

## **ISSUES/COMMENTS RECEIVED WEEK ENDING 15-02-2014**

### **ISSUES**

working hours, change to contract, cost of changes to working hours and resultant childcare issues, provision of extra curricular activities which will no longer fit with school hours, lack of sports etc provision by schools (possibly by external providers such as BSLT) after school hours which would help working parents/carers.

concentration and deterioration in behaviour towards the end of the school day. It will be essential to ensure that adequate breaks are allowed and the day is paced properly for primary aged children. Lunch time is also an issue. If children are starting school before 9 on a Friday and not finishing their allocated teacher contact time until 1.15 this will be an unacceptable length of time for small children to wait for their second meal of the day.

I do not believe we should be cutting any school day in fact I would propose we should be doing the opposite and investing more time in our children's education. I would be happy to pay more money to see this happen. Numeracy in children being taught across the Scottish Borders is known to be below average yet instead of investing we are cutting back.

timings for drop off pick up for work no one here to look after kids on a Friday if half a day

Length of lunchtime may be reduced meaning lunchtime clubs will end.

school nursery hours to increase and length of school day would alter and times may not be similar meaning a lot of extra trips to and from school and nursery if you have children in both.

Tiredness of children with a longer day in infant primary.

Increase in children from high school hanging around the town with no activities on half day.

The quality of the Children's Education.

The Aim of this change is to reduce teacher number by providing a more efficient teaching timetable. However classrooms are already understaffed in some areas so I fail to see how teaching standards can be maintained with a reduction in teacher numbers, surely this will actually lead to a less flexible timetable with a smaller pool of teachers that can only be detrimental to our children's Education.

Are teachers to work longer hours? If the children are at school for the same number of hours if a teacher has a training session in Friday afternoon are these then extra hours? I can't see how this adds up without the extra hours.

Is Friday Afternoon the best time of the week to carry out teacher training sessions? Are there enough resources that all the training sessions can happen at one time to make this actually effective?

Longer school hours

Particularly for younger primary children longer hours cannot be a good thing as they will get tired their concentration will not be so good and hence their education will suffer.

All extracurricular activities will be effected and need to be re-scheduled. Teachers will have to work longer hours during the day so may well be less willing to provide support in these areas.

Although there may well be a savings on staff/school costs. Working parents might have difficulty accommodating the change with their work arrangements. ie having to take Friday afternoons off or have additional expenditure for childcare.

I support the asymmetric week but would prefer the short day to be on the Friday and not mid-week.

We have 2 children at WLPS, one in P2, one in P4. Both my husband and I work full time.

I would support the asymmetric week if it did not result in less time spent at school. For example 09.00-3.50 and 09.00-12.45 would be ideal, making it easier than at present to collect the children at the end of the school day.

I would prefer a later end time, rather than an earlier start time.

I would NOT support the asymmetric week if it reduces the total number of hours spent at school per year, even if this is explained away by shorter lunch breaks, although reducing holiday time would be acceptable to me.

My concern is that reducing the total hours per year spent at school, even if this is achieved by shorter lunch breaks etc., would inevitably detract from their schooling.

Whilst I understand the cost saving. I can see no benefits to the pupils or education. My key issues are that children, particularly lower primaries, will be overly tired due to extended hours. I also think reduced breaks is concerning as children need good quality time to exercise outside and play.

No issues.

A later end to the day will be too taxing on younger students who are already shattered with a 3:15 end. Will also reduce time for extra curricular activities and family time together.

Younger children even more tired

More difficult to make after school activities/clubs

Child care issues for a Friday afternoon

It will be quite a long day for the little ones. presumably they won't get lunch on the short day - will they get an extra bit of time to eat something?  
Please make the short day a Friday.

Terrible idea more cost to parents who actually work

As my wife and I both work from home this doesn't really impact us negatively. I do wonder about job changes in the future however.

None

Depending on which day of the week the early finish is this will require additional childcare. Will there be enough childcare providers locally to fulfill the increase in demand??

The issues for me are;  
Increased childcare costs  
Disruption to work pattern

CHILDCARE. We live in cardrona have 2 primary age kids, peebles does NOT currently have the infrastructure to support looking after kids. It has

to my knowledge 2 nurserys and 9 childminders.....in primary schools we have 1000+ children, I know not all will need childcare but what of those who do? Its too simplistic to suggest the need will be met as what if it is not? What company's will set up for a Friday PM only too? How will children get to the care if its supplied? What about the cost to working parents?

