



Trinity Primary School Parent Council Newsletter

June 2009

Proposed closure of Fort Primary School – what the Parent Council think, what we are doing – and what you can do now

Like all parents, we were surprised to receive a letter last week about plans to close Fort Primary School and for all pupils to be offered a place at Trinity.

A merger of Trinity and Fort was proposed by the Council in 2004, and after a successful campaign by parents, was rejected as being without merit.

What is being proposed?

The Council is proposing to start consultations from the start of the next school year on a **proposal to close Fort at the end of the 2009/2010 academic year and for all the Fort pupils to be offered a place at Trinity.**

Further information is available on the City of Edinburgh website at http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/internet/council/council_business/council_consultations/CEC_children_and_families_property_review

So why has the Council resurrected this idea? Largely for well-publicised budget reasons, and because Fort is significantly under-capacity.

What has the Parent Council done?

The Parent Council believes that we should act now, rather than await the formal consultation in August. We have already written to the Council, local Councillors and MSP to complain about the proposals. No reply has been received from the Council.

What are the implications for Trinity?

If Fort were closed at the end of the 2009/10 academic year, and all its pupils were offered and accepted places at Trinity, we have the following areas of concern:

- Trinity's roll increasing from around 337 at present to around 438 on current numbers
- Increasing class sizes to their maximum in most or all year groups including even larger classes with team teaching
- The loss of the science room, support for learning room and current library and IT suite
- Existing composite classes being de-composited
- Huge pressure on the main hall and dining room
- Increased difficulty for non-district siblings and others in being admitted
- Potential decrease in support to children with additional needs
- Lack of spaces at After School Club

Trinity's capacity

Trinity's notional capacity, on the Council's own figures, has been 415 for a large number of years. In the Council's recent paper on the closure, this has jumped up to 456, providing a further 41 notional "spaces" at Trinity. How has this been achieved? The Council has, while carrying out a survey for energy performance, reassessed Trinity and, without advising the school or Parent Council, decided that it can now accommodate 15 classrooms, rather than the previous 14 rooms. This would mean losing the science room, support for learning room and current library and IT suite.

At the same time, reassessment at Victoria has resulted in the *loss* of 54 spaces which would also have been available at this nearby school.

If the proposal goes through, and all Fort pupils move to Trinity, then using the Council's own 2008 figures (before this convenient change in capacity), Trinity will become **the most overcrowded school in Edinburgh**.

Unlike the other schools threatened with closure, there are no plans to make money by selling off the Fort site and it is also anticipated in the council's proposal that the school population in this area will *grow* by 150 places requiring that Fort be re-opened in the future.

Have your say now

Please let us have your responses as soon as possible to the questions below, either by using the tear-off slip below or by email. The cut-off date for responses is Wednesday 24 June. For email contact mail@trinityparentcouncil.org.uk.

Please also write to the Director of Children and Families, Gillian Tee, Waverley Court, 4 East Market Street, Edinburgh EH8 8BG or email her at Gillian.tee@edinburgh.gov.uk. Please copy in your local Councillors (City Chambers High Street, Edinburgh EH1 1YJ) steve.cardownie@edinburgh.gov.uk; cammy.day@edinburgh.gov.uk; allan.jackson@edinburgh.gov.uk and Elaine.morris@edinburgh.gov.uk plus MPs – malcolm.chisholm.msp@scottish.parliament.uk & lazarowicz@parliament.uk

Please let them know your views on the proposal.

Please return this slip to the school

	Yes	No
Do you oppose any proposal that will result in a large increase in class sizes or overcrowding at Trinity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Yes	No
Do you think these proposals will result in large increases in class sizes or overcrowding at Trinity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Yes	No
Do you oppose the closure of Fort and offer of places at Trinity to all Fort pupils?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>