

School Day arrangements

Background

School day arrangements were a real focus of our improvement planning in 2019 and, after careful consideration, we decided to make a two-step change across 2019-20:

- from six 50-minute lessons per day to five 60-minute lessons per day
- from a 2-2-2 periods per day model with two 50-minute lessons after lunch to a 2-2-1 period model with one 60-minute lesson after lunch

This model is one that fits better with our focus on effective learning, and time in lessons for retrieval, and one that we have seen adopted with good effect in other schools. It also allowed us to decrease teaching and learning time after lunch by 40 minutes, rather than increasing this by 20 minutes.

We have been pleased with the move from 50 to 60-minute lessons, which was step one of this approach...but, as with so many other things, Covid interrupted our plans for the second step of this implementation for September 2020.

Key benefit of this school day arrangement

Our experience is that teaching and learning are less 'effortful' before lunch allowing more effective learning to occur.

What do we need to consider to support this school day arrangement

It is important that students have regular breaks and opportunities to eat interspersed across the school day. Pre-Covid our students made greater use of High Options before school for breakfast.

As we move into September 2023 we will be:

- encouraging students to have breakfast in High Options should they wish to between 8.15am and 8.35am
- serving food across more outlets during break
- serving food across more outlets during lunchtime and extending lunchtime by 5 minutes
- improving our food offer

Moving from year zones, and improving our social spaces, allow us to offer more opportunities for our students to buy food (and eat their own food) during their social time. We will also be organising our social zones in line with the preferences of our students which they have shared with us in our student survey.

We are aware of a number of schools who operate this model successfully, but we will keep it under close review and also consider whether there are any ways that we can make further amendments that improve the experience for our students.

Feedback from our students, parents/carers and teachers continues to be welcomed and valued as we work together to get it right for our students.

Ms R E Powley, Headteacher