



WKN JAN02

Monday 9 January 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Times of the Day

I am writing to provide further details regarding the college's decision to change the times of the day and to explain the research and philosophy underpinning this change. We want to reassure you that this decision is based on strong evidence, which supports improved learning and behaviour across a large number of schools nationally, that this will and already has been a positive move for the college.

The two short breaks have been implemented through consultation with students and staff, and is backed up by research that it is better for the learning environment of the school. In some IT lessons students were given a questionnaire, all tutors were asked to gather votes from tutees and the Year 11 elected Student Heads of House were consulted at length. In addition, teachers were given both a forum to express their opinion and then vote. The college also did a consultation on the timings of the school day last academic year regarding moving to a 2:2:1 lesson structure, which came out overwhelmingly in favour of making the change – this is in line with 90% of other schools in the country and is backed up by a lot of research regarding positive learning.

It is important to note that the amount of break time is exactly the same as before – 1 hour and 10 minutes; previously split into a short 20 minute break in which students felt rushed with regards to buying food, and a longer 50 minute lunch. Lessons still remain 5 one hour lessons with two 35-minute breaks. The reason why we have split the time equally between break one and two is because it does give a chance for students to eat at either point. 73% of our students travel very long distances to and from school which means that data provided from the canteen and student voice told us that the majority of students were eating at first break but did not have enough time to eat. Hot and cold food is served at both break times and all students have been able to get food in time as we have been monitoring this very closely.

Many successful schools, including in our new academy partner and a number of good local schools, use the day structure that we moved to last week, as this enables a focus on teaching at key times of the day; reduces the length of learning after the final break to just one session which results in more focused learning across the afternoon. Clubs will continue to run in break 2 and staff will be innovative in how these run. Students can also choose to eat in break 1 allowing them to go straight into activities in break 2, whilst many clubs allow students to eat while attending.

We will continue to monitor this change and its impacts carefully over this term to ensure that it is making the improvements that we are wanting to happen and will then respond to this evaluation if necessary.

Yours faithfully,

Ralph Wickenden

Deputy Principal