



## School Day Changes Proposal

### Summary

It is proposed to change the session start and finish times at St Matthew's CE Primary for all pupils. These changes will have no effect on the total number of teaching hours or number of school days.

### Context

Unlike the number of school days (190), there are no legal requirements as to the total length of school session times. Therefore, it is delegated to individual schools and their governing bodies to decide upon the start and end time of the school day. St Matthew's currently has one of the longest school days of all our local primary, infant and junior schools. Our school day begins at 8.55 and ends at 3.30. As a primary school, we also have to maintain the same start and finish times for all pupils to make school drop off and collection practical for families.

St Matthew's CE Primary current school day session times:

	Morning	Afternoon
Nursery <i>mornings only children</i>	8.55 – 11.55	-
Nursery <i>afternoon only children</i>	-	12:30 – 3.30
Nursery <i>full time</i>	8.55 – 11:30	1.00 – 3.30
EYFS	8.55- 11.30	1.00 – 3.30
KS1	8.55- 12.00	1.05 – 3.30
KS2	8.55 – 12.05	1.05- 3.30

In recent years, we have begun opening our classroom doors at 8.45 to encourage a calm and orderly start to the school day. This has proved to be very popular with children and families as all classes are almost full at 8.45. This means that, in effect, the school day has been unofficially extended by 10 minutes. An extra 31.6 hours a year.

The impact of this unofficial longer school day has been noted by staff as enormously beneficial in the mornings but challenging in the afternoons. Lesson observations show children in the morning session are more alert and engaged in their learning. The extra time has been used to encourage parents into class for our younger children and give older children time to consolidate prior learning before lessons begin.

However, learning outcomes are more inconsistent in the afternoons and nearly all behavioural incidents take place during long lunchtimes or in afternoon lessons. Feedback from children, parents and staff is that children are exhausted by the end of the day and their ability to learn is impeded.

With the school day ending as late as 3.30, it means many of our children and families are still walking home when it begins to get dark in the winter. Last year, one of our children was involved in a serious road traffic accident whilst walking home. This risk is increased during the dark winter months, which is why most secondary schools close earlier.



Furthermore, the current length of lunch time is long, particularly for our youngest children running from 11.30 to 1.00. This extended lunch break for the EYFS has always been in place to ensure:

- the infant and junior children have the same finish time
- Nursery morning and afternoon sessions are consistent

During our recent Ofsted inspection (May 2017) the lead inspector commented on the length of the EYFS and KS1 lunchtimes. She suggested we may wish to consider alternative options as a way of maximising teaching time.

Finally, this unofficial increase in the length of time teachers are responsible for the children has had an inevitable impact on their workload and wellbeing. Whilst the education and welfare of our children is always our primary concern, our ability to retain teachers and promote their wellbeing is important. The current unofficial, earlier start has created very long teaching sessions. As a smaller primary school, the workload burden is significantly greater for our teachers as they do not have partner year group teachers to work alongside. Working a longer taught day only compounds that burden further.

Therefore, I believe it to be in the best interests of the children and the school to alter the timings of the school day.

### Considerations

- Views of the children
  - As part of this consultation, children should be given the opportunity to share their thoughts and opinions. These should be taken seriously by governors and school leaders. *Article 12 United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child*
- Attendance
  - Attendance at school is improving and we would not want to take any action that might negatively impact on attendance. Most children are now in school earlier than the registration time because of the earlier, unofficial start time. However, there are families who are consistently late. These children often miss the beginning of lessons.
- Multiple-school families
  - Parents who have children at multiple schools may be impacted by these changes. Whilst this is less likely to be an issue for secondary school age children, parents who have children at different primary schools will need to adapt their drop off/pick up arrangements. There are currently four families who have children at multiple primary schools.
- Childcare
  - St Matthew's currently supports working families with a strong childcare offer. School is open from 8am until 6.20pm daily, along with the school holidays. Changes would need to be made to the start time of afterschool club. Breakfast club already ends at 8.45.
- Arrangements for parents
  - Routines for bringing and collecting children would need to change for many families. Therefore, any changes to the school day should be relatively small

to ensure most families only need to make minimal changes to adapt their routines to the new school day. New communication and information systems should also be considered to publicise all changes.

