WHEN SHOULD PRIMARY 1 START FULL TIME? SCHOOLS VIEW

First Day of Term in August = 4; First Monday in Sept = 14; Middle Sept = 18
1st Monday in Oct = 23; After Oct Holidays = 16

Comments

I used to work with P1 full time, a week after term started and although they were quite tired we got so much done. Long term I found this beneficial.

Achahoish Primary

Staff feel that to be in school a full day too early in the session can be detrimental as children, particularly those with late birthdays, can find a full day too much. A short period of full days before the October break is a good way of staggering the start.

Ardchattan Primary

General feeling was October was early enough for a full day.
WHEN SHOULD PRIMARY 1 START FULL TIME? SCHOOLS VIEW

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Comments

Here are comments from our staff, most are also parents:

P1 pupils are exhausted by lunch time – they just need to rest and have a quiet time. Most look forward to going home as they are so tired – it’s no reflection on the school!

There is a different structure from Pre-5 to P1, therefore the pupils are mentally tired by lunch time. There is also a big change in environment from Pre-5 to P1, which pupils can find stressful. Issues like playground, lunch time arrangements all need to be introduced gradually to pupils as they do get upset and stressed.

We once had a P1 pupil stay after lunch – the child fell asleep daily. The parent then realised why they weren’t in all day and started collecting their child at lunch time.

In a two or three stage composite class, it is important to have quality time with P2 or P3 in the afternoon as P1 pupils need a lot of attention in the morning.

Arrochar

As a Parent Council, we feel that after the October holiday or even after the December holiday would be when Primary 1 pupils should start full days.

Teachers are not baby sitters and should not be expected to teach pupils that are not ready for a full day at school.

We feel that children (usually 4 years old) are too tired by the time lunch time comes for any more learning, they just want to sleep! Developmentally, we also feel they are not ready for a full day’s education, we would like to suggest that the first 6 months of their education is ½ day only.

Also, in a composite P1/2 class, it gives the class teacher a chance to work closely with the P2 pupils when the P1 pupils go home at lunch time.

We are totally opposed to any changes to when P1 pupils start full day provision at school.

Arrochar Parent Council

It would be good for all children to have a month to settle in to the school routine. Many children have not experienced childcare which extends beyond the 2.5 hours pre school provision and really struggle with the intensity of the school routine and are exhausted. A period of longer than a month can be disruptive for working parents therefore a mid September start is a good compromise.

Cairndow
WHEN SHOULD PRIMARY 1 START FULL TIME? SCHOOLS VIEW

First Day of Term in August = 4; First Monday in Sept = 14; Middle Sept = 18
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Comments

Over the past two years we have used the time between the August start and October to bring children in groups in the afternoons. It has been a very beneficial time for the children - allowing them to settle in and get to know their class teacher in a smaller group environment. It has also had benefits for the teacher - allowing her to group children and work with them in a more focussed way; extending or supporting early learning steps within the P1 classroom. Every child has benefited and families are aware at the start of term which days their child has been allocated as full days. Pupils also stay for lunch on their full days - allowing a more settled transfer to this system again, in smaller more easily managed groups within a large and busy whole school setting. I would like to see this able to continue.

While I appreciate that some children spend full days in Pre 5 setting prior to coming to school; many children cannot cope with 5 full days within the larger school setting and all children should be allowed the experience of effective transition arrangements such as these in order to build to the full time model. We have seen much more confident children by October, using this method of approach.

Cardross Primary

School staff from our Cluster agreed that the first Monday in October was a suitable compromise for the following reasons:

• Smoother transition from pre-school – gradual introduction to longer day.
• Some children are very young – not 5 until January or February. Can become very tired when they start attending for full day.
• Other European countries do not start formal education until children are 7 years old approx.

Castlehill

Most children are able to cope with the half day as quite often children have longer days at nursery, however I feel that the structure of the day for P1 should be considered carefully with any type of formal/structured learning through play in the morning and more play based or physical exercise/games in the afternoon. That are fun and have the involvement of the teacher enjoying the children, with time out for quiet play or rest.
WHEN SHOULD PRIMARY 1 START FULL TIME? SCHOOLS VIEW

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Comments

this year we trialled a phasing in period and had a group of children in school for the afternoon. This gave us the opportunity to get to know the children and to do lots of PSed activities to raise their confidence before starting full time. We found this to be very beneficial to us and the children.

