

**Tayport Primary, Nursery and Playgroup Parent Council**  
**Minutes of Engagement Meeting to discuss**  
**proposed changes to the school timetable**  
**Held on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2014 in the school**

Mrs Holmes went through the presentation which had been presented by Fife Council Education representatives at various meetings throughout Fife. It had been amended slightly to reflect concerns voiced by parents to date.

Mrs Holmes explained that this is an engagement process and will continue into next term. If there is enough interest in looking more closely at these ideas then there will be a full consultation process. Any changes agreed through the consultation process are unlikely to be implemented before Aug 2016.

14 parents from Tayport Primary were present, so it will be necessary for the Parent Council to decide how to engage with the wider parent group at Tayport Primary. Fife Council intend to send out another letter to parents at the end of December/beginning of January.

The whole council will have a £77 million budget gap by 2017-18. The fundamental issue is that if the Education & Children Service continues to run along the same lines for the next few years, the budget gap will continue to increase. Therefore Fife Council wish to plan for some changes over the next 2-3 years.

Currently each child in Tayport Primary School receives 25 hours of education per week of which 22.5 hours are with the class teacher and 2.5 hours are provided by the non-class contact teacher and the visiting specialist teacher (Mr Sweeney is our PE visiting specialist teacher and currently delivers 50 minutes of PE to each child per week).

There is no plan to make up the 2.5 teaching hours lost on Friday afternoon by extending the school day elsewhere in the week. As quoted in the Fife Council presentation there is no correlation between time spent at school and reading scores.

Teachers are contracted to work 35 hours per week, comprising 22.5 hours teaching, and 7.5 hours for preparation/marking and 5 hours for assessment/reporting and collegiate time. Probationers are not included in these proposals. They work 4 days a week and have one day for working with mentor/further training.

**Changes proposed under the new plans:**

The pupils would have just one teacher for 22.5 hours. This fits in better with the requirements of CfE as the day is not divided up rigidly into 50 minute time slots. Pupils are allowed to continue with an activity for longer if the teacher feels this would be beneficial. School could finish at lunchtime on

a Friday, which is the preferred option or each day could be shorter. Teachers terms and conditions are not changing and teachers will continue to work a 35 hour week.

There is no proposal to make up lost 2.5 hours teaching time. Staff could, however, have a common 2.5 hour slot on a Friday afternoon which would be useful for training and meetings. However there would be no adjustment to hours for the Nursery, so these staff could not be included in all staff training at that time.

The visiting specialist teacher force would not continue in its present form. Whilst Tayport benefits from a visiting specialist teacher, this is not the case for all schools across Fife. It is also suggested that visiting teachers do not know each child as well as the class teacher.

It is possible that some of these teachers could become a supply workforce as this is an area of need. Others might be deployed to train class teachers in sport, art or music. Fife Council is clear that no teacher will lose their job.

Thus the staff savings would essentially come from removing the 35 visiting teachers and the non-class contact teacher in each school. Supply teachers are obviously only paid as needed.

JH reported that staff feelings are mixed at this early stage in the engagement process – all staff comments and questions have been passed on to Fife Council as part of the engagement process.

All questions raised at the meeting were recorded and will be passed to Fife Council for answers.

Some of the questions from parents are detailed below:

1. How does being in school 2.5 hours less per week benefit the children, particularly those with additional support needs?
2. When the council states that education would be improved, enhanced by these proposed changes, what are they measuring?
3. There was a general feeling that the curriculum is being cut, as many teachers will not be able to deliver expressive art or PE to a sufficiently high standard, which will affect attainment.
4. What thought has been given to increased costs of child care/capacity of current childcare provision in Tayport? ( It might be useful to undertake a survey of parent's views on this).
5. What effect will teenagers wandering around on Friday afternoons have on the local community? This will further disadvantage disadvantaged families.
6. No other council has shortened the primary school day as far as we are aware, so we need more information about anticipated benefits/disadvantages.
7. Parents should be encouraged to go online and comment on the proposed changes at <http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/educationprovision>
8. The point was also made that it is unlikely that all these online comments are read and the best solutions in these type of situations are achieved where the decision makers are involved in the development of the policy. Do we know whether Education Services Committee have been involved so far?