- Traffic and Parking
  - Congestion around St Matthew's would be affected by any changes to the school day. For example, an earlier finish would mean there would be no cross-over with parents arriving for afterschool lessons at Little Angels Swimming School (located next to school) which is currently an issue.
- School crossing patrol
  - The timings of the school cross will need to change to reflect any changes. Trafford Road Safety team will need to be consulted as part of the consultation in order that school crossing patrol staff patterns are altered to match any changes.
- School transport
  - Some children are eligible for free transport to schools provided by the local authority. We currently have no children eligible for this service.
- Lunch service
  - The current lunch service window is 1.5 hours. During this time all children taking a school meal (approximately 150 children a day) choose, receive and eat their school lunch. There are only short periods of 'down time' during the lunch service when dishwashing, cleaning and further preparation takes place. Any changes to the lunch break timings need to ensure there is sufficient time for the full service to take place.

## Objectives

To ensure any changes made to the school day impact positively on the education and wellbeing of our children, I have established the following objectives:

- To further improve pupil outcomes, wellbeing and behaviour
- To maintain or increase the length of taught sessions
- To reduce the length of the lunch break for children in the EYFS but maintain sufficient time for school lunches to be served.
- To maximise the educational benefits of an earlier start time and longer morning session
- To support teacher wellbeing with more realistic teaching sessions (not artificially extending day)
- To minimise disruption any changes would make to parents and other stakeholders



## Proposal

It is proposed to change the start time to 8.45, and for the school day to end at 3.10. Here is a breakdown of how both sessions would run for each key stage.

	Morning	Afternoon
Nursery mornings only children	<b>8.45 – 11.45</b>	
Nursery afternoon only children		<b>12:10 – 3.10</b>
Nursery full time	<b>8.45 – 11:30</b>	<b>12:30 – 3.10</b>
Reception	<b>8.45 - 11.40</b>	<b>12.40 – 3.10</b>
KS1	<b>8.45 - 12.00</b>	<b>12.55 – 3.10</b>
KS2	<b>8.45 – 12.10</b>	<b>1.00 - 3.10</b>

## Benefits

- All children who attend school full-time will continue to have the same school hours as each other, but with a reduced lunch break for most children. Other break times will be unaffected. The school day would be shortened by just 20 minutes which may make it easier for parents to adapt their pick-up plans and routine.
- An earlier start time allowing for a longer morning session. This would allow:
  - More teaching and learning time in the mornings when the children are best able to engage with their learning.
  - Make better use of the time from 8.45 to 8.55 when the majority of children are in school.
  - Opportunity for a morning assembly, which we do not currently have time for. This will also mean children who are late do not miss the start to key lessons and no key lessons have to move to the afternoons. Assembly time will be reduced to 20 minutes to ensure no teaching time is lost. Assemblies are currently at 3.00pm to avoid teaching children in the classroom when they are feeling the most tired.
- A reduced, staggered lunchtime
  - EYFS children will have more learning time with teaching staff.
  - Lunch timings can be staggered so current midday staff can be allocated to different playgrounds throughout their shift increasing pupil to adult ratios. This will hopefully reduce any behavioural incidents further.
  - Because of the staggered break, the total time for lunch service is only reduced by 10 minutes.
- An earlier finish time
  - Children and families can walk home in the daylight during the winter months. Also, children who attend afterschool clubs will be able to leave school in daylight.
  - Allow additional time at the end of the day for staff training, lesson preparation and meetings.
  - The end of the school day matches more closely our local primary and secondary schools.



- Afterschool club will be started earlier to support families with any childcare issues and extra-curricular activities will be increased to enhance the offer the school provides the children.

### Process

30.1.2018 - Consult with staff

30.1.2018 & 6.2.2018 - Consult with Governors at committee meetings

19.2.2018 - Consult with children using a questionnaire, assemblies and school council

19.2.2018 – Consultation letter sent to parents for feedback

19.2.2018 - Consult with other stakeholders

5.3.2018 - Consultation closes. Consultation feedback to be processed.

8.3.2018 – Final decision on consultation. Approval decision tabled for Governors at full board

Summer Term 2018- communication of new hours to families

1.9.2018 - Start date for new hours (subject to approval)

Mr T Johnson

**Headteacher**

22.1.2018