rose (FR), Conor McCarthy (CMcC), Michael Law (ML), Rory McCoy (RM), Helen Cross (HC), Adam Capek (AC – minutes), Gillian Gray (GG)  
School Staff Attendees: Yvonne Donaldson (YD), Lynn Sweeney (LS), Kelly Linn (KL), Julie Roberts (JR), Jilly Ford (JF), Marissa Centola (MC), Vicki Keith (VK)

**Apologies:**

Fiona McMillan (FM)

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

HB welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**2. Minutes of previous meeting (30/08/23) and minute taking of next meeting**

Minutes of previous meeting – consideration of proposing and seconding these minutes digitally going forwards. No objections to this offered. Minutes of 30<sup>th</sup> August proposed by ML and seconded by AC. Minutes confirmed.

MB kindly offered to do minutes at next meeting.

**3. Head Teacher Report and Staff Team Update**

*The Lighthouse (Nurture) in Netherlee Primary School*

YD – Welcomed MC and VK to discuss the Lighthouse provision within the school.

LS discussed the initial phase and scope of the programme with the lighthouse.

Explanation that this is the nurture room for children who may have a variety of social, emotional or wellbeing needs to step out of their classroom at times. It is to provide a safe, focused room with a small core of staff. Main staff there are MC, VK and other support staff – in particular Mrs McCorquodale and Mrs Johnson.

MC explained that 5 years ago it was identified by Mrs Donaldson that we needed to have a “safe space” for children who required support within the school. Initially this was “an empty classroom”. There were nurture groups, social skills groups and soft starts for some children for whom the start of the school day was more difficult.

2020 – The Lighthouse provided support during lockdown for a number of children and a lot of outdoor learning.

Post-pandemic – moved into a more permanent space (former meeting room), which joins onto the atrium garden. This allows much greater flexibility for the children to match their needs.

There is a set timetable through the week – some children attend for a longer block and other children attend maybe once or twice a week. Eg social groups, life skill groups, gardening group, movement group. Time is available for class teachers and children’s friends to visit the Lighthouse too.

Now looking to expand the nurture principles through all classes in the school (Nurturing Schools UK). There is an emphasis to roll-out the principles used within the Lighthouse to the whole school – to ensure ongoing focus on nurturing environments. It is important not only the Lighthouse is seen as the “nurturing” environment within the school – but that the whole school is nurturing.

The key Lighthouse staff are also part of a nurture group within the cluster and also attend many training courses to enhance knowledge of the topic.

HB – how are children identified for the lighthouse? Taken on an individual basis between parents/ home, teachers or other professionals (including educational psychologist).

YD - Need for the support is not increasing within the school as such but there is a commitment within the school's own staffing complement to ensure there is capacity for this as it makes a huge difference for the children involved. Certainly there is increasing need for this overall across society.

There was shorter term need post-covid for some children to use the lighthouse, this has thankfully settled. Previously children were identified reactively (due to more acute problems) but more and more this is proactively managed now (though there is still capacity to be reactive where necessary).

There is a plan to take on another group of children within the lighthouse in January and assess the ongoing needs of current attendees.

MB – asked why the name "Lighthouse" was chosen. It was collaboratively chosen with some of the children.

The meeting and all attendees were taken to see the Lighthouse. They were shown the various spaces within the room and the ease of access to outside space.

Topics discussed – Currently 2 groups are using the lighthouse – 3 days/week. Other children can attend on a flexible basis when necessary.

Lots of role play within the Lighthouse and always 2 adults in the room so that the pupils can observe the interactions between them. There is great focus on management of emotions.

All PC attendees were grateful for the opportunity to see this space in person and acknowledge the positive impact it can have for the children within Netherlee.

*Other Topics from Headteacher's Report:*

ONGOING –

KL - Gold UN rights respecting school re-accreditation.

The main action point from the previous Gold Accreditation was an expectation to increase activism outside the "Netherlee bubble". During the most recent Gold Accreditation visit, this has now been acknowledged to have been successful. A number of strengths that were noted – children have an excellent knowledge of their rights, recognised the curriculum to celebrate diversity within the school and nursery (cultural and also neurodiversity and other diverse characteristics), children feeling empowered to make change. It was highlighted that our children are aware of major world topics and feeling they are able to campaign and be activists. Children feel safe in school.

