

REPORT TO: EDUCATION COMMITTEE – 26 JUNE 2006

REPORT ON: STANDARD SCHOOL HOURS (PRIMARY)

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

REPORT NO: 402-2006

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report brings to the attention of the Education Committee the results of parental consultation on standard school hours for pupils in all mainstream primary school classes.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Education Committee is recommended to:

i) note the results of the consultation

and

ii) approve that from August 15 2006 the school hours for a standard school day will be 5 hours for all pupils. The standard school day for all primary pupils in the City will begin at 9:00am and finish at 3:15 pm. The lunch break will be 1 hour.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The Education Revenue Budget Primary Teacher Staffing contains financial provision for the implementation of the recommendation in 2.1.ii above

4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None.

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 All pupils are provided with equal access to education. The proposal to standardise school hours in primary schools will ensure that all pupils have consistent hours of education.

6.0 REPORT

6.1 In the past it has been the practice that all Primary 1 and Primary 2 pupils had a shorter day than older pupils. For instance, in many schools these classes finished their school day earlier than other classes. Over the years some schools have increased the number of contact hours for these pupils to anything between 4 hours 30 minutes and 5 hours. This has led to inconsistency in school hours for P1 and P2 pupils.

6.2 It was felt that there should be a standard school day of 5 hours for all pupils attending Dundee City Council Primary Schools. During a number of interactions with parents through School Board meetings, parent focus groups etc. it was apparent that a more consistent approach to school hours across the City would be appreciated.

6.3 In order to ensure that all parents had the opportunity to express an opinion on the proposed school day a city wide consultation exercise was undertaken. Each primary school Head Teacher was asked to survey the parents of pupils attending their school as to their preference.

6.4 The consultation proposed that a standard school day be established for all primary school pupils as follows

- Start: 09:00
- A morning interval of 15 minutes
- Lunch break of 1 hour
- All pupils to finish at 3:15pm

Head Teachers, in consultation with staff and parents, will decide the exact timings of morning interval and lunch break.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

7.1 2286 parents responded to the consultation exercise.

7.2 The results of the survey show that 90% of parents who responded were in agreement with the proposed standard day and 10% of those that responded were not in agreement with the proposed standard school day.

7.3 It is therefore recommended that from August 15 2006 the school hours for a standard school day will be 5 hours for all pupils. The standard school day for all primary pupils in the City will begin at 9:00am and finish at 3:15 pm. The lunch break will be 1 hour.

8.0 CONSULTATION

8.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Depute Chief Executive (Finance) and Head Teachers of Dundee City Council primary schools, parent representative groups and

parents of children attending Dundee City Council primary schools have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 None.

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Director of Education

14 June 2006

AW/LW/LF