

Haggerston School

Aspiration, Creativity, Character

Headteacher's Newsletter - 3rd Dec 2018

Dear Parents/Carers,

Every year, during the Autumn Term, we review our curriculum. Last year, the focus of the review was on our GCSE options and whether we should move to a Year 8 options process. You may have taken part in this consultation. As a result of that process, we introduced a partial Year 8 options process but retained Year 9 options for the majority of subjects. We also introduced GCSE pathways so that subject choices are tailored for student abilities.

This year, we have been reviewing the timings of the school day and also looking at our PSHCE provision and trips offer and how these might be improved. The main issues we are looking to solve are:

- More curriculum time is needed for Science GCSE, particularly Separate Science GCSEs.
- Although we have extended our enrichment offer this year, we still have limited take up from students and want to find a way to build enrichment into the school day, so that all students in KS3 take part.
- Period 6 lessons (3.15-4.15pm) are currently compulsory for students studying some GCSE subjects. We also run intervention for Year 11 students during Period 6. We would like to build in intervention sessions earlier for students so that issues with progress are dealt with as they arise, rather than in Year 11 when students are already under increased pressure.
- Our tutor time is only 15 minutes per day. This means that assemblies often run over into lesson time and tutors have minimal time for pastoral support. We would like to extend this time so that tutors have greater contact time with students, especially in the younger year groups, and are able to provide meaningful guidance around pastoral care and progress.
- We currently run 3 'drop down' PSHCE days per year group across the school year. We would like to increase the number of days and also use these days to incorporate more trips.

The following proposal for changes to the timings and structure of the school day enable us to achieve the improvements identified above and we feel that students will have a more rounded educational experience as a result. The key changes would be:

- The school day would continue to start at 8.45am but would finish slightly later, at 3.25pm on Mondays-Thursdays and earlier, at 2.30pm, on Fridays.
- Lessons would be 55 minutes long instead of 60 minutes.
- All students in Years 7-9 would have one period of enrichment built into their timetable. They would be able to elect their co-curricular option from a list of available activities such as Engineering, STEM, Dance, Cooking, Painting, etc. This would take place on Tuesday afternoons from 2.30-3.25pm.
- All Year 10 and 11 students would be given one period of intervention in a subject area they need more support in. These allocations would change termly depending on assessment data but students would be consistently attending this additional tuition built into the school day on Tuesdays 2.30-3.25pm.
- Increase in drop down days for PSHCE to ensure thorough coverage of the curriculum and to allow more trips to take place without incurring additional curriculum damage or staff absence.

- Tutor Time would be delivered in extended 55 minute sessions and there would be different time allocations depending on the school phase. In the lower years, time with tutors would be maximised as students are settling in and developing independent learning skills. As students progress up the school, tutor time would be gradually reduced to maximise curriculum time in subjects. See below for details:

Phase	Weekly Tutor Time Allocation	What would be included?
Lower school - Years 7&8	3 x 55 minute tutor periods	Assembly (25 mins) 2 reading sessions (1 independent and 1 shared -25 mins each) A 25 minute Pledge session (our character programme) A 55 minute supervised study session or Prep (students would complete some of their homework during this time)
Upper School- Year 9	2 x 55 minute tutor periods	Assembly (25 mins) 1 independent reading session A 55 minute supervised study session or Prep (students would complete some of their homework during this time)
Upper School - Years 10 & 11	1 x 55 minute tutor period	Assembly (25 mins) A 30 minute tutor session

Timings of the School Day:

Current School Day:	8.45-9am Registration	Proposed changes to School Day:	8.45-9.40am Period 1
	9-10am Period 1		9.40-10.35am Period 2
	10-11am Period 2		10.35-10.55am Morning Break
	11-11.20 Morning Break		10.55-11.50am Period 3
	11.20-12.20 Period 3		11.50-12.45pm Period 4
	12.20-1.20 Period 4		12.45-1.35pm Lunchtime
	1.20-2.15 Lunchtime		1.35-2.30pm Period 5 (school would finish at 2.30pm on Fridays)
	2.15-3.15 Period 5		2.30-3.25pm Period 6 (Monday - Thursdays only) Tutor time /Enrichment/Intervention/
	3.15-4.15 Intervention/Clubs/Extra lessons		

We feel that these changes will give us a more sustainable model where enrichment and intervention are available to all students and not just a privileged few. Although the school day would be slightly longer on Monday to Thursday, we feel that the earlier finish on a Friday would be beneficial for students' concentration as they are often more tired towards the end of the week. The earlier break and lunchtimes will also help students to manage their energy levels and concentration. If we were to move to this new model, we would reduce detention time by ten minutes so that these do not run later than they currently do.

Some special activities would still run outside of these times, such as sports fixtures or rehearsals for school productions, but the majority of enrichment would be included in the elective offer. We have already consulted with staff on these changes and feel that the reduction of lessons to 55 minutes will lead to increased pace and purpose in lessons and won't impact on students' progress. Furthermore, this model allows us to allocate an extra period per week to Science in Years 9-11, ensuring there is enough time to cover the new curriculum.

We recognise that there is increased pressure on students to perform academically and want to ensure that time is also explicitly given to equip students with the skills they will need to succeed, such as reading and study skills, while also devoting enough time to educating students about wellbeing, healthy lifestyles and pastoral care.

The link below allows parents to comment on the changes and express your views as part of a consultation. If you would like to contribute, please complete the survey by Wednesday 12th December. The views of parents, staff and students will then be considered by Governors and I will write to you in due course to let you know the outcome of this process. Any changes would be brought in for September 2019.

<https://goo.gl/forms/5tL55WkOly2E9dPu2>

Kind regards



Ciara Emmerson
Headteacher