

Dear Parents/carers

Change to the school day: Consultation

I am writing to you as part of a consultation process to make changes to the school day as part of our plan to continue to improve the quality of provision of education at Atherton Community School. The decision to consider the proposal at this stage of the schools development is for a number of reasons that the leadership at Atherton Community School believe are of significance for the students. We would like to take on board your views before putting in place any changes for September 2019.

Rationale

Safeguarding our students is something that we take incredibly seriously. Currently Atherton Community School is the only school in the area where students leave at 4pm. This poses safeguarding concerns for our younger students, in particular in the winter months when the dark nights draw in.

Traffic is much lighter at 3pm and potential incidents involving the main road are less likely when large numbers of students are leaving school, whereas at 4pm, local work traffic is starting to build up. A reduction in the amount of students leaving at this time would greatly reduce the risk of this occurring.

At present the school is unable to attend sports fixtures as they currently all take place within our school day whereas the other schools in the area have already finished. We intend to offer voluntary clubs to our KS3 and year 10 students which, along with the sports fixtures would allow those students who are interested in clubs and extracurricular activities to thrive with likeminded peers.

Good GCSE's are (amongst other things) an extremely important outcome for a student when leaving secondary school. A 3pm finish for our year 7 to 10 students would allow focused support for each year 11 student. They would receive intervention within their personal areas for development with a vastly improved student:teacher ratio.

Recruitment and retention of strong staff is an issue that every school in the country faces at present. This issue is compounded at ACS as the 4 o'clock finish has meant that the work life balance of teaching staff is affected and therefore it is more difficult to retain strong staff.

Teacher training and development is considerably difficult to deliver meaning this has a knock on effect to the quality of provision across the school. Staff at ACS are working well above the recommended 1265hr guidance from the government; we are therefore unable to ask staff to remain after 4pm. With the current finish time staff need to miss lessons and have cover to attend the Wigan school wide meetings as they start at 3.30pm.

The proposal

The change is different for 7-10 and year 11 based on the above rationale. The structure to the school day is below for your consideration.

Year 7 – 10

8:30 – 8:50 Registration
8:50 – 9:50 Period 1
9:50 – 10:50 Period 2
10:50 – 11:10 Break
11:10 – 12:10 Period 3
12:10 – 13:10 Period 4
13:10 – 13:50 Lunch
13:50 – 14:50 Period 5
14:50 Pupils finish for the day.

Year 11 (Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. On Thursday and Friday they will finish at 14.50)

8:30 – 8:50 Registration
8:50 – 9:50 Period 1
9:50 – 10:50 Period 2
10:50 – 11:10 Break
11:10 – 12:10 Period 3
12:10 – 13:10 Period 4
13:10 – 13:50 Lunch
13:50 – 14:50 Period 5
14:50 – 15:50 Period 6

Consultation Arrangements

The Board of Trustees and Local Academy Board will be considering this proposal and offering their views on the proposed change. Alongside the consultation with parents and carers there will also be consultation with students and staff running concurrently.

A consultation evening will be held at school on 29th January 2019 at 6pm, where a presentation by the Executive Headteacher and Headteacher will be given and there will be an opportunity for you to ask any questions regarding this process.

Should you wish to offer your views in writing, please address a letter to either Mr Layzell or Miss Povey at the school address.

The consultation period will end at 12pm on the 8th March 2019. The findings and all viewpoints of the consultation will be discussed and reviewed by the Executive Leaders of Chapel St Community School Trust and a decision will be relayed to parents and carers by the end of Term 5 2019.

Yours Sincerely

V J Povey

Executive Headteacher

Chapel St Community Trust