Pupil Parliament changed last year – to allow children to "have their say" and that this is acted upon.

Activism – school has raised around a tonne of food for foodbank donations. Netherlee has now contacted all schools in ER to coordinate their donations to foodbanks throughout the year so there aren't just peaks and troughs through the year. Now there are 14 schools involved in this (a number of other schools already doing their own thing) between September and April this year. Local SNP council want to raise awareness of food bank collection points more generally and have contacted Netherlee and the other schools involved to help with this.

YD – one of our children has been empowered to contact YD and Director of Education regarding abolishing single use plastic bottles within ER catering for schools.

The only other suggestion from the Gold Award visit was to continue the great work on helping our children to understand their potential influence individually and collectively.

HB – will there still be mixing between years and classes from Pupil Parliament?

JF – Pupil Parliament – takes place every Wednesday. Focus on debating and talking skills within the classrooms (as listening and talking is on the SNIP). Kirsten Oswald MP also came into the school to speak to the children "MNPs" (Members of Netherlee Parliament).

Priorities for Pupil Parliament:

Term 1 – talking and listening skills and What is a Parliament?

Term 2 – Eco focus. Within classes to work with their class teachers. Recycling has been a major focus and each class is looking at an aspect of this. The children have been very passionate about this topic.

Term 3 – Diversity – in a broad sense. This will be covered after Christmas. There will be mixing across classes in doing this.

There are 7 pupil parliament boards around the school with a summary of all the class missions – developed by the children. Eg “Raise awareness of recycling in the school” (P1). Today P7s were litter picking to “improve the environment in the community”.

There are also p7 leadership groups on a Wednesday afternoon. Each p7 is in one of these groups (eg library, tech (work the lights etc for school events), house captains, communications (currently recording a podcast!), young leaders of learning, diversity and equality etc). Children chose the group they wanted to be in.

### School Clubs

KL – There are 24 school clubs going on in and out of school hours – both local groups, Williamwood High School, parent and staff lead etc. There is a decision not to charge for clubs (as part of Sport Scotland Gold Award) although technically speaking schools are allowed to charge for them. There is an active schools coordinator within the cluster who is helping organise this.

All of p1 and p2 have had a 4 week block of multisports overseen by staff but lead by p7s. This has also been the case for a baking club in the school.

A number of parents are involved in many of these clubs –if they don't have PVG or need staff support that is possible though involves some logistical planning. Parents can be put through PVG by the school if necessary.

There are QR codes at the front of the school and on the website and in the Friday bundle to allow parents to sign up if they have skills they would like to share – at lunch or after school.

MB – parents in local clubs may be able to come into the school to help with these school clubs and also help recruit for their own clubs.

### Book Week Scotland

JF – We have had a number of local authors and the local librarian in to speak to every stage in the school. Thanks to HC and all other contributors for this. The children have really enjoyed going to the library in the school for this.

YD – Reading, listening and talking are on the SNIP. Major focus on reading for enjoyment. The school library hasn't been opened as a "community library" but suggestion made by GG to allow parents and relatives etc to come in at the end of the school day with their children to run a "community library".

YD and JF will take this forward to work out how this might logistically be achieved.

## **4. Communication – Consultation**

HB – discussion about how information is being communicated to the parents. Noted improvements for parents which have included the Friday bundle (rather than multiple emails through the week).

The question is how this can be improved both for school staff and parents both ways?

Friday bundle – FR – asked about the potential to simplify the language within the bundle. YD – there are translator tools available to have the bundle sent in a specific language where requested.

FR – towards the end of the school year – there is so much stuff going on that people can get quite lost. So potentially having a synopsis in the Friday bundle saying "in the next week this is what is coming up..." may help. This is something that could be trialled but there is a concern that if something is missed from this synopsis (even if it is in the other places of information such as the calendar) then it may cause more harm than good. The other possible suggestion is to put a link to the calendar and accept there is "a single source of the truth". YD – happy to have this actioned going forward. School calendar is available on the website but potentially not so well used currently by

some parents.

Wider discussion over the timing when the bundle goes out to parents – although acceptance that this is so personal for all families it will be impossible to please everyone all of the time.

## **5. PTA Update – Christmas Fayre**

MJ - Pumpkin Event – very well received and more successful than PTA had hoped. Great community feel to it. ~£900 raised – gone to the school for the shed and games.

