



30th November, 2018

Dear Parent / Guardian,

I am writing to consult you with regard to lengthening the school day from September 2019. Pupils would be required to be in school from 8:30am but the day would end at 3:30pm rather than the current time of 3:00pm. The duration of break and lunchtime would remain the same.

This modest increase would allow us much greater flexibility in providing a broader offer, whilst retaining everything we already do. This would include additional subject options at GCSE, dedicated curriculum time to support priorities such as 'healthy minds' and more teaching time for English and maths at GCSE.

An additional 30 minutes may seem modest but the time gained within the day achieves a great deal of flexibility. Although the amount of learning hours across the year will increase, to partly compensate, the school will provide additional holiday in the autumn and summer terms. Extensive extra-curricular programmes, including trips, will focus on providing enrichment and pupils would be encouraged to embrace these additional opportunities.

If you have any comments or questions with regard to the changes please do contact the school before the end of term.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Phil Ingram
Acting Headteacher

Frequently asked questions:

1. Why are you proposing this?

Mainly because a longer day will enable us to fit in more subjects and broaden our curriculum. In recent years the demands of government around league tables has meant that the curriculum in many schools has been narrowed to "major subjects" like maths, English, science, humanities and MFL. This has left less time for other important subjects like art, music, etc. These changes will give us the time to broaden our curriculum and enrich the education of our young people.

2. Will this mean that students get less teaching time?

No. Pupils will get more teaching time but more importantly there will be greater flexibility to deliver a broader curriculum.

3. Will this lead to a decline in standards?

No. If we thought that it would have a negative impact on standards we would not be proposing this change. In fact both schools have seen improvements in performance over the last 4 years and we anticipate this continuing.

4. How do teachers feel about the proposed change?

We have already consulted our teachers and they are very supportive because they realise that although it means more teaching hours they will be able to teach a much broader curriculum and they feel as professionals that it will yield better results.

5. Will the extra time put more pressure on students through a longer day?

We don't believe so because students will have a curriculum with much greater variety, with many more opportunities to pursue their own individual interests and express their creativity. Each day will be very different. We believe that this will actually have a positive effect on student wellbeing.

6. Will the longer teaching day lead to the decline in standards because teachers won't be able to give their best over a longer day?

No. Because we would aim to timetable our day to take as much pressure off teachers as possible. We would be employing more teachers and planning time would increase.

7. Are the extra holidays a good thing?

We think so because we believe this can be done whilst making the school better. The extra holidays will allow parents (at last!) to claim some cheaper family holidays and save a lot of money. It will also remove the temptation for parents to take their child out of school during term time, something which still happens occasionally and which causes real problems between a few parents and the school as well as damaging children's education.

8. My child has siblings in another school. Can anything be done about this?

We will be consulting our partner primaries to see if we can sought any alignment to help with this issue.