Colgrain Primary

As an infant practitioner and presently as a head teacher of a nursery and primary school, I remain convinced that full day educational provision should be a gradual process. We presently offer two afternoons a week which is a gradual immersion for our children and the ratio is better for addressing individuals and getting to know them as 'little people!' The children were not too tired and as a depute head of infants with a P1 class I remember the tiredness that my class had as they began a 5 day week! I have also accessed research in Scandinavia and was interested that a different formal approach was taken until 7 years old. My infant staff also take "seasons for growth" initiatives during their free afternoons.

Colgrain Primary

A 'soft start' provides a valuable opportunity for class teachers to build on existing relationships started through a transition programme within Early Years setting. We have to ensure that this proposal is beneficial for every child. Children with Pre5 experience have to ensure that this proposal is beneficial for every child. Children with Pre5 experience have had 1:10 ratio and they need time to adjust to change in all aspects of primary school life. What is the rush - Children are in 'Education' for a long time. We as Early Years Practitioners believe we should adopt the Scandinavian style to learning.
WHEN SHOULD PRIMARY 1 START FULL TIME? SCHOOLS VIEW

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Comments

Not exactly by a clear majority, but more people preferred the first Monday in September. Nobody chose after the October holidays.

Dalintober

Most staff felt that a full day start straight away was quite tiring for most children however some felt that leaving it until after the October holidays was quite a long time. One person had experienced the September start in another LEA and felt this worked quite well.

Happy House Christian Pre School

A middle of Sept start would allow plenty of time to settle in to school and would give time to try school dinners and after lunch play time too before having to stay a whole day.

Inveraray Primary
WHEN SHOULD PRIMARY 1 START FULL TIME? SCHOOLS VIEW

First Day of Term in August = 4; First Monday in Sept = 14; Middle Sept = 18
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Comments

Even though the children have attended a Pre Five Unit we feel that starting the full day at the beginning of August is too early as they get really tired. Having discussed this we suggest that the best time is the first Monday in October thus giving them the opportunity of a few full days before the October holiday preparing them for a full school day.

Iona

Although children attend 'school' each morning for pre 5 provision they still find the demands of the P1 classroom quite different and parents comment on how tired they are at first. When we have a P1/2 composite the afternoons without P1 is very beneficial to P2 pupils for the first few weeks.

Kilcreggan Primary

I inherited this arrangement from the previous Head and I haven't felt the need to change it. Distance is the issue here. The glen spans 19 miles therefore it is more efficient for the children to get on the school bus (public bus) to travel to and from school. It is regarded as the norm here by parents. Children of P1 start first day of term in August and remain in school for the full day.

Kilmoden Primary Pre Five Unit
WHEN SHOULD PRIMARY 1 START FULL TIME? SCHOOLS VIEW

First Day of Term in August = 4; First Monday in Sept = 14; Middle Sept = 18
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Comments

We have had various discussions in school about this topic I have summarised them below.

“We agree that P1s should have a phased introduction to school and believe that children are ‘ready for school’ at different stages, and acknowledge that one arrangement will not suit all.

“We are grateful that we have been consulted on this matter and have endeavoured to focus our discussions on meeting children’s needs in the context of their educational development. In our school this involves children in P2 & 3 and we feel that their needs should also be taken into consideration in any discussions that take place.

“We also feel that the country as a whole needs to make the distinction between education and childcare and where a whole day at school may meet the needs of some parents, particularly those who are working, in our experience it will not meet the educational needs of most children.

Kilninver

The 2 P1 teachers feel that mornings only for the first 6 weeks (approx) give the children a chance to build up the stamina need for full engagement with school.

Kirn Primary

As a very small school we are able to very flexible about this. We are able to work to whatever each individual needs. Generally P1’s start on half days for a couple of weeks then stay 1 full day for a couple of weeks and gradually build up more and more full days until the October break after which they come in for 5 full days. I would like to continue

Lismore
**WHEN SHOULD PRIMARY 1 START FULL TIME? SCHOOLS VIEW**

First Day of Term in August = 4; First Monday in Sept = 14; Middle Sept = 18
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### Comments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Little Gems Nursery</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Most children attend nursery on a full day basis and therefore we feel the transition to school would be smoother for the children if this is continued. Also in the current economic climate most parents are working and this is an added burden if they have to find alternative arrangements for their child.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lochgilphead PRimary</th>
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<tr>
<td>Would prefer last monday in September. For the past 3 years our P1 pupils have started full days on the last monday in September. When they start in August, the morning session has been extended to 12.15pm, giving them 15 hours provision. We have found this to be very successful with the different pupil:staff ratio and fewer hours allocated to pupil support assistants, this staged increase in provision enables pupils to adjust gradually to a different setting. Parents have commented favourably on our arrangement, although there will always be some who, for financial reasons, will wish their child to have a full day provision from August.</td>
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<th>Park</th>
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When should Primary 1 Start Full Time? Schools View

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Comments

We are all of the opinion that a couple of weeks gives the children enough time to get into school routine. Pre 5 has done a lot of the ground work. The present amount of time on lunchtime dismissal is too long.

