



Neilsland Primary School Newsletter

November 2023



Dear Parents, Carers and Friends,

I cannot believe that we are fast approaching Christmas! The weeks have gone past so quickly. All of our classes are practising hard for our Nativity and Christmas Concert and preparations are well underway for the Christmas Fayre.

Outdoor Clothing

As we fast approach the winter months, the weather has started to take a turn. PE continues to take place outside once a week and each class also participates in outdoor learning sessions. The children are outside at playtime and lunchtime even in wet weather therefore jackets and suitable footwear will be needed.

Parent Council

Our Parent Council meetings continue to take place termly and we are always keen to welcome new members. If you would like to find out more about the work of the Parent Council, have any questions or queries you would like taken forward by the Parent Council or if you would like to join, please contact the chairperson Lindsay Backer on **neilsland.ps.pc@gmail.com**. **The next meeting will take place on 20th November at 1pm.**

Our Parent Council ran very successful Halloween parties this year in school. The children had a wonderful time. Thank you.

Parking/Road Safety

We have had a number of complaints recently regarding the safety of the children at the end of the school day. Cars are speeding through the drop off area and also double parking. This makes it almost impossible for children coming out to see beyond these vehicles. We focus on road safety in school with the support of our Junior Road Safety Officers. It is imperative that parents and carers of pupils are careful, considerate and safe in their driving practices. We are currently in the process of developing a school travel plan in consultation with our Parent Council, Police Scotland and Traffic and Transportation (South Lanarkshire Council). This will most likely result in some key changes to parking and drop off within school grounds.

Indoor Shoes

Can all pupils please bring a set of shoes for indoor use only eg. gym shoes, hard soled slippers. If you don't have a pair of shoes which could be provided for this purpose, please email me directly and I will be able to help - gwl4neilslandht@glow.sch.uk. Whilst we recognise the comfort and ease that footwear like cros can provide, we must stress that these shoes are not suitable for any form of PE either indoor or out. They have no grip for the varying surfaces we have PE on, and provide no foot/ankle support to the wearer.

Eco Committee

Our Eco committee have organised a climate change and sustainability day on Friday 10th November. All pupils will engage in a variety of activities including poster design, litter picking and musical performance. They will be developing a range of skills across all curricular areas.

Clubs

We currently have a dance club running for our infant pupils. This is very well attended. Different stages are attending in blocks. All classes will be offered the opportunity to attend.

Our P6 and P7 youth club has been very popular. A further 2 sessions will be offered. See the calendar for details.

One of our parents is running a series of wellbeing workshops – Petite Retreat. Different classes attend each week. The feedback from the children has been very positive!



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Our Eco Committee continue to meet on a weekly basis. We currently have 30 members attending. They are working extremely hard on their 8th green flag application.

Mrs Kennedy and our reading champions run a weekly lunchtime Reading Owls club. This will run throughout the session and classes attend on a rota basis.

Our Parent Council are running a series of film clubs throughout the session. The first showing was a documentary. The next film club will take place on 19th December. All children are welcome.

YCFL

Our YCFL worker, Caroline Stewart, has already been very busy this session. She ran Read and Relax sessions for children and adults to enjoy reading together and she has also ran a series of Family Fun sessions after school which allowed parents/carers to engage in a range of activities with their child/ren such as arts and crafts, board games and outdoor play. The feedback from the children and adults was very positive with 8 pupils giving it 10 out of 10 stars. Here are some parent/carer comments.

'It has been good to interact with the girls within the school environment.'
'Great fun! Kids absolutely loved it.'

Caroline also supports our pupils in class and has worked with our P2/3, P3/4 and P4/5 pupils in promoting health and wellbeing through the Massage in Schools programme. Here are some of the children's comments.

'I learned how to relax and breathe.'
'It was so relaxing and helped me to feel calm.'

Caroline is currently planning her next workshops which will focus on developing children's numeracy skills through play along maths sacks and a series of cooking workshops. More information will follow soon.

Chef Robert

Our P5, 6 and 7 pupils recently took part in a series of cooking workshops with South Lanarkshire Council's very own Chef Robert. They learned about nutrition, how to use a knife safely and had the opportunity to put their new skills to the test when they made soup and spicy pasta. The smells wafting through the school were amazing. Parents and carers also attended one of the sessions.