Financially the impact would be depremental to my family,currently we both work and only just make ends meet,to have additional child care cost will tip the balance for our family as I have No family in this area for childcare.

No major issues.

Child care on a Friday pm. School buses. Longer school day especially for infants. Families who have kids at primary and secondary school.

1. Childcare for primary pupils on the 'short' afternoon. There is simply not the provision across SBC and in the current economic climate, asking families who are already stretched to also have to pay for childcare is simply unacceptable, even if there were spaces available (which in the majority of catchment areas, there simply is not)

Childcare for children on the day they will be attending for half the day

\* I think my concern is the length of the day for children who already find attending and concentrating for the duration of a day, challenging.

\* Children with additional needs are also another concern having an even longer day.

\* The impact of childcare on working families, the potential increased demand for childcare on the proposed "short day"

As a health professional working in schools it is also going to impact on my ability to meet with teachers etc, before and after the school day - impacting on my working hours.

Long day for pupils travelling from outlying villages to secondary school.

Concern re timing on Friday and whether there will be a lunch break - cannot expect pupils leaving home at 7.30am to go to 1.15pm without opportunity for lunch.

\* Absenteeism on shorter day

\* Impact on after-school activities - may result in some children being unable to continue with activities or those activities taking place later meaning that children are less rested for school next day.

\* Ability of parents to arrange childcare esp in rural areas where there is already a lack of affordable childcare

\* Latch-key kids on short school day

Buses

Possible lack of form time/ form teacher contact with pupils

How does this save 256?? hours of teacher time - secondary - is this achieved by no registration time?

child care and quality of education

Crime has gone up in area with a Asymmetric week. Children learning by skype will not be as effective. Children having to travel to other schools for

lesson who will pay the bus fares? No afterschool clubs or sports clubs have said they will run or if they will have places. How would young children travel to these clubs if they ran without risk. The last time asymmetric week was talked about it was going to be too expensive to implement what has changed? some children left to look after themselves could be a risk. Can all the schools work together and agree.

Longer school days from primary children, shorter hours on a Friday have childcare implications.

Why should our children be restricted to 6 choices in S3/4, potentially dropping maths and English if that's what they choose, or 4 choices if it's decided that maths and English should be compulsory, when ALL the other children in Scotland (except those in Dumfries and Galloway) have 8 choices - even in the Highlands!? Other areas operate a 'start at 8 choices' policy whereby it can be reduced to 6 should it not be suitable for the child. Why have we dumbed down to 6 with no chance of upgrading (according to the Depute Rector of one Borders High School)? Universities may very well only require 6 Nationals as a minimum requirement but, not only does this restrict options for Highers having a smaller pot to choose from at that stage, it also puts a child with potentially 5 grade A highers and 6 grade A nationals up against a lot more children with the opportunity to have 5 grade A highers and 8 grade A nationals. Given the choice of a few with the former and a lot with the latter, which do you expect will be chosen? Minimum requirements are exactly that, they are not the only qualifications which will be taken into account. I am not at all happy that my children will be disadvantaged by Scottish Borders Education Authority before they even attempt to progress beyond school. Have you asked ALL the universit

Childcare on a Friday afternoon is not available locally for my primary school aged child. I am concerned about the quality of learning happening at senior school when my older child is on period 7 of the day. He attends Earlston high school, so won't finish school later, but if he has a subject which is end of the school weighted, then the seventh hour of learning is going to have a negative impact. I expect teachers won't want to run as many extra curricular clubs, which have to happen at lunchtime at Earlston, because of the shorter lunch hour (which has happened at other schools in the region) and that will limit opportunities for my children. The loss of registration will remove valuable time for my child to gain information, hand in forms, see staff across the school-that time will eat into learning. I value the time my child has with teaching staff. If, when he reaches senior school, he is expected to study without specialised support in the school, I imagine I will have to find the income for tuition-the quality of which will not be as good as the teachers at the school.

Ensuring that my children's education does not suffer due to council cutbacks.

Childcare costs to cover the proposed half day.

If children can cope with longer days at school.

This is a huge logistical disruption to the status quo for families and for primary schools makes no financial saving whatsoever.

I am most concerned about the current contradictions in education policy and the effect that this uncoordinated approach is having on our children's education, which raises the following:

• School meals are so important they are to be free if until P4. £55 million is to be spent on this P1-P3 policy nationally which seems inappropriate given the scale of cuts required at regional level. Are these kids going to get them on the half day before they are sent home? We haven't been told the impact on times for lunch, especially at secondary, but isn't the council also supposed to be concerned about childhood obesity and exercise levels? Less lunch hour or longer school days will reduce opportunity for fresh air and sports clubs for all children.

