



Re: School Day Arrangements 2022/23

Thank you to all members of the school community who responded to the Governors' consultation (May 2022) regarding a proposed change to the school day for the next (academic) year. In response to some of the queries received regarding the proposal, the school has put together the following responses, which it is hoped will be of use and interest.

'Frequently asked questions'

Why is the school making these changes now? Over the last two plus years, the school day and other operations have been built around a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, notably including the necessity to keep year groups apart and in 'bubbles'. These measures are no longer formally required, although it should be noted that schools might need to reintroduce them should there be a significant outbreak of COVID-19 or similar in the future. The control measures that have been in place have inevitably impacted upon staff capacity and the smooth day to day running of the school. The school is therefore seeking to build its arrangements once more around what is believed is best for pupils' learning and welfare.

Have pupils been asked for their views regarding the changes? Yes – pupils, parents, carers and staff were all invited to contribute their views to the Governors' consultation. A number of pupils of different ages took part in focus groups looking at and shaping the proposal. The Headteacher wrote to all parents (23 May 22) asking them to discuss the proposal with their child and contribute their family's feedback to the Governors' consultation.

Given the changes, will there be enough time for my child to purchase snacks and/or a hot lunch from the canteen? Prior to 2020, all pupils in the school had their break (20 minutes) and lunch times at the same time and the canteen staff were able to facilitate this in the time available. The school is retaining a split lunch time for key stage three and key stage four pupils (with younger pupils having an earlier lunch time). Both the canteen and TCC serveries will be in operation using the efficient cashless payment system, and the school will also be opening an additional 'snack shack' facility in October which will be situated outside of the main hall. The canteen will now also be open from 08:00 to 08:30 so that pupils can purchase a snack before school starts should they so wish; and a simple breakfast option will now be available. Older pupils in particular have asked whether there could be an option for them to make purchases at 14:45 to 15:00 and the school is exploring if this might be possible in the future.

Will my child have less formal learning time? Pupils will continue to have 5 lessons each day, each of 60 minutes duration i.e. there is no change to formal lesson time. Tutor time has been extended by five minutes to support the effective delivery of PDL (personal development learning), assembly and other interventions/activities that support pupils' learning and pastoral needs. School now starts at 08:35 and so pupils are advised to be on site five minutes prior to this.

Will after school activities such as clubs and music classes start earlier? Yes – the intention is that the majority of after school activities, including those events that include parents, will start proportionally earlier. Pupils tell us that they generally prefer clubs after school as they have more time to get prepared and involved, in particular when they need to get changed for sport or are doing time dependent activities such as cooking or science experiments. The COVID-19 pandemic limited the extra-curricular activities available for pupils and this is an area which the school is keen to re-establish with pupils.

Is Period 6 only for Year 11 Pupils? No – Period 6 is a local term that we use for the hour after formal lessons conclude. It applies to all extra-curricular activity offered to pupils of all ages, and so there are Period 6 clubs as well as Period 6 revision classes, for example. In the vast majority of cases, Period 6 is optional; however, there is precedent of formal lessons being scheduled in this time for specific GCSEs and pupils and their parents would be informed if this were the case.

Is it correct that the split lesson has been removed as my child has found continuity of learning difficult during this lesson? Yes – there are no split lessons in the new arrangements.

Why do we need to continue with specific year group entrances? It has been helpful to designate specific year group entrances to manage pupils' entrance and exit from school in a more orderly fashion, hence it has been retained. However, now that COVID-19 control measures are not required as they were, if a pupil has a particular reason for using a different gate, e.g. walking home with a sibling from a different year group or living very close by to a specific gate, then they may use the alternative gate.

If my child chooses to attend a Period 6 club, what do they do for 15 minutes from 14:45? The end of the school day is a busy time and we find that pupils (and staff) simply need a few minutes to conclude/pack away their Period 5 lesson, take a comfort break and get to where they need to be next, change for sport etc. Pupils should remain on site and simply get themselves organised for their next activity; staff will advise if they can start earlier.

How will any gained directed time for staff be allocated? Where applicable, gained time for teaching and support staff will be allocated to running targeted interventions and towards additional meeting times with parents/carers.

Will the arrangements be reviewed? Yes – the arrangements will be kept under constant review with Governors planning to discuss arrangements again early in the new year. External factors including issues of public health and Government requirements will continue to be considered.