Silent Disco - ~£300 made.

Winter Fayre – Mr Bryce and the School are leading. About 15 stalls signed up – capacity for 20 stalls. Choir will be outside on the stairs to make them more visible.

Current PTA balance - ~£1300. Though still to come out - ~£200 going to gardening and ~£400 for pumpkin event.

This leaves about £700 left currently for projects but some will need to be used in the short term as a float for winter fayre etc.

HB – it has been useful for people to know exactly what they are raising money for.

EA – what is the money from the School Fayre going towards? YD – most of it goes to the school fund directly though the school is very grateful to the PTA for largely running the event – and this is used for subsidising trips, playground games, baking materials etc.

EA – confirms it is very helpful for people to know where the money is going.

## **6. SNIP Priority – Nurture and the Lighthouse**

Above in HT report.

## **7. Membership Update**

VP - Now have 12 full members of Parent Council. Open to new members.

CM – potentially interested to join the PC.

Discussion of the definition of the parent council versus PTA and the roles of the parent council members. Confirmation by YD that PC members are involved in selection of school leadership team roles (Head Teacher and Deputes) but currently we don't have any trained members. Training is run by ERC and training lasts 3 years once completed. Once another date for training is available this will be circulated to members by HB.

FR – asks whether this training can be made more accessible for parents (either online or a virtual training that can be done in a parent's own time).

HB – confirms more sessions are planned for this but not aware of any plans to change the format of training.

## **8. School Report Update**

No update at this time.

## **9. AOB - RSHP & periods, ERC Citizen Panel, Connect update, Comms Newsletter support, parking details reminders**

Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood – ongoing review of this policy since last policy from Scottish Government was in 2014. There is a link to share with all parents to link into the ERC response to the current Scottish Government guidance on this.

ERC Citizen Panel – a collection of ER residents who help the council inform policy and services. They are looking for newer members (particularly those <35yo and living in certain under-represented areas). This link will be circulated.

Connect Updates – the PC is now a full member of connect. There is a lot of guidance available to PCs and workshops being run to look at the role of the PC and the connectivity between PC and the school. Connect also insure us for PTA events. There was concern at ERC PC chairs meeting that many schools hadn't paid this membership – this has now been done for Netherlee.



Comms Newsletter – EA – needing help with formatting the newsletter for parents.

Generally we have a minute taker (formal) and a “highlights” compiler to write the copy for the newsletter. PC is looking for help in creating the “copy” and also the formatting – with thanks to FM who has performed this role for several years. RM – happy to help with this going forward.

Parking Details – increased traffic warden presence around the school since last meeting. EA has been in touch with ERC to establish the best way to report dangerous parking around the school. Currently – little progress but there has been further encouragement to report this by email to ERC. EA will continue to press ERC to get response and further action on this. Notably – there is concern amongst local residents also (on Netherlee Neighbours Facebook Group) so this is not just a school issue.

FR – do any of the pupil parliament groups discuss the topic of parking and cars idling outside the school? JF – this has been looked at in the past but is something that can be revisited.

GG – aware of further safety issues due to improper parking and MB also aware of incidents recently.

VP – are there solutions we can suggest to ERC about how we feel this could be improved? i.e. contact roads officers as well as parking team

YD – remember the PC can invite people to meetings and we could potentially invite someone to a meeting from roads department or transport.

Smart Phones - RM – previously mentioned an idea about addressing smart phones and their implications on children and families. There was talk at that point to look at surveying parents. RM has emailed out a draft survey and is happy for anyone to feedback to him if they have views on this before potentially sending it out to parents to gather their thoughts. Keen to stress this is an information and opinion gathering exercise.

GG – aiming to be clear to parents that this is not a school project and is more community focused.

Transition for p7 going to Williamwood. FR – this process involves a huge amount of documentation that isn't always easy to get hold of. Wonders whether other schools have had a similar experience and whether there is a way to smooth the process through the wider PCs for parents.

HB – there is a way to get council tax bills online but it is a valid point that collating the paperwork can be very difficult. She will mention this at the next PC chairs meeting on 7/2/24.

**10. Close (next meeting planned for Wednesday 31 January 2024, 7pm at school hub)**

HB thanked all attendees for coming and her co-chairs for their efforts leading up to this meeting.