



# Neilsland Primary School Newsletter

## March 2024



Dear Parents, Carers and Friends,

I cannot believe that we are almost at the Spring break and fast approaching term 4. It has been a very busy year for us so far at Neilsland and we are looking forward to an action-packed Term 4! We have many events and activities planned and look forward to welcoming you over the course of the term. As always, I would like to thank all of our families for their continued support. In particular, I would like to remind families of the importance of children being in school on time each day. In the month of February 9% of pupils were late for school. We know that family circumstances change and if we can support you with these changes, please do not hesitate in contacting the school.

Thank you.  
Mrs Kelly



### **Pupil Attendance**

If your child is going to be absent from school, please contact the school before 9.00am. There is an answering machine for this purpose. Unexpected absences will be followed up by school staff, in line with SLC policy. Parents who have to take their child out of school during the day for an appointment, should send in a note in advance and collect their child from the School Office.

Regular school attendance is essential for all our children to make good progress, achieve their academic potential and consequently have better chances in life. Our whole school attendance target is 95%. It is the responsibility of parents/carers and the school to achieve this. There are 190 school days across the school year, leaving 175 days to book holidays and attend non urgent appointments. We appreciate that children are unwell from time to time and that there can be exceptional circumstances for absences, but we ask that you think carefully about keeping your child out of school. There is a strong connection between attendance and achievement at school. Absence is proven to have a significant negative impact upon a child's educational attainment.

**Currently, our overall attendance is 93.1%**

### **Danceathon/ Neilsland's Got Talent /Easter Fun Day/ Dance Festival**

Our P6/7 pupils have been extremely busy, organising a Talent Show, Danceathon and Easter Fun Day for the full school.

Pupils were able to showcase their talents in front of the whole school during the talent show after a rigorous round of class-based auditions. Everyone agreed that Neilsland certainly does have talent!

On Friday 15<sup>th</sup> March, P6/7 hosted a Danceathon for all classes, parents and carers to tie in with Comic Relief. It was lovely to invite our adults into the school. The event was enjoyed by all and we raised over £100 for Comic Relief. Thank you.

Today, all classes enjoyed an Easter Fun Day. P6/7 organised a range of games, events and activities for all classes. Every child received a small gift to wish them a Happy Easter.

This year we have a group of children who are taking part in the Dance Festival held in Hamilton Townhouse on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> May. They are practising hard with Caitlin, our dance instructor. After only 2 rehearsals so far, their performance is already of a very high standard. We are really looking forward to their debut!



### **Parent Consultations**

It was lovely to see so many people last night at our parent/carer consultations. We are extremely proud of our children's achievements and hope that you had the opportunity to share in their successes. If you haven't already done so, can we please remind you fill in the feedback sheet for your child/ren. We discuss this with the pupils, and it helps us to set learning targets with them.



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### **Transitions**

We are currently working in partnership with Calderside Academy to ensure the smooth transition of all our P7 pupils. We have had various visits from staff and pupils with more visits planned for next term.

We have 2 induction dates organised for our pupils coming into P1. The visits will be on **Wednesday 22nd May 1.30pm-2.30pm** and **Wednesday 29th May June 11.00am-12.30pm**. Our new pupils will spend time in class with their teacher and will get to meet their P7 buddy. They will also stay for lunch on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> May.

### **Swimming**

Our P4 pupils have started their 12 week block of swimming lessons at Hamilton Water Palace. This is a fantastic opportunity for them to develop water confidence, an essential life skill. The children are making great progress and are an absolute credit to the school.



### **Scottish Cycling Sessions**

We are delighted to be involved in this programme delivered by Scottish Cycling and funded by Transport Scotland, aimed at providing an opportunity for coached cycling sessions from Clydesdale Colts cycling club coaches. The sessions consist of fun and progressive cycling activities in our school grounds, to help each rider to become more confident in riding a bike and to develop a love of cycling. Each rider is also shown how to carry out safety checks of their bikes and helmets and how to carry out simple bike repairs.

### **Parent Council**

Our Parent Council are actively involved in many initiatives within the school and always 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**.

Recently the Parent Council ran very well attended and successful Valentine's discos and film clubs.

They are always open to ideas or suggestions for future events.

### **School Fund**

We continually aim to reduce the cost of the school day for our pupils. We do not charge for extra curricular activities. Our Parent Council are currently in discussion with our Pupil Council regarding suggestions for the school and proposals to spend some of the monies raised.

Our school fund is also used to subsidise the transport cost for all trips taking place before the end of the session. This will help to ensure that costs to families are kept to a minimum.

Our P3/4 class have recently enjoyed a trip to David Livingstone Centre as part of their studies in class. P6 and P7 pupils enjoyed a taste of the arts yesterday when they went to see Legally Blonde at Eastwood Theatre.



### **Travel Plan**

We would like to thank our Parent Council and our whole school community for their active involvement in the development of our new School Travel Plan. The travel plan was officially launched last night at our Parent Consultations and has been emailed out to everyone.

Traffic has been flowing more freely since the nursery staff started using the school parking area. This has allowed more spaces for collection at the end of the day which has in turn almost stopped the double parking. The Learning Hub have also changed the timings of courses taking place and this has also helped to reduce congestion at the start and end of the day.



# Neil Island Primary School Newsletter

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### **Attachment Accreditation**

We are absolutely delighted to announce that we have been successful in achieving the first 2 pledges of South Lanarkshire Council's Attachment Accreditation, 'Act to make a difference' and 'See the whole person'. This recognises the work that we do within the school and community in embedding attachment - informed good practice. There are 6 pledges in total and it is our intention to apply for our third pledge 'Hear their voice' before the end of the session. On successful completion of each pledge, we receive a jigsaw piece for that pledge with the aim of completing the jigsaw at the end of the process.

