



# ST. AIDAN'S

CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL

Dear Parent/Carer,

24<sup>th</sup> June 2024

## Timing of the School Day

Thank you to everyone who responded during the consultation period regarding the proposed changes to the timing of the school day. We read with interest all 167 responses and apologise that we are unable to respond separately to each of these. There were however some common themes to much of the feedback and so, after considering all of these, we have decided to make some changes to the original proposal. We have liaised closely with St John Fisher throughout the process to ensure that the agreed timings are suitable for both schools. Aligning the school day at both sites will strengthen the operational success of our Associated Sixth Form and allow this unique provision to continue.

Please see below the agreed timings which will take effect from September 2024. In the interest of transparency, we have included the current timings, what we sent out as the proposed timings, and the new confirmed timings as a result of considering all the consultation feedback.

<u>Current Timings</u>			<u>Proposed Timings (consultation)</u>			<u>New Timings from September 2024</u>		
8:45 – 9:10am	Form time/ PSHE/ Assembly	25 mins	8:45 – 8:55am	Check-in/ learning ready	10 mins	8:45 – 8:55am	Check-in/ learning ready	10 mins
9:10 – 10:10am	P1	60 mins	8:55 – 9:20am	WALK time	25 mins	8:55 – 9:15am	P1 WALK time	20 mins
10:10 – 11:10am	P2	60 mins	9:20 – 10:20am	P1	60 mins	9:15 – 10:15am	P2	60 mins
11:10 – 11:30am	Morning Break	20 mins	10:20 – 10:40am	Morning Break	20 mins	10:15 – 10:35am	Morning Break	20 mins
11:30 – 12:30pm	P3	60 mins	10:40 – 11:40am	P2	60 mins	10:35 – 11:35am	P3	60 mins
12:30 – 1:30pm	Lunch	60 mins	11:40 – 12:40pm	P3	60 mins	11:35 – 12:35pm	P4	60 mins
1:30 – 2:30pm	P4	60 mins	12:40 – 1:25pm	Lunch	45 mins	12:35 – 1:25pm	Lunch	50 mins
2:30 – 2:35pm	Travel time	5 mins	1:25 – 2:20pm	P4	55 mins	1:25 – 2:25pm	P5	60 mins
2:35 – 3:35pm	P5	60 mins	2:20 – 3:15pm	P5	55 mins	2:25 – 3:25pm	P6	60 mins

We had many responses that were in favour of the changes with people recognising the need to have a more formal structured session at the start of the school day; WALK time will allow us to implement a whole school literacy strategy and develop every student's transferable literacy skills through reading and oracy.

Headteacher: Mrs S Dover

It will also give us time to improve the way we deliver collective worship and develop our culture through the St Aidan's vision and values. Many of you recognised the importance of investing time into staff training and development to benefit the students and the quality of the education we provide. Finishing 10 minutes earlier each day will create over 30 hours across the year to the continued professional development of all staff.

We have categorised below some of the main concerns and comments raised in the responses and hope that you feel we have addressed these as best we can.

### **Buses**

Changes to the end of the day are minimal - bus companies are aware of the 10-minute earlier finish and have advised that they can work with these times. Many of the buses arrive on the school site at 3:15pm so will already be waiting for students. As happens currently, if the buses do arrive late (often due to traffic) students will be supervised in the sixth form café area where they can socialise, do homework, purchase refreshments, and use the facilities.

### **Lunchtime Catering**

Over the past few months, we have been working closely with our catering team to look at efficiencies that can be made to the serving time and the queuing system. In September we will have pre-order stations available for students who attend clubs and activities. Meals can be ordered in advance and collected from a pick-up point to avoid the need to queue. Initially this can only apply to cold food orders, but we are working to find ways to include hot food orders in our pre-order service as soon as possible. This initiative will reduce the number of students queuing at the servery so it will still be possible for students who take part in a lunchtime club to have a hot sit-down meal if they wish. We are very proud of the quality nutritious meals that we provide here at St Aidan's and this quality will not be compromised with the introduction of this new initiative. We will also be revising our till stations so that students who want a lighter lunch can use a different pay station.

### **Extra-Curricular Lunchtime programme**

The time efficiencies that the new lunchtime initiatives will bring will mean the reduction to a 50-minute lunch break will have little or no impact on the large number of extra-curricular clubs that will continue to run. We know that the biggest concern here was around our music offer where some ensembles currently only get around 20 minutes of practice. The music department are committed to ensuring that no ensembles will suffer due to the 10-minute reduction in the lunch break. We have increased the proposed lunchtime from 45 minutes to 50 minutes as a result of your feedback. There are other efficiencies we have identified that will be used to help the setting up and putting away of equipment that is used for our lunchtime clubs, and these will again create more time for student participation in the activities.

### **After School Activities Programme**

Our rich activities programme will continue as it always has. The benefits will be that the activities can either finish 10 minutes earlier or, if staff wish, they may well finish at the same time as we currently do but have 10 minutes longer. We are not making any changes to the time that our library, sixth form study centre, or sixth form café closes so students who need to stay in school to wait for parents can continue to do so.

### **Lesson Time and Transition Time**

We listened to how stakeholders felt about the reduction of some lessons from 60 minutes to 55 minutes so have decided to keep all our lessons as 60 minutes. There is currently disparity between St John Fisher and us in the afternoon as St Aidan's has a 5-minute travel time between the two afternoon lessons and St John Fisher does not. We also recognised that the majority of post 16 classes have been finishing 10 minutes early and some starting a few minutes late to allow students to move from one site to the other. Both schools have now agreed that only students moving sites for their next lesson will be allowed to leave p3 or p5 10 minutes early.

Through identification on the register, subject teachers will be aware of who these students are and will plan all their lessons with these students in mind, so they do not miss any learning. Both schools have agreed that students must arrive to p4 and p6 on time and these lessons must start promptly in the knowledge that anyone who has been at the other site will have been given time at the end of the previous lesson to get to the other school.

### **Student Behaviour**

The behaviour of the students at St Aidan's continues to be outstanding. The majority of our students conduct themselves well around the school and treat others with respect and kindness in line with our high expectations and Christian values. Some responses alluded to the fact that the changes to the timing of the school day was a behaviour strategy due to a perceived decline in student behaviour. Please be reassured that this is not the case and student behaviour at St Aidan's remains a real strength.

These revised timings will commence from September 2024, and we would once again like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who took the time to read and/or respond to the consultation. We hope that you feel your views have been listened to and that you can see the school is always open to feedback from parents and carers. Your views really do mean a lot to us and together we know that the decisions that we make, although not always agreed by everyone, are there to ensure that St Aidan's students receive the best possible care, nurture, and education to allow them to experience the gift of life in all its fullness.

Yours faithfully



Mrs Siân Dover

Headteacher