



Darland High School

Ysgol Uwchradd Darland

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Headteacher P. Agnew BA NPQH

7th February 2017

Dear Parents,

Changes to the School Day

On 13th January I wrote to all parents about the consultation the governors have asked me to hold about changes to the school day. I am now writing to you to ask your opinion on a further proposal to change the way we organise the day.

As you will recall, the primary reason behind wishing to change the day, was to provide a better working atmosphere in the afternoon lessons. Many of us feel that the lunchtime is too long and allows children to become distracted, which has a negative impact on the overall standard of behaviour, not just over the lunch break, but in the afternoon lessons. The further proposal which has arisen from the consultation is to shorten the afternoon by moving period 4 to before lunch.

Current Model	Model A	Model B
9.05am-9.20am Registration/form time	9.05am - 9.20am Registration/form time	8.55am - 10.00am Period 1 (inc 5 min reg at beginning of lesson)
9.20am - 10.20am Period 1	9.20am - 10.20am Period 1	10.00am - 11.00am Period 2
10.20am - 10.35am Break	10.20am - 10.35am Break	11.00am - 11.20am Break
10.35am - 11.35am Period 2	10.35am - 11.35am Period 2	11.20am - 12.20pm Period 3
11.35am - 12.35pm Period 3	11.35am - 12.35pm Period 3	12.20pm - 1.20pm Period 4
12.35pm - 1.20pm Lunch	12.35pm - 1.15pm Lunch	1.20pm - 2.00pm Lunch
1.20pm - 2.20pm Period 4	1.15pm - 2.15pm Period 4	2.00pm - 2.20pm Registration / form time
2.20pm - 3.20pm Period 5	2.15pm - 3.15pm Period 5	2.20pm - 3.20pm Period 5

An increasing number of secondary schools both in Wales and England are now moving to have a longer morning and a shorter afternoon, having found that pupils focus better in the mornings. We feel that Model B represents significant advantages over our current model.

- While parents may be concerned that having four lessons before lunch may lead to their children becoming hungry, in Model B we have extended break by 5 minutes to 20 minutes, to allow students to have a healthy and substantial snack before attending lessons 3 and 4.
- Parents should also note that we will be making considerable improvements to our canteen over the summer holidays in order to speed up the way that we serve pupils.
- Moving registration and form time to after lunch will, we believe, lead to a prompt start at the beginning of the day. Form tutors will be able to monitor the Attitude to Learning grades from the morning sessions, when meeting with their form after lunch and settle the pupils for the final period of the day. Assemblies will also be held at this time.
- Pupils in Years 10 and 11 attending courses at Coleg Cambria, will leave as they do now, at the end of period 3. However, they will be able to have their lunch in an un-crowded canteen before their college bus leaves at 12.40pm.

Model B does not involve a change to the timings of the start and finish of the school day and it is proposed that we will introduce this model from September 2017. However, before this time, there will be a period of consultation, during which you are welcome to email or write to me with your comments. All comments will be shared with the governors. There will be an open meeting for all parents on this issue on Thursday 2nd March at 6.30pm, where you can discuss this further with me and the Chair of Governors. The final decision on whether we adopt Model A, Model B or stay with our existing arrangement, will be taken by the governors on Tuesday 7th March.

Training Days 2017-2018

I write to inform you of the training days that have been chosen by the school for the 2017-18 academic year. Efforts have been made to synchronise these with our cluster primary schools for the convenience of parents.

Our training days will be:

Friday 1st September 2017
 Monday 4th September 2017
 Friday 24th November 2017
 Monday 8th January 2018
 Monday 9th April 2018

Term dates for students

Term / Holiday	First Day	Last Day
Autumn Term Dates	Tuesday September 5, 2017	Friday October 27, 2017
Autumn Half Term	Saturday October 28, 2017	Sunday November 5, 2017
Autumn Term Dates	Monday November 6, 2017	Friday December 22, 2017
Christmas Holidays	Saturday December 23, 2017	Sunday January 7, 2018
Spring Term Dates	Tuesday January 9, 2018	Friday February 9, 2018
Spring Half Term	Saturday February 10, 2018	Sunday February 18, 2018
Spring Term Dates	Monday February 19, 2018	Friday March 23, 2018
Easter Holidays	Saturday March 24, 2018	Sunday April 8, 2018
Summer Term Dates	Tuesday April 10, 2018	Friday May 25, 2018
Summer Half Term	Saturday May 26, 2018	Sunday June 3, 2018
Summer Term Dates	Monday June 4, 2018	Friday July 20, 2018
Summer Holidays	Saturday July 21, 2018	

Behaviour on Arriva Buses.

In my letters to you in recent months, I have reminded parents of the need to speak to their children about the importance of behaving well on the journey to