



Willow  
Academy

Alston Road, Bessacarr  
Doncaster DN4 7EZ

T: 01302 539249

E: [admin@willow.doncaster.sch.uk](mailto:admin@willow.doncaster.sch.uk)  
[www.willowacademy.org](http://www.willowacademy.org)

Headteacher: Mrs D Sumner

17<sup>th</sup> March 2017

### Consultation with Parents/ Carers: School Start and Finish Times, September 2017

Dear Parents and Carers

As part of the significant review and change taking place at Willow Academy, both I and the Interim Executive Committee (IEC) have decided to review the length and timings of the school day with effect from September 2017. This is to ensure our children have the most efficient school day which maximises the opportunities for learning for all and provides a positive learning environment for the children.

The proposal was initially presented to the IEC in January and was met with support for consultation about the proposed changes. All staff have been consulted and they unanimously support the proposal to streamline the day. The next stage of the consultation is to share the proposal with parents and carers.

We are proposing to streamline the school timetable to ensure that we provide clear teaching and learning sessions that give the children the optimum amount of time and opportunity to learn and progress and to reduce the lengthy playtime and lunchtimes.

We have one of the latest school finish times in Doncaster (3.40pm for Key Stage 2), certainly within our local primary schools and Hall Cross, who finish at 3.05pm. As the timetable currently stands, there are sessions in the day that are not conducive to the approach to learning we are striving to achieve and the playtimes are too long. This was also noted in the recent Ofsted inspection in November.

The second session after first break, for example, lasts 1 hour 15 minutes which is too short for two lessons but too long for one. For example, by slightly shortening the morning break and reducing the length of each lunchtime sitting by 5 minutes the session could include a 30 minute guided reading slot as well as a full hour of learning. Another example of restricted learning time is the last session after afternoon break, which for Key Stage 2 is only 50 minutes long including walking in from the playground, packing up time and collective worship/ PSHE time. The reduction in the length of lunchtime will support the significant improvements being made in children's behaviour.

By adjusting the sessions, removing the afternoon break and including a 5 minute 'brain break' it will ensure that another hour of more productive learning can take place at the end of the day. Feedback from teachers and staff confirms that the afternoon break currently interrupts the flow of the Imaginative Learning Project/ Topic learning and being so close to the end of lunchtime, is unnecessary.

By implementing the changes outlined above, we will be able to reduce the finishing time of the school day from 3.40pm (KS2) / 3.30pm (Reception and KS1) to 3.05 for Reception/KS1 and 3.15pm for Key Stage 2 whilst maximising the time for learning during the school day.



## **Proposal for September 2017**

### Start Time/ Morning:

- The school day for Reception to Year 6 will start at 9.00am (soft start entry for all children from 8.50am).
- We will continue to offer our already popular morning Multi-Skills however we will introduce a Breakfast Club to this provision from 8am.

### During the day:

- The internal school timetable will be slightly adjusted to ensure that there are better opportunities for teaching and learning. The children will continue to have daily Maths, Mental Maths/ Times Tables, Reading and Writing. Children will continue to have PE, RE, Imaginative Learning Project (Topic work) and Languages for Years 3 – 6.
- A 30 minute daily reading or phonics session will continue to be timetabled without impacting on other lesson time.
- Lunchtime will reduce from 1 hour and 15 minutes to 1 hour and 5 minutes (reducing each lunch sitting by 5 minutes).
- A 20 minute daily collective worship/ assembly/ PSHE session will be timetabled without impacting on lesson time. This session will be used to develop the children's personal, social, health education as well as their social, moral and cultural understanding of the world.
- Our children will continue to benefit from two PE lessons per week to encourage active, healthy lifestyles.
- A 5 minute 'brain break' will be incorporated into the afternoon session to provide children a quick, stimulating break if required.

### Finish time/ after school:

- The school day finish for Reception/ Year 1 & 2 will be staggered by 10 minutes to allow for parents or carers to pick up from Key Stage 2 but will not reduce any opportunities for learning. Reception/ Year 1 & 2 will finish at 3.05pm and Year 3 – 6 will finish at 3.15pm
- There will be an increase in the extended provision of after school clubs to support all parents and carers, particularly working families, and to encourage healthy active lifestyles. We also intend to provide a homework club. The clubs will run until 4.30pm each afternoon and will be suitable for children of all ages to attend. The costs of the clubs will be in line with current after school club prices.



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I recognise that some parents/carers may be dependent upon the school day to facilitate their own working routines however our decision must be based upon what we believe is best for the pupils in supporting them to maximise their potential at school. In respecting the working routines of parents/carers, I have ensured maximum notice is given to provide everyone reasonable time to make adjustments should there be a change in September 2017.

It is important that the IEC receives any parent's views as part of the consultation exercise we are undertaking. Once the consultation process is completed, the IEC will decide whether any or all of the changes to the school day will take place with effect from the start of the September 2017 academic school year.

If you wish to comment on the proposed changes to our school day, please complete the feedback form on the following link

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/KKGPG3K> or call in to the school office for a paper version of the survey. If you are unable to come in to collect a paper copy, please contact the school office who can post it to you.

An informal information session for parents and carers will take place on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> April at 4.30pm; any comments should be received by no later than Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2017 at 4pm.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs D Sumner

Headteacher, on Behalf of the Interim Executive Committee.



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The Department of Education advises the following in their 'Guidance for Schools on Attendance' issued in October 2014.

*'The decision to alter the School day will be taken by the Governing Body (in our case, the IEC) and the Senior Leadership Team – there is no legal requirement for consultation and agreement with any stakeholders, however, clearly it would be unwise not to.'*

#### School Day

*Every school day must have two sessions divided by a break. The length of each session, break and the school day is determined by the school's governing body. The governing body has the power to revise the length of the school day as it sees fit. There is no requirement to consult parents on revisions to the school day but it can assist parents to do so.*

#### Timescale

*We are proposing to give parents/carers and staff minimum of three months' notice prior to the start of the new arrangements which would commence at the beginning of the next school year.*