



Community Services: Education

Argyll House
Alexandra Parade
Dunoon PA23 8AJ

To: Heads of all Educational Establishments

Dear Colleague

Alteration of school hours

Head teachers/campus principals may, on occasion, wish to change the hours of attendance of children and staff, either by altering the time of commencement or conclusion of the school day or by altering the timing of breaks. Such changes may have consequences for the arrangements made by parents/carers or for other services and should, therefore, be the subject of careful consideration and consultation. Changes should normally be implemented at the beginning of a school session.

When a Head Teacher/Campus Principal wishes to make any change in school hours, he/she must first consult the appropriate Head of Service. This officer, before giving permission to the Head Teacher/Campus Principal to embark on a consultative exercise, should:

- (a) be satisfied that the educational opportunities available to pupils will not be diminished;
- (b) be satisfied that there is good reason for a change to be considered;
- (c) confirm that any effects on school staff can be accommodated within the existing arrangements;
- (d) in consultation with the administrative officer for transportation (based at the education offices in Dunoon), be satisfied that any consequent alteration in contractual arrangements for school transport can be effected and can be contained within existing overall budgetary provision for school transport;
- (e) be satisfied that there will be no effect on the ability of the catering service to provide meals within the contractual cost limits;

(f) be satisfied that there will be no effect on the ability of the cleaning service to provide cleaning and related services within the contractual cost limits;

(g) check that there will be no adverse effect on other schools in the area.

When the Head of Service is satisfied that all of the factors listed above have been taken properly into account, authorisation will be given to begin formal consultation. The form that the consultation will take is for the Head Teacher/Campus Principal to determine. In most cases it will be appropriate to ensure proper discussion by holding a meeting or meetings. It is, in any event, necessary that each of the following interested parties should have the opportunity to become fully aware of all of the issues involved and to express opinions:

(a) the parents/carers of children in attendance at the school;

(b) young persons (ie those over school age but under 18 years of age) in attendance at school;

(c) all staff employed in the school;

(d) the parent council;

(e) the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure Services who is responsible for school crossing patrols in the catchment area of the school.

The councillor(s) for the area should be informed of the proposal and invited to any parents' meetings arranged to discuss the matter. Copies of the minutes of meetings held and any relevant correspondence should then be forwarded to the Head of Service together with a recommendation for action.

Where the consultation process reveals important differences of opinion, the Head of Service will seek the views of the local member(s) before reaching a final decision. In any event, you will be informed of the final decision and you should inform all interested parties before proceeding towards implementation.

Yours sincerely

Executive Director of Community Services

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