

23rd March 2018

Dear parents and carers,

Changing the School Day: Consultation

I am writing to you as part of a consultation process to make changes to the school day. The changes, alongside the rationale for change and timescales are set out below. We would like to take on board your views before putting in place any changes for September 2018. This consultation is also taking place at Sir Bernard Lovell (SBL) Academy and IKB Academy as we share learning GCSE and A Level classes.

In summary, the proposal seeks to ensure:

1. A shorter lunch than the current 1 hour;
2. A finish time that is different from both Chandag Infant and Chandag Junior Schools (3.25pm and 3.15pm respectively);
3. A tutor time at the start rather than in the middle of the day;
4. A day which continues to allow for shared provision at KS4 with IKB Academy and at KS5 with both SBL and IKB;
5. Allowing more time at the end of the day for extra-curricular activities and revision sessions but still allowing for students to get home at an appropriate time;
6. There is no loss of learning time as there will still be five, one hour teaching periods delivered over the course of the day;
7. Securing visitors and speakers for assemblies will be easier.

Why change the school day from its current format?

The need for change has been agreed by the school's leadership team as a result of the following:

Student voice

I have repeatedly been asked both formally by the student council and informally by many students to shorten the length of lunchtime. Initial student focus groups have confirmed that the vast majority of students would favour a shorter lunch.

Student progress & attainment

It is my responsibility to ensure that students are ready and prepared to learn in all lessons and that time is focussed on this objective. The current 60 minute lunch time has some students running around playing football without rest, and others sitting around, sometimes getting bored. Neither ensure that students are focussed and ready to learn Period 5.

Research of other schools

Very few secondary schools have such a long lunch break as Wellsway's current model. Out of all the 30 secondary and studio schools in Bath and South Gloucestershire, there are only two other schools with an hour lunch break.

Student behaviour

We strive for the highest standards of conduct from our students and our records from Friday lunchtimes demonstrate that reducing the length of the lunch break will reduce the number of behaviour incidents which occur during this time and maintain student focus on learning in the afternoon.

Tutor time at the start of the day

By moving tutor time to the start of day, it will allow the school's pastoral team to deal with any issues that have happened the previous day or overnight more effectively without disrupting students' learning in lesson time. It will also allow for our more vulnerable students to meet with their learning mentor or other agencies supporting them in order to prepare them for the school day ahead. Furthermore, it allows the school to reinforce key expectations around uniform and coming to school equipped at the start of the day rather than in the middle.

The tutor period will remain an opportunity for a weekly House Assembly to introduce key themes & reinforce our core values in addition to giving out key notices and to meet individual students to discuss their progress, which we feel would achieve better results and have more impact at the start of the day.

Finally, it ensures that any punctuality issues that can be caused by rush hour traffic disruptions, especially with students on buses, do not impact on lesson time.

How will we ensure the changes are made smoothly without disruption?

In deciding the new timings, we have considered the following aspects of school life:

Dining facilities

We currently run a 30 minute lunch on a Friday during which we are able to serve all the students wanting to purchase hot food. Therefore, we are confident 35 minutes would be sufficient time to serve all students. We will continue to run a slightly extended lunch for the first two weeks of the academic year for the new Year 7 students to ease their transition into secondary school.

Assemblies at the start of the day

In order to set up for assemblies in both Mendip Hall and Lansdown Hall, we have to clear these spaces 15/20mins before the end of lunch. This is a period of time where students have limited places to go, which is a problem in the cold and wet months. Assembly at the start of the day removes this issue and will ensure that the halls can be used for eating for the whole of lunch in the same way they are at break.

Impact on extra-curricular activities

We are committed to extra-curricular provision and have considered the impact the change may have on student uptake of these opportunities. We currently have a greater amount of activities running after school than during lunch and attendance at many lunchtime clubs is poor. By finishing at 3.30pm as we currently do, clubs end in the dark in the winter months and it is a late finish for both students and staff. Our commitment to running after school activities remains unchanged and I believe that an earlier finish time will allow staff the opportunity to run further after school clubs.

Aligning our end of the day with other local secondary schools will also help the arrangement of sporting fixtures. Currently students are occasionally withdrawn early from Period 5 which would be less likely in this model.

From a safety perspective, it will also mean students having fewer days where they travel home from school in the dark, especially when attending an after school activity, which we hope will lead to increased participation.

Finish time of local schools

For safety reasons we have deliberately structured the proposed school day to ensure a finish time that is different from both Chandag Infant and Chandag Junior Schools (3.25pm and 3.15pm respectively). By finishing at 3.00pm we shall ensure that the school buses and most vehicles will be clear from Chandag Road before the primary schools finish.

Buses

We shall consult with the bus companies but we are confident that they will be able to accommodate these changes from September 2018 as they are already able to provide their service on a Friday as well as the termly early closures (at 2.45pm) to facilitate subject network meetings.

Proposed New Timings

Activity	Monday - Friday	
	Lesson start	Lesson end
a.m. Registration (assemblies)	8.45am	9.05am
Lesson 1	9.05am	10.05am
Lesson 2	10.05am	11.05am
Break	11.05am	11.25am
Lesson 3	11.25am	12.25am
Lesson 4	12.25pm	1.25pm
Lunch	1.25pm	2.00pm
Lesson 5 (p.m. registration)	2pm	3.00pm

Consultation Arrangements

The Scheme of Delegation (available on the school website) states that the Academy Governance Committee (previously known as the Local Governing Body) be consulted on any proposed changes to the school day. Under the Scheme of Delegation it is for the Executive Team to make the decision on any proposed changes to the timing of the school.

Alongside this consultation with parents & carers there will also be consultation with members of the Academy Governance Committee, students, staff and other stakeholders running concurrently.

To ensure the shared provision across our family of Trust schools is maintained at KS4 and KS5 the proposed timings of the school day have been formulated through discussion with our sister schools, IKB Academy and SBL Academy and we all agree that what is being proposed meets the needs of all schools. As such there will be similar consultations running at these schools over the same period.

If you would like to share your views, please complete this online form:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/NFTFNKJ>.

The consultation period will end at 12pm on Wednesday 18th April 2018. We will then consider the comments and will inform all stakeholders of the outcome before the end of Term 5 to facilitate any changes that may occur from September 2018.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Woodville', written in a cursive style.

Matthew Woodville
Principal