

Monday 12th July 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to share the outcome of the pilot Friday afternoon restructure which has been in operation throughout the summer term. Over the course of the last 12 weeks we have monitored the new Friday afternoon structure. We have surveyed staff, pupils and parents/carers to seek feedback on this timetable and how we can continue to improve the blended provision.

As such I am pleased to announce from September 2021, the new Friday afternoon structure will become a permanent change, and this letter sets out a few of the findings from our experience this term.

As expected the most constructive feedback we received was from our pupils – who is better placed to help us improve other than the pupils themselves? Out of a possible 210 responses we received 154 (73.3%); I would like to offer a special thank you to our Reception parents/carers, who took the time to complete the survey with their child. The pupils would like to see more of the following:

- More physical tasks – exercise based
- More cooking activities to do with parents
- More gardening tasks
- More arts and crafts
- More science

This feedback has been shared with staff and from September 2021, we will adapt the Friday blended learning offer to reflect these activities.

The significant majority of parents declared no concerns with the current timetable. Bespoke support will continue to be offered by the academy should any individual circumstances require this.

However, we were able to generate some helpful suggestions relating to the frequency of Doodle Maths and English, what constituted compulsory home-learning, what was deemed Friday blended learning provision and finally when learning was being set and when it should be completed. Leaders have met with staff and we will be implementing a simplified model from September 2021, so that it is easier for parents/carers to know what needs to be completed as home learning and what is optional.

- Home learning will be set on a Friday along with the blended learning offer – Home learning is to be completed by the following Monday as is the optional blended learning work, if pupils choose to engage with this.

- Timetable will be issued weekly, with the compulsory home learning in a green column, and the optional blended learning offer in an orange column.

For Example

Compulsory Home Learning	Optional Blended Learning
Reading x 3 over the course of the week reading diary to be checked in-school on a Monday	Doodle English – set task
Practice spellings	Gardening task – see the teacher video on class Dojo
15 minutes online times table practice	Joe Wicks workout – click the interactive link

During a Friday afternoon, pupils will be offered blended provision consisting of 2.5hrs worth of activities. Although this provision is optional it is highly recommended as it will enable all pupils to further their learning through a range of digital platforms and practical activities.

For our working parents (either where both parents work or, in the case of single parent families, the sole parent works) on-site provision will remain in place as it has during the pilot phase. The blended learning offer for these pupils will be completed onsite. As stated in the initial consultation, the DFE recommends face to face teaching time consisting of 25hrs per week, the new model provides 26.5hrs per week, exceeding the current recommendations. This does not include the breakfast club provision we offer or the afterschool clubs all of which are free.

As the Principal, I had an initial concern over a dip in attendance on a Friday afternoon, however, it quickly became apparent that we did not have a Friday afternoon attendance issue, in fact we had an extended weekend attendance issue, whereby Monday attendance was in fact lower than a Friday. This issue has been addressed and I am pleased to say we are now seeing a marked improvement in attendance on both a Monday and a Friday. We will continue to monitor this closely.

Further details on finishing times will be released later this week, following the recent government changes to COVID legislation, regarding staggered starts and finishes coming to an end in England.

Thank you for your ongoing support



Miss Hawkins
Principal