• Curriculum for Excellence talks about "totality of experiences" but the asymmetric week implies cuts in the future to specialised music, arts and gym teachers in primary, and also seems to reduce the opportunity for these clubs in secondary schools? If Curriculum for Excellence is the focus, and the new qualifications, surely the breadth of education is vital. Hobbies and out of school activities are very important now for CV and university applications and any reduction in accessibility will have impact on teenagers health and exercise levels?

• Nursery hours are to increase because of the good start this gives to children, but then once they get to school they can have a whole afternoon off and it won't make any difference to the quality of their education? Surely this is a wasted opportunity. The Scottish Government is spending £59 million expanding childcare for two year olds yet SBC may be going to remove this one afternoon a week? For ante-pre and pre-school children it seems obvious to me that the number of sessions is just as important as the number of actual hours spent in the nursery - young chi

• SBC are consulting us on the proposed changes by giving us two boxes where we can guess the impact the changes will have based on very little factual information.

Surely it would have been more efficient for SBC to include a questionnaire where most responses could be counted and so could be analysed methodically? And for SBC to provide more information on the obvious and most common questions to save all parents repeating the same points. Many parents I have spoken to believe that the decision has already been made and do not see the point of giving their opinions - the consultation format has not helped th

• Glenn Rodger said at the PHS meeting that this change does not save money in itself, but was unable to give any details of future changes which would save money, or any model of savings - how much will the asymmetric change cost to implement? Why are we not being told any more about th

• SBC need to cut the education budget by £11 million but PHS think it is reasonable to use Senior Management time to pressurise all S1s to go on an ex

## Personal Issues

• My personal impact - losing working hours when I only work in school hours as it is, and I am providing a service to customers. Losing an afternoon is not compensated for by extra minutes on the other days.

• I don't currently use any childcare but I have considered this and may choose to in the future. I feel that an asymmetric week would increase the dem

• In Innerleithen there are some clubs but these are mostly run by working parent and volunteers so they can't simply be moved from an evening to an

• To travel out of Innerleithen for activities is costly and would require waiting until my secondary school child is home and fed. To then take a younger child

• A lot of the discussion of clubs and childcare which may be moved such as swimming lessons relate mainly to younger children. A lot of children from the

How will my youngest child (6 years old) cope with longer days, he struggles as it is come Friday afternoon.

I am also concerned about how the children will cope with the longer morning on the half day regarding lack of food to keep them alert and motivated.

Relating to Eddleston PS, it would be important to maintain funding for playground supervision for the pre-school period. I would also like to see additional funds earmarked for supporting vulnerable after-school clubs ensure a streamlined Friday transition as they will have to manage changes to staff contracts, fee income and length of session as a consequence. I would not support a Friday finish in advance of lunchtime.









Childcare for Langlee area.

I work four days a week (mon-thurs 9.00 - 15.00), if the half day was a Wednesday this would be an issue to find childcare as the school my daughter attends does not have an after school club. Not so easy to have a family member pick her up because they also work or have other things on.



After-school care on Fridays













**COMMENTS****RESPONDENT**

Is this consultation being taken into consideration at all or is this, as many people believe, a fait accompli?

parent/carer - primary school

What are the quantifiable benefits to pupils and teachers?

parent/carer - primary school

for many families of Friday afternoon childcare will be extremely difficult, not only financially but simply in terms of availability.

Schools are not in place to provide childcare whilst parents work however childcare places are very limited even in the larger towns in the Borders, unlike cities such as Edinburgh where there are more childcare providers. Once again parents especially mothers who work are penalised!

parent/carer - primary school

what about the taxis buses for the kids if every school when in at the same time they would need more as the same ones cant do a double run and for those people with kids primary and kids at nursery at another school impossible to be at 2 places at once

parent/carer - primary school

possibly some good sporting opportunities could come out of the half day afternoon for pupils.

parent/carer - primary school

parent/carer - primary school

parent/carer - primary school

parent/carer - primary school

This doesn't support hard working parents as child are would need to be provided.

parent/carer - primary school

parent/carer - primary school

An earlier start to the day wouldn't be problematic as most children wake early anyway.

parent/carer - primary school

parent/carer - primary school

I don't mind the move to an asymmetric week too much as I work flexibly and can accommodate it. I would prefer a Friday afternoon as this will allow us to maybe use the weekends a bit better and get more family time

parent/carer - primary school

More childcare for parents

parent/carer - primary school

Ending the school day on the Friday at 1.15pm seems daft. Why not end it at 12.15 and save money on lunch?

parent/carer - primary school

Friday is the best day for the half day for many families I think and certainly for us.

