



26 May 2022

Dear Parent / Carer

## HAVE YOUR SAY! – PART 1

As we reach the end of this first summer half term, I want to give you the opportunity to feedback on a couple of developments that we hope to make shortly, to improve provision for our students.

The first is regarding changing the school day in order to meet Government requirements around in-school contact time for students. In the White Paper released in March, the Government outlined their expectation that, by September 2023, all students must be in school for 32.5 hours each week. Paragraph 59 of the White Paper states:

*We will introduce a minimum expectation on the length of the school week of 32.5 hours (the current average) for all mainstream state-funded schools. We will expect all mainstream state-funded schools to work towards meeting this expectation as soon as possible and by September 2023 at the latest.*

Our current school week leaves us 25 minutes short and so we wish to take steps to address this as soon as possible. All other Trust schools are either already meeting this expectation or will be moving to it in time for this September, adding to our desire to make this change now. We are therefore proposing starting the school day 5 minutes earlier at 8.40 am. This seems like the least amount of change for the maximum impact, as buses will remain largely unchanged. This model also means we keep lunchtime where it currently is, and for the same duration, and students will still finish at 3.10 pm, allowing time in the afternoon / evening for extracurricular activities both onsite and offsite. Lesson times will remain one hour in duration, but tutor time will be lengthened and we will use this slightly longer period of time to implement a reading programme and associated activities to enhance cultural capital.

We explored other alternatives to enable us to meet Government expectations, such as lengthening one day a week by 25 minutes and also by finishing 5 minutes later each day instead. Both these options meant that there would be considerable impact on the arrangement of the school day, ranging from two afternoon sessions (which is never popular) to a completely different structure to the day, with different routines, once a week. Following significant consideration, we have settled on the slightly earlier start time of 8.40 am daily, finishing as is currently the case, at 3.10 pm.

If you wish to make a comment on this proposal, please use the email address below:

[newschooldayconsultation@southdartmoor.devon.sch.uk](mailto:newschooldayconsultation@southdartmoor.devon.sch.uk)

This inbox will be checked regularly for your feedback. Consultation will close at 9.00 am on Friday 15 July 2022 and I will write to you the following week to confirm arrangements for the new academic year during the last week of term.

The second area in which we would like your feedback is regarding uniform. The Student Council has worked really hard to put together a proposal for your consideration and this will be coming to you shortly as '**Have your say! - Part 2**'. Please be assured that whatever we decide to do regarding uniform, there will be a significant period of time in which it will be rolled out. The new uniform, when it is decided upon, will be phased in over at least a year, enabling students to grow out of old uniform and preventing additional purchases of clothing that might only be worn short-term. Please also be assured that cost has been our main driver, so the proposal will be considerably cheaper than what is currently required. Opportunity to consult will happen immediately after half term.

Cont/d ...

Wishing you a relaxing and hopefully sunny half term break.

Best wishes



Mrs Jen Veal  
Executive Head teacher

---

Trust    Respect    Equality    Excellence

South Dartmoor Community College & Atrium Studio School is part of the Westcountry Schools Trust which is a Limited Company registered in England and Wales. Company Number: 07398467. Registered address: Harford Road, Ivybridge, Devon, PL21 0JA