Football Success

Mrs Hare recently took a group of pupils to represent the school at a football tournament at Fives Pitches. The team played extremely well and were the winners of group B. Our trophy is proudly displayed in our cabinet at the front of the school. Some of our players also received special recognition. Well done!



Developing the Young Workforce

We recently had a visit from the fire service to speak to the whole school about their work and keeping safe, especially on bonfire night.

Later in the week we will have a Children in Need mini first aid workshop for our P4-7 pupils.

Homework Policy

Our new homework policy has now started in school. A copy of the policy was emailed out last week. Please do not hesitate to get in touch should you have any queries.





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Christmas Cards

Thank you to everyone who has ordered a pack of their child's individualised Christmas cards. All money raised through this initiative will be used to fund many fun activities and resources for the children in the school.



Panto

We are going to have a Christmas panto in school on Friday 1st December (am). The title of the panto is Jock and the Beanstalk. There will be no cost for the children.

Christmas Lunch

Our Christmas lunch will take place on Wednesday 13th December. Christmas lunch menus and order forms have already been sent out.

Christmas Shop

We are looking for donations for the 'Children's Christmas Shop' (new, unused items please – toiletries, gift sets, candles etc). The Christmas shop will be open from Monday 4th December to Friday 8th December. All items range from 50p to £5. The pupils can buy small gifts for family, friends and pets and have these gift wrapped and labelled as a surprise to take home. These gifts are excellent value for money. We keep prices as low as we can so that the children get good value for money. Donations can be sent into the office anytime.

We will also have a selection of children's gifts available this year. **Any donations of unwanted toys/books in good condition would be appreciated.**



Christmas Fayre

Our Christmas Fayre this year will take place on Friday 1st December. P6/7 are helping to organise the fayre and all parents, carers, family and friends are welcome to attend from 2pm – 4pm.

Our Parent Council are looking for any donations of **bottles** for the bottle stall or any **raffle prizes**. These can be handed in to the school office anytime.

Please contact the Parent Council if you are interested in having a stall at the fayre.

Each class will make something that can be sold at the Christmas Fayre. All items made to sell will be priced at 50p. We have decided not to 'personalise' the items and try to make them all look the same. This will hopefully give them a better chance of selling everything.

As well as the above, children will be able to buy personalised baubles, get glitter tattoos, have their face painted and purchase a selection of food and drinks.

We are mindful that this is a very busy and expensive time of the year so have organised a range of **free** activities, games and crafts as part of the day.

We cannot thank you enough for your ongoing support. **All funds raised from the fayre and the shop are spent on the children** eg. games/resources for the classroom, outdoor learning equipment, play equipment for P1, treats for parties, gifts for P1-3 children, gardening equipment, funding extra-curricular clubs, Active Literacy magnetic boards and letters for home for all P1 pupils, trips and the whole school panto.



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Gifts

As we approach Christmas we are aware that many families wish to share their gratitude with staff in the form of gifts and treats. Whilst we welcome the kindness and thought that goes in to this and are lucky to work with families that appreciate us, we feel that this year in particular, that appreciation can be shown in other ways and ask that NO gifts are given. Should you wish to thank a particular member of staff then we ask that children complete a drawing or write a small card. We are very conscious of the 'Cost of the School Day' and also the fact that family budgets are tight at this time of year, and we do not want families feeling under pressure to purchase gifts. Please remember you give us the best gift everyday by sending your children to school for us to teach.

Class Hampers

As part of our Christmas activities, each class will be making a themed hamper. We will have a **Be Bright Be Seen day on Friday 24th November**. On this day, can we ask children to bring in a small item for their class hamper (if you can). Items can be brought to school from Monday 20th November. We will then hold a raffle with the FANTASTIC HAMPERS as prizes. We will sell raffle tickets for the class Hampers in school. We will draw the Hampers on Wednesday 20th December. We hope you will help us in our fundraising efforts and thank you for your support.

