

July 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Thank you for your comments as part of the wider consultation process regarding a change to the school day. Below is an overview of the responses and questions raised. Under questions raised I have taken the opportunity to try and alleviate concerns by providing more precise and full details. In total we received 12 responses;

The questions raised can be grouped together as follows and we have provided responses accordingly:

Does having a shorter day mean shorter lesson time?

No, lesson time still remains the same with 5 x 1-hour lessons each day.

With lessons starting at 8.25am what are the arrangements for tutor time?

Tutor time will be put alongside break so that approximately half the school are on break whilst the other half are in tutor time. We then swap over. Break and tutor time start at 10.25am and 10.40am respectively. Break is 15 minutes long and tutor time is 20 minutes. Now that the rest of the structure of the day is confirmed I have put a copy of the school day in full below.

Tutor time is an important part of our school provision and is an incredibly valuable part of a student's experience. The 5 sessions, each lasting 20 minutes, provide an opportunity for students to feel part of the tutor group, build a relationship with their peers and tutor and also be an opportunity to receive and be part of assemblies which we anticipate being in person as much as possible.

There was some confusion about the length of period 5.

Period 5 will last one hour and will finish at 2.30pm

Will the lunch period 12.30pm to 1.00pm split lessons as my daughter/son has had their PE lesson split. Every effort is made to avoid practical lessons being split when we put together the timetable.

A couple of comments discussed the final lunch sitting starting at 1.30pm and this being too late.

The final lunch sitting starts at 1.00pm and finishes at 1.30pm. If this was confused or unclear in the first letter we apologise. In addition we will ensure the students who are on the last lunch sitting have the second breaktime to try and spread out their breaks.

A copy of the school day is below for your information

THE ACADEMY DAY	
All students should be in school at 8.15 am.	
PERIOD 1 & 2	
Period 1	8.25 am – 9.25 am
Period 2	9.25 am – 10.25 am
VMG/ Assembly	
10.25 am – 10.45 am	
BREAK	
10.45 am – 11.00 am	
Period 3 & 4	
Period 3	11.00 am – 12 noon
Period 4	1 Hour
Lunch: ½ hour	
12 Noon – 12.30 pm	
12.30 pm – 1.00 pm	
1.00 pm – 1.30 pm	
Period 5 & Enrichment	
Period 5	1.30 pm – 2.30 pm
After School Enrichment	2.30 pm – 3.30 pm

Questions were asked about the amount of food available and the choice available during the final lunch sitting.

This is something we will be working with both our students and the catering team to develop through Student Voice as we come out of the restrictions schools have had to work within, during this pandemic.

Is enrichment compulsory and what will the range of activities look like?

Whilst the school day finishes at 2.30pm, learning does not, and students can attend optional Enrichment activities from 2.30-3.30pm, and in some cases beyond. We believe students should have the opportunity to try new sports and interests, or work on catching up in subjects, at a time when they are still fresh. On Tuesdays, staff have two hours of training time from 2.45 – 4.45pm so there are less Enrichment activities on that evening.

We cannot make enrichment compulsory because it is not a timetabled lesson. However, due to the staggering lunchtimes and the fact that lessons will be going on in some parts of the school, there are no lunchtime activities over and above the library being available. Therefore, all the sporting clubs, creative activities, hobby based clubs in addition to a wider range of academic activities are available during enrichment.

There is a great deal of encouragement for students to attend and as students progress through the years there is a greater emphasis on academic enrichment as you would expect. We will publish a full programme of enrichment stating rooms and staff members running the enrichment once they are confirmed in the first couple of weeks of the term. Students who attend are registered so we know who is on site and we celebrate students staying for enrichment by using the registers to complete one of our 10 pledges.

It is fair to say enrichment this year has been a challenge and we look forward to being able to put on a wide, varied and vibrant offer.

The proposed 2.30pm finish time is too early for me to be able to pick my son/daughter up from school.

In addition to the enrichment programme the library will be open every day until 3.30pm. This allows an opportunity for any student who needs to wait to be productive either engaging in an activity or completing school work. It also ensures there is a safe, supervised space for a student to wait until their parents/carers are able to pick them up.

A question has been raised about COVID catch up funding and opportunities for students to collaborate and socialise away from screens

We are planning how best to use the catch up funding to have the maximum impact. However, in addition to this we are also aware of screen time and how much of that students have had this year and last. In September we are looking forward to returning to the use of collaborative learning structures in school. These structures, there are actually 23 of them, allow for students in groups of 4 to work together in a variety of planned ways to discuss learning, problem solve and justify explanations as a team when asked. Use of tools such as our random student selector and random group selector encourages students to be fully engaged and focused in their learning and for all students to learn from each other and take a leadership or mentoring role in learning too. Not only is this effective in allowing teachers to check understanding but it really helps increase self-esteem as praise and recognition of contributions is hugely encouraged. They also encourage socialisation, teamwork and cooperation skills and are hugely enjoyable for students and staff to be a part of. We are really excited to return to collaborative learning structures which will be a very new feature for the staff and students here at the academy.

Having read through all the responses and responded above, I hope that this letter offers some clarity on points raised.

I can confirm that the proposed school day will be implemented from the start of next term.

Yours sincerely



Mr I Cooper
Head of School