I would like you to consider shortening the lunch break for the younger primary children - to help reduce the length of the day. I realise there is a desire from some parents to maintain the full hour break to allow clubs to continue, but these are for older children. Please can you consider the influence on p1-3 and consider an earlier finish for them.

parent/carer - primary school

Very happy for this change. Sounds like it will be of benefit to teachers for planning and preparation and it will be very positive for us to have extra time for our family to take part in extra-curricular activity and get outdoors rather than be in the classroom all day. I think it will give a better balance to the week and create opportunities for the children to take part in sporting and musical clubs according to their individual interests. Many working parents are able to take time off on Friday afternoons and I think this can give a good life/work balance for families.

parent/carer - primary school

I think that this would be excellent for families, as it will provide an opportunity for further time together. I also believe that there will be benefits for staff and with flexible working patterns, I can't see a major problem for parents to arrange cover for a Friday afternoon.

parent/carer - primary school

Will SBC schools be providing afterschool clubs?

parent/carer - primary school

The opening part of the proposal says that a managed reduction in teacher numbers is required, yet the proposal defines that there 'may' be a reduction in the future. Therefore the council is not prepared to quantify or fully believe that there will be a reduction in teacher numbers.

parent/carer - primary school

I feel its shocking and irresponsible of the council to implement

something for primary kids, which has little or no benefits to them, which could potentially leave children without adequate care and cause people to loose income if they are able and can afford to alter their working week.

parent/carer - primary school - school support staff - SBC

I think the impact on families will be huge in the current financial climate when people are like myself having to watch every penny, I can't see any financial benefits for the council either, as I'am aware that teachers will still be working on that day.It makes No sense, and last year there was already an overwhelming response to for a NO vote. Don't change something that's not broke.

Flexibility for leaving on a Friday for a weekend away.

parent/carer - primary school

parent/carer - primary school

parent/carer - primary school

1. Most whole school teacher meetings/training takes place AFTER SCHOOL at present so to say that an assymetric will save disruption during the school teaching week is simply untrue.

2. Teacher training Courses which are Scotland-wide eg SQA are NOT just held on a Friday afternoon - if teachers are to attend these there would be disruption regardless of whether the week is assymetric or not

3. How can timetable alignment (and pupils travelling between schools) honestly be effective when the secondary schools are so far apart across the region?

4. SBC secondary schools simply do not currently have the appropriate technology to allow e-learning ie pupils being taught by a teacher in another school on a screen (even the 3 new schools are not ready for this!) - who will do the marking, discipline etc - how will this work exactly?

5. Reducing lunchtime and extending the school day will result in exhausted teachers and pupils. What about extracurricular activities at lunchtimes? Teachers are already under MASSIVE strain with the new curriculum in secondary schools - the extra stress and workload of teaching more classes in a day with less time f

6. If teachers work to their maximum during the 4.5 days, surely they will not need to be in school on the short afternoon - they will have worked their contracted hours already.

Would only work for me if the half day was a Friday

parent/carer - primary school

parent/carer - primary school - teacher - SBC

parent/carer - primary school

Can understand that sharing teaching resource between schools is a good concept - will it be introduced at the same time as the asymmetric week?

\* saves council money

\* allows teachers to do collaborative planning

parent/carer - secondary school

Do not see any benefit for pupils other than early start to weekend with or without parental care

parent/carer - secondary school - teacher - SBC

Will save money!!

parent/carer - secondary school - teacher - SBC

it might save the council money, but it will cost many parents money in lost wages and child care

parent/carer - primary & secondary school

Would teacher need inservice days if they have every friday afternoon together.

parent/carer - primary & secondary school



... secondary one of the issues is childcare - to save your budget, I am going to have to pay for more childcare or cut my working hours (which my employer may not be happy about) so to save your budget, I will be worse off. If teacher training is to take place on Friday afternoons, does this mean there will be less or no in-service days? Also will after school clubs still run on a Friday?

parent/carer - primary & secondary school

It says an awful lot about the general impressions the education department has of the Borders children. Start low, that's all they're good for. Don't bother aiming high, you won't get there. It's an absolute disgrace!