Hamper Themes

- P1 Savoury Christmas
- P1/2 Red Christmas
- P2/3 Green Christmas
- P3/4 Cosy Christmas
- P4/5 Plastic Free Christmas
- P5/6 White Christmas
- P6/7 Sweet Christmas



Equity

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Participatory Budgeting

We are delighted to announce the results of the Participatory Budgeting 2023. The winning option was option 3 i.e. purchasing 5 chromebooks and resources for the Stationery Stations. The school has already purchased the chromebooks and they are now in class for the children to make use of.



Halloween Costumes and Christmas Jumpers

The school is very proud of our achievement of 7 Eco Green Flags and our ongoing work on recycling and reusing a range of resources. Last year, we asked if you had any unwanted Halloween costumes that could be reused and the response from parents/carers was fantastic. Due to the great response last year, we are asking if you have any Halloween costumes, please could you donate to the school. Also, if you have any Christmas jumpers that could be reused, could you please hand in at the office, and we will put them on the 'rake and take' rails.



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Foodbank

We continue to receive donations from the Foodbank on a fortnightly basis. We understand that family circumstances can change suddenly and if the school can support you with this, please do not hesitate to contact the school for help and support. Alternatively, we replenish the food stock outside in our equity shed daily and this is open to both families and community to use during school hours.



Period Products

A gentle reminder that we offer free period products to those pupils requiring them. The products can be accessed from the toilets within the school. If extra products are required during school holidays, please contact the school office.

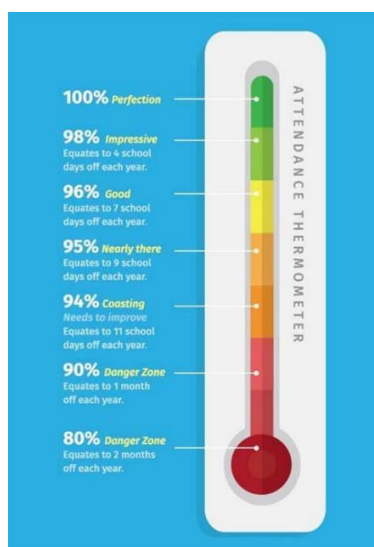
Challenge Poverty Week

All classes took part in Action Poverty Week, engaging in activities to raise their awareness of finance in real life contexts and about ways to support families in the local community. They shared their learning during the weekly Friday assembly.

Attendance and Punctuality

In Neilsland, we monitor punctuality and attendance on a daily basis. This year we are aiming for **95% total attendance**, and we continue to ask for your support to achieve this. **We are currently sitting at 93.8%**

Being late 10 minutes per day is 50 minutes of lost learning time and over four weeks this equates to 3 hours and 20 minutes of lost learning. We understand that sometimes children can find the transition from home to school difficult and we ask that families contact the school so that we can put supports in place. A larger copy of the attendance thermometer will be emailed along with the newsletter.



Money Matters

South Lanarkshire Council are keen to provide as much support as possible for all our families. Please see the information below on Money Matters should this be of support to you:

We offer free, confidential and impartial advice - we can help check your benefit entitlement, assist with the claims process, challenge decisions and represent you at Social Security appeal tribunals. For debt issues we look at your financial circumstances, contact creditors, discuss options and give budgeting advice. Contact number: 0303 123 1008. Our Telephone Advice Line offers a similar service specifically aimed at pregnant women and families with young children. Contact number: 01698 453154.



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Reading Schools



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We had an exciting day on Thursday 2nd of November when Stuart Reid, the award-winning Scottish children's author, came to visit us at Neilsland. He told us all about the children's books he has written and worked with some of our classes delivering creative writing workshops to inspire young writers. He focussed on plot, setting, character development, genres and starter strategies when writing their own stories. All pupils attended an engaging, educational and extremely entertaining, book assembly too, where they learned about ellipses, alliteration, onomatopoeia, creating story characters, took part in a Q and A session and acted out some parts of Stuart's stories using props! Everyone had a great time and the sessions have inspired pupils to write their own stories. Stuart was very impressed with our children's book knowledge, their enthusiasm for stories and their lovely manners!

Next week is Scottish Book Week and our class Reading Champions have been busy planning lots of fun reading activities for everyone to take part in and celebrate our love of books together. Families will be invited into school to work with their children on book based activities. Look out for an email informing you of dates and times, the children would love you to join us in our book celebrations.