### **Fun with Maths and Family Cooking with YCFL**

Caroline Stewart recently ran another course of family cooking sessions where parents/carers came along to cook with their child/ren, working together to make nutritious, tasty food. The smell of pizzas cooking was lovely. Parents/Carers enjoyed getting the opportunity to meet and chat with one another and the children looked forward to their grown-ups coming into school to cook with them.



Caroline also ran a series of maths workshops for P1 pupils and parents. Families had the chance to explore different maths concepts in a fun, interactive way using maths sacks. Each maths sack contained a different variety of activities, games and resources. Maths sacks were taken home to use over the week and then swapped over at the next session. Feedback was very positive with pupils and their families enjoying learning together.

### **Tae Kwondo Taster Sessions**

We are delighted to welcome Tae Kwondo coach Karim Belgacem from Cho's Tae Kwondo on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> April to deliver taster sessions to all classes. Karim runs a local club which is attended by some of our pupils.



### **Playground Consultation**

We are currently consulting our pupils about our playground procedures. We are continually looking for ways to make improvements. Each class has come up with a list of ideas and suggestions for the playground. This has been discussed as a whole school. The most popular ideas will now be taken forward and put into practice.

### **Wider Achievements**

We are always keen to celebrate the achievements of our pupils outwith school. Many of our pupils engage in extra-curricular clubs or activities and we love to share in their successes. Equally, we also love to hear about children's personal achievements eg learning to ride a bike. Please get in touch with good news stories.

### **Hamilton Burns Club Verse Speaking Competition**

Two of our senior pupils recently represented the school at the recent Hamilton Burns Club Verse Speaking Competition. They recited the poem Willie Wastle flawlessly and with super expression. It was an amazing performance. Well done Kali (P6) and Isabella (P7).

### **Extra Curricular Clubs**

- The Reading Owls lunchtime club is run on Mondays by some of our P6 and 7's with Mrs Kennedy and is going well. Each class is enjoying their drop-in sessions where they can enjoy our library books or take part in a book related activity.
- Our pupils will be running many clubs during term 4. More information will follow.
- Dance club is on a Friday with Caitlin, it's great fun and is currently open to our Dance Festival pupils.
- A fun fitness club will start for P1-3 pupils on **Friday 26<sup>th</sup> April** at 8.30am in the gym hall. More information will follow.



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### **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.**



### **Scottish Child Payment**

Scottish Child Payment is a new benefit which started in February 2021. This payment is for families on certain benefits or tax credits.

**Scottish Child Payment helps towards the costs of supporting your family. It's a weekly payment of £25 that you can get for every child you look after who's under 16 years of age. You'll get the payment every 4 weeks if your application is successful.**

To find out more about this payment and other benefits or grants to which you may be entitled, please access [www.mygov.scot/benefits](http://www.mygov.scot/benefits) or call 0800 182 2222.

### **Preloved School Uniforms and 'Rake-n-Take'**

We are an Eco School and our 'Rake-n-Take' rail is available daily at the front door. Preloved school uniforms are welcomed at all times.

We have a selection of non-perishable food items and toiletries available from the front entrance each day. This is freely available to our families. We replenish the stock available regularly. If you are clearing out any cupboards, we are always happy to receive any donations.

### **Period Positive South Lanarkshire:**

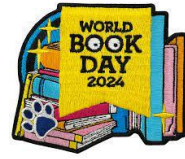
South Lanarkshire Council has been consulting young people on the use of free Period Products in schools. Sanitary Products Sanitary products are freely accessible to all who need them. Our older girls know where they can be accessed in the school without causing any unnecessary embarrassment. Out-with schools, residents of South Lanarkshire have been able to order Period Products online which are then delivered to their homes. Products are also available in various locations throughout South Lanarkshire.





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We all had great fun on World book Day on Thursday 7th March. Lots of us came to school dressed as a book character, brought an object related to a book or brought a book from home they would like to show their classmates. We enjoyed a book themed lunch and had fun building dens to read outdoors. We all took part in a whole school Reading River which snaked all along our corridors. Pupils booked an appointment with Enja at her Reading Surgery to chat about the books they liked to read and suggest some new books for our class Book Buzz areas that everyone would enjoy. Some of us managed to have fun reading in weird places in the school! Classes spent time in our School Library for some reading together time and teachers nominated 1 person from each class to choose someone from another class to have time in the Tales Tent to read together. A couple of children from each class shared some of their class reading activities with everyone at The Reading Rocks assembly on Friday 8th March, where they saw some photos of our costumes for World Book Day over the last few years. They had great fun guessing who was behind the disguises!

### **March/April – Equity Update**

#### **Attendance**

We continue to work together with all stakeholders to improve attendance at Neilsland Primary School and our attendance rate to date is 93.1%. From August 2023, we have been looking at the days where most absence occurs, and our data shows that Friday is the day when most children are absent. We have compiled a table showing the number of absences each day.

#### **Day of the Week Number of Absences**

- Friday 420
- Monday 344
- Wednesday 331
- Tuesday 312
- Thursday 307

The main reason for absence has been holidays and the school so far has had 194 absences due to holidays.

#### **Participatory Budgeting**

The Pupil Council are beginning to plan the use of next year's Participatory Budget, and they would like to hear some suggestions for how this money could be spent for the benefit of all pupils. In the past, the money has been spent on:

- Sensory Walks
- Stationary Stations
- Zen Den
- Chromebooks
- Funding buses for trips.

If you have any suggestions on how this money could be spent, please email the school [office@neilsland-pri.s-lanark.sch.uk](mailto:office@neilsland-pri.s-lanark.sch.uk)