

## **Proposed change of the time of the school day**

### **Parent Consultation 11<sup>th</sup> February 2021 4.00pm via MS Teams**

**Present:** Patrick Robertson (Head Teacher), Alison Hall (PT), Gill Rae (CT), Olive Firth (parent)

**Apologies:** Carolyn Rivers (parent)

### **Rationale**

Mr Robertson outlined the rationale behind the proposal:

- 2018-19 Pupil Council proposed that the afternoon break is taken away during discussion with the HT.
- The previous HT in discussion with Mr Robertson agreed they would plan to proceed with a consultation around the timings of the school day, including the impact of the break on learning and teaching.
- Mr Robertson took up the post of Head teacher in August 2019 and agreed to observe the current structure of the school day before proposing any changes.
- March 2020, school closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

### **Consultation process**

The consultation process began in session 2020-21.

- Questionnaire was issued to families to gather their views on the proposed change to the end of the school day from 3.30 to 3.15 and change in lunch break from 12-1 to 12.15 to 1.15.
- Meetings have been held with Catering and Transport services.
- Consultation has been carried out with schools in the Learning Community including Balfron High School.

### **Results of consultation to date:**

- No concerns raised by Head Teachers in the wider Learning Community where a similar model to the proposal is currently in place. HTs reported that in their experience, the proposed model was positive allowing for a flow of learning through the afternoon. The 3.15 finishing time allows children to travel to after-school clubs and allows staff to travel to professional learning courses/events which are often held in Stirling.
- Catering had no concerns.
- Transport had no concerns about being able to continue to provide their service but would require notice.

### **Next steps:**

- Summary of the feedback gathered will be shared with families.
- A further discussion group with school/parents before the end of March 2021. Any remaining points will be recorded and an opportunity to ask further questions.
- All information gathered from the consultation process will be shared with Stirling Council.

### **Concerns raised by parents:**

- Impact on after-school childcare.
- The proposed 2 hour afternoon is too long without a break; lunch could be moved to 12.30-1.30.

**Discussion:**

-AH commented that the younger children would be engaged in short, focused tasks structured around natural breaks for a play or a story.

-CR had put forward suggestion for lunch to begin at 12.30pm to 1.30pm, reducing the length of the afternoon session from 1.30pm-3.15pm.

-PR-teachers are able to judge when children need a change of focus or task. Teachers will plan carefully to include opportunities for outdoor learning. There might be a focused teaching time before children are set a practical task followed by time to evaluate and discuss or feedback.

-OF commented that it would be helpful to parents to be clear about what the afternoon structure would look like. 12.30pm is quite late for children to wait for their lunch.

-PR commented that the children's views will also be taken into account as soon as is possible after the return to school.

-GR pointed out that in winter, it is often getting dark by 3.30 so finishing 15 minutes earlier would make it safer for those children walking home independently.

-OF highlighted some of the issues for some parents around childcare. There may be more scope for after-school clubs in the future.

There are currently no after-school clubs due to the Covid-19 restrictions since children are not permitted to mix among different class groups.

-PR suggested that an interim measure could be to offer an after-school supervised reading club for 15 minutes to support parents whose working arrangements make the collection time changing to 3.15pm more difficult.

-OF agreed that this would be a useful interim measure. It would also be important to liaise with nursery once they are on the same site as the school.

**Summary of next steps:**

- Summary of the feedback gathered will be shared with families.
- A further discussion group with school/parents before the end of March 2021. Any remaining points or questions will be recorded.
- Consultation with children on return to school.
- All information gathered from the consultation process and recommendations will be shared with Stirling Council.