



PORTOBELLO HIGH SCHOOL
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Our Ref : RM / NT

21 April 2016

Dear Parent / Carer

Consultation on Changes to the School Day at Portobello HS

As a school, we have been reviewing aspects of our work in preparation for our move into new premises. The new building offers the opportunity to refresh approaches and adapt what we do to ensure maximum benefit from our enhanced facilities.

I am writing to you to give you the opportunity to comment on changes which we plan to make to the school day. We want to make some changes for the following reasons:

- To improve pupil experience in Key Adult Groups
- To remove the confusion caused by different period times
- To allow us to deliver two periods of PE per week, in line with Scottish Government expectations
- To allow us to increase courses and levels on offer to learners across the school

We have already undertaken consultation with staff and pupils on our arrangements for Key Adult Time – both groups were very clear about what was working well and what needed to be re-thought. In order to make the full range of improvements to the Key Adult Time, we need to make some adjustments to the school day.

We have also taken this opportunity to address some aspects of the school day that have been identified as causing issues that impact negatively on learning and teaching at Portobello High School. These include the variation in the timings of each day and the lack of daily registration. We are confident that the planned changes will enhance the level of support we are able to offer our pupils and allow us to set and maintain the high standards we would want all our young people to aspire to.

As we move to our new school, we also need to increase the amount of PE to meet government expectations. We have not been able to meet these to date due to our limited sports facilities and have been granted an exemption. Meeting these expectations would not be possible within our current model without the significant loss of time in other subjects.

The key changes to the school day are:

- The re-introduction of registration/ Key Adult Time every morning
- Period changes at the same time every day
- Period length changed to 50 minute periods, which allows
- An additional 3 periods to be added to the week

Please note, that the overall time spent in class is the same, though it is divided up in a different way. The proposals would take effect from the start of the new session in August 2016.

The proposed changes will also allow us to offer the maximum number of courses and levels across the school and make the most efficient use of resources. This has the potential to improve the range of courses on offer and to make sure the courses are of an appropriate level for our pupils.

A copy of the proposed timings for the school day are printed over leaf and are available on the school website, along with a short presentation outlining the information above. As you will see, the distribution of lessons would mean that there would be one day with a slightly shorter afternoon. We feel that there could be benefits in this for extra-curricular activity. The shorter day is shown as a Thursday for illustration but could be earlier in the week and we would welcome your views on this.

If you wish to make any comment with regard to these proposals, please do so in writing to myself by **3 May 2016**. We would be particularly interested to know what you like about the proposal, any difficulties you foresee and suggestions you have for improvement.

If you would like to submit your views via email, please send them to:

admin@portobello.edin.sch.uk

Yours faithfully

Ruth McKay
Head Teacher