We now have to very seriously consider moving into another area just so that our children can have the education they deserve, meaning that they will have to leave behind their friends and all the activities they have grown up with and love. Not to mention the cost and other implications this will have for all of us. I simply can't allow my children to be put at such a disadvantage when they have such great aspirations. Nothing may come of their aspirations but I at least want to give them the opportunity to try.

You should be ashamed of yourselves. I note Glenn Rodger's kids haven't or won't have to put up with this decision. Absolutely disgraceful!

parent/carer - primary & secondary school

I'm afraid I don't see any benefits beyond the financial, the pressures of which I fully understand.

parent/carer - primary & secondary school

working parents have organised their work and often their flexible working requests around the current system and all that is put in jeopardy. That is not saying that a school is responsible for hail

parent/carer - primary & secondary school - school support staff - SBC

parent/carer - primary & secondary school - employer in Scottish Borders

I am disappointed that so many obvious questions were not answered by or acknowledged in the initial consultation document or at the public Q&A sessions:

1. What do the example times allow for breaks and lunch?
2. Will canteens cope with shortened lunch hour at secondary? My daughter already queues for up to twenty minutes daily for her lunch at PHS, menu options often run out and the facilities struggle to cope with the number of pupils.
3. What will be the impact on canteen staff, cleaners and classroom assistant numbers & hours? After hearing Glenn Rodger speak at PHS I am very concerned about future cuts to these staff, the impact on the school environment and on discipline and teaching in the classroom.
4. What is the impact on part-time teachers " will they all have to change to be in school on the pupil-free afternoon? How will this affect teaching and working patterns at primary?
5. If secondary teachers are teaching all of their class hours, how can they cover other staff illness and absence? What will be the impact on the use of supply teachers and costs from this? Already at s
6. I am concerned that there will be less flexibility in the secondary tim My child in S1 already has multiple teachers each week for core subje
7. Aligning timetables to enable cross school working for pupils will re
8. What will be the impact on homework? There will be less time to d
9. At secondary, if more homework is to be left for the half day and w
10. Will there eventually be a loss of specialised gym, art and music ?
11. Any out of school activities on the half day will not be available to
12. Why has the discussion with existing out of school clubs and acti
13. Comparing to Edinburgh schools doesn't compare like with li
14. The impact on working parents, childcare availability and costs is
15. There is an impact on non-working parents too, especially if they
16. What is the legal situation for leaving children alone in the house?
17. How can the buses cope with same finishing time on the shorter c
18. Has the impact on attendance been looked into if Friday is a half
19. I am concerned about the impact on choosing options at second&parent/carer - primary & secondary school - member of Parent Council

Personally, I think the asymmetric week is an excellent idea for secondary schools, but do question the need for primary schools to be involved too. I appreciate that transport in rural areas is a big issue regarding cost, but surely there has to be a way of resolving this problem, perhaps running smaller buses.

I work within an early years setting, and I feel that when I listened at the Tweeddale Consultation, early years was not really mentioned or taken into consideration. The knock on effects of having a child in a pre-school setting which will be operating under the new increase to 600 hours from August '14. I'm not sure that parents will want to have their youngest child in playgroup when they have older siblings off at home, which makes a bit of a mockery of 'quality family time'. I am also hearing from parents in my setting, the childcare issues this is throwing up. It would appear that there is a lack of places available for childcare in my area, both through private nurseries and childminders.

I also feel that early years settings should be more involved with their local schools to ease transition from playgroup/nursery to P1. Again this was never mentioned at the consultation evening. Th parent/carer - primary & secondary school

If the move has the backing of teaching staff, then it would have my support.

Other







The Scottish Government Policy of increasing nursery hours is in direct contradiction with the asymmetric week both in financial terms but also the ethos. On the one hand we have the Government telling us that we need to get back to work and we should have free pre-school childcare to enable us to do so, and on the other hand we have an asymmetric week being introduced where people's childcare arrangements are thrown into disarray and that is of no consequence to the school. We would benefit from more joined up thinking please! It is ludicrous to have overflowing resources that are ringfenced whilst slashing budgets just because they are 'different pots of money'. Increasing nursery hours is totally incompatible with the asymmetric week and will make life very difficult for me.

Other

I see no benefits to my child, family or my working life.  
Fri for half day would be better as I would be at home anyway.  
I would need to look into childcare who would do pick ups from school. I would believe that lots of mums will be worried about childcare for these half days.

Other

Other

Other