Park Primary

Pupils in Port Charlotte Pre 5 unit have a liaison (plan, do and review beginning early October). This provides opportunities to be in the main school building to work along side P1/2 teacher and to collaborate with P1/2 pupils. They also come along to a weekly assembly. They are well used to school routines. There is a great deal of joint planning between preschool and P1/2. I fully realise that there may be transport issues.

Port Charlotte Primary Pre Five Unit

From my own experience with my children they were ready for the full day at school well before October holidays. The transition from Pre 5 to P1 makes children more than ready for school now, as it becomes a natural progression in their education.

Port Charlotte Primary Pre School
WHEN SHOULD PRIMARY 1 START FULL TIME? SCHOOLS VIEW

First Day of Term in August = 4; First Monday in Sept = 14; Middle Sept = 18
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Comments

Children in P1 are very tired by the end of the afternoon when they start coming in all day and it is a long time for them to be away from home – some of them are still only 4.
We thought it might be an idea to phase in the ‘whole day’ eg in mid Sep the children could come in 2 whole days and build up over the remaining weeks of the term to complete a whole week.

Port Ellen

Initially, it is a long enough day for P1 and staff. Children are tired and parents report that children sometimes sleep in the afternoon.
The mornings are very active and resourcing a multiple of short but numerous activities requires a lot of thought and time. P1 staff provide time for other infant staff to assess their new children individually and this time would be lost. Time is short, however and so as the term progresses it is difficult to get some things done.
Would children have enough energy for quality learning in the afternoon? Not sure?
Would they be less rested, overtired next day? Probably?
Mid September – a compromise?
Children always start to lose energy about Wednesday, fall out on Thursday and many are tearful on Friday.
Would full days mean this happens earlier in the term?
Obviously happy to go with the majority.

Rhu

As a staff we had a very wide ranging and interesting discussion on this subject and it was felt that the decision should be a professional one based on the needs and developmental stage of the individual child. There are certainly many children who would cope well with a full day from the beginning of term particularly where an Early Level class is in operation.
We did feel that children with January and February birthdays can find a full day particularly tiring and that the issue of age at entry to p1 may need further discussion.
WHEN SHOULD PRIMARY 1 START FULL TIME? SCHOOLS VIEW

First Day of Term in August = 4; First Monday in Sept = 14; Middle Sept = 18
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Comments

Present system works well and I see no good reason to change. I certainly would not advise the children in P1 staying for the full day at least until the middle of September. My preference however, is as above.

Rockfield

The new P1 Pupils need until the first Monday in October to settle in to the routine of school. The 4 year olds in particular are very immature and tire. Most P1 pupils still need a short 'sleep/rest' in the afternoon and this is not appropriate in the classroom.

Rockfield

It's a big enough step from Pre 5 into school. Children need some time to adapt and also they are very tire initially, as they are getting used to the school routine, therefore, nearer the October holiday would be a better time to start the full day!
WHEN SHOULD PRIMARY 1 START FULL TIME?  SCHOOLS VIEW

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Comments

The children in P1 spend so much energy in to settling in school that they are exhausted come lunch. To have a few weeks to get into being in school would help them adjust.

Rockfield Primary

This allows a short settling in period for those pupils who are not ready to cope with a full day but those who are ready can progress quicker, i.e. there is more time in the day to get through the work!

Rockfield Primary

Children need time to adjust to the P1 class routine even though they have been to nursery. They are now in a class of up to 25 with only 1 (sometimes 2) adults present. The large playground with 2 - 3 hundred children takes time to get used to (morning, short playtime allow this). Mornings are very busy and by lunch time children are generally very tired. The gradual build up in expectations towards October break suits most children. The week before the holidays is an ideal time to start full days.

Rockfield Primary
Comments

Pupils starting P1 are often tired by lunchtime with so many new things to take on board - new setting, peer-group, adults and curriculum. The fairly intensive focus on literacy skills in the first few weeks is of great benefit to the pupils - but is tiring for them resulting in afternoons being a floppy time where little would be achieved in school. By October there is a noticeable development in most P1 pupils who are clearly ready for a full school day by then.

Rockfield Primary

A few weeks of mornings only allows for the children to adapt to new routines, people and places. The start of P1 is fairly intensive and all of the children are generally very tired by lunchtime. I think we need to ensure that changes, if any, are for educational reasons and not for childcare reasons! By the start of Oct, we see noticeable maturity in the children and readiness for a longer day. I also feel that there are some children, who are just not ready for full days and would be concerned if this were to happen immediately for them.

