

FLEXI-SCHOOLING

A SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN PARENTS AND TEACHERS. A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE FOR ROSALIND at DUNINO PRIMARY SCHOOL, FIFE 1996 – 2003

Rosalind attended Dunino Primary School on a part time basis (flexi-schooling) for seven years. In Primary One she came to school one and a half days a week. In Primary Seven she was in school for three and a half days each week. The arrangement was flexible. At Christmas time for instance if the school was putting on a show, Rosalind would invariably have spent more time in school. Conversely if extra opportunities arose out of school Rosalind spent more time out of school.

Her progress in school proved very successful. She played an active part in school life and managed her work programme creatively.. She also enjoyed a range of learning experiences out of school. There have never been any problems or difficulties attached to the arrangements between Rosalind's parents and the school. The flexi-schooling arrangements agreed for Rosalind ensured that the interests and needs of the child were met, and that the Education Authority and the parents had satisfied provisions laid down in the Education Act.

Flexi-schooling is, in my opinion, a radical and exciting way forward in education.

Some of the advantages for children and parents of the option of flexi-schooling:

- Children can be in school for as much or as little of the week as suits their particular style of learning and stage of development;
- Children can benefit from individual tuition from people outside school and self-directed learning at home, while also enjoying group activities and different tuition at school;
- Education is placed more firmly in the hands of the child as it may be oriented much more to her/his interests, needs, abilities, rhythms, dreams and aspirations;
- Children can learn in and from a wider range of environments;
- Children can benefit from mixed age learning;
- Parents can continue to learn with their children to a greater degree;
- Parents can retain responsibility for their children's education;
- Children are more highly motivated while at school for shorter hours;
- Teachers with fewer children to teach at any one time are able to adopt a more co-operative mode of instruction.