Dear Julia

I am writing to you on behalf of Merrylee Primary Parent Council in response to the proposed restructure of janitorial provision within Glasgow primary schools. While we recognise the need for budget savings we have real concerns about the potential effect on such a large school of not having a janitor on-site throughout the day. Could I ask for some clarification on how the following issues would be addressed:

The janitor’s responsibilities currently include a playground presence before 9am each day after opening up the school in the morning to offer security to the children waiting to enter school. It is difficult to see how a reduced team could provide this cover, along with lock-up at the end of the day, to every school in the cluster at the same time? All schools are in need of these roles being fulfilled at the approximately the same time and clearly this cannot happen.

A second health and safety concern is how quickly it would be possible to respond to breakages and spillages that happen during the school day. Without a janitor on-site there could be broken glass or dangerous spillages within the school where the children are present until a janitor can be sent back to deal with this. This seems an unnecessary risk.

With the new model, who at the school would be responsible for tasks such as overseeing and putting away deliveries and overseeing workmen if there is no janitor on-site? Our concern is that this would naturally fall on the office team or the school management team who are already over-stretched in their efforts to maintain standards with reduced staffing while the school has rapidly increased in size.

We do understand that budgets are squeezed and efficiencies need to be implemented wherever possible and fully support the introduction of new tasks to the job role but would suggest that there is a way this could be achieved with a reduced impact at Merrylee. Along with OLA Primary and Lime Tree Nursery there are three properties placed right next to each other which could be served by a single janitor within the cluster, permanently on or around the site. This would have the huge additional benefit of maintaining our janitor’s place within the local community which cannot be overestimated.

I look forward to hearing your thoughts on what we feel is a practical approach to minimising the effects of this new structure on our school community.

Kind regards

Fiona Hunter

Merrylee Primary Parent Council Chair