Rockfield Primary

I think a two week settling in period is enough most children are ready to start full time straight away.

Rothesay Primary
WHEN SHOULD PRIMARY 1 START FULL TIME? SCHOOLS VIEW

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Comments

A short settling in period and time to get to know one another and then in for the full day.

Rothesay Primary

We have found that 3 weeks is about the perfect timing from Aug to begin full days. This gives children time to adjust after their long summer holiday. It also allows time to slowly introduce staff, tuck, playtime, PE and lunch routines.

Rothesay PRimary

The transition from Pre-5 setting to Primary is now much less intimidating. As a direct result of our transition programmes, children and parents are comfortable with the links between pre-5 and school. Children may have fewer social or emotional problems associated with transition but physically they still find a full day very tiring.

At present we offer our new P1 pupils lunch from August to October. This in itself is a steep learning curve for some. We encourage children to use cutlery properly and to socialise at the table with other children. Their parents pick them up after lunch.

With most parents working full time, better transition arrangements and early level learning working across Pre-5 and Primary sectors, I can understand the questions being raised about full time P1 provision. However, I am unconvinced that these reasons are always in the children’s best interests. Many of our youngest learners simply find the full day experience too much and benefit from the system we have at present where there is a gradual introduction to full time education.

Southend
WHEN SHOULD PRIMARY 1 START FULL TIME? SCHOOLS VIEW

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Comments

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Southend

I think P1 children are far too tired to be in school for the full day at the beginning of term. Even after October in years gone by, I still had P1 children falling asleep. In the first term quite a lot of P1’s still go for an afternoon nap at home. They have to get used to the routine of a school working day.

St Joseph’s Primary

I feel the children are so young it gives them a better start if they are eased into full time gently. They also get quite tired too, having to concentrate for long periods at such a young age.

St Joseph’s Primary
## WHEN SHOULD PRIMARY 1 START FULL TIME? SCHOOLS VIEW

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I think P1 children benefit from having some weeks of part time education before starting full days. At first, many of them find the full day is tiring.</td>
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</table>

### St Josephs Primary

We have chosen to start P1 in full time after 4th or 5th week depending on length of term (normally 7 weeks) an on other commitments in the school. I would prefer to keep this flexibility.

### Strath of Appin Primary

Children in P1 tire very easily after a mornings activities to begin with. A half day is an ideal amount of time for the transitional period from Nursery to P1. A whole day can be a little overwhelming for new P1 children. They don't have the concentration span to be able to focus on afternoon activities. Eases the separation anxiety for some of the children.
WHEN SHOULD PRIMARY 1 START FULL TIME? SCHOOLS VIEW

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Comments

Head teacher:
The arrangements we have at present are that the children come for the morning only until two weeks before the October Holiday. They then stay for lunch for the week and are collected after playtime at 1.00 pm. For the week before the October break, the children come in full time.

This arrangement works well. The children are gradually eased into the full day. If there are particularly young children in the class, a full day from August would be very tiring for them.

p1/2 teacher:
I have mixed views but am leaning towards first Monday in October. Some children are very tired when they are in for just half a day. Different structure/ routine to that of pre 5. Some children are not emotionally ready particularly if they are a ‘young’ p1. If teaching a composite class it is difficult in the first term to settle p1s while teaching others and it’s good for the p2s to get some more time with the teacher in the afternoons without the p1s being there.

Taynuilt

I think P1 pupils should attend Preschool provision for a further year and enter formal education one year later - when they are 6. (MB)

I feel some pupils are better prepared than others for a full day before October. Some of the children can be very tired following a morning. Very dependent on individual children. (EM)

Tayvallich Primary

As we are a small school we have been able to be flexible, looking at the needs of both children and parents.

For the past two years we have only had one P1, and each one started in August for the full day.

This year we will have 5 new entrants whose needs are unknown as yet which is why we have opted for the first Monday in September.

Helen Brown
At Ulva, in the past, we have been flexible about when the P1s stay for the whole day dependant on personal circumstances.
As we probably only have 2 or 3 P1s starting at the same time the factors taken into consideration have been stamina, the distance they live from the school, whether they have siblings in the school and parental choice.
This last year our 2 P1 pupils started to stay for the whole day in the middle of September and coped very well.
The 3 P1’s who started at Lochdonhead this last year stayed on Wednesday afternoons when the whole school went swimming and on a couple of occasions had to have a wee nap in the afternoon. They were very tired by the end of the morning and would not have coped with afternoon school well.

Heather Waller

Ulva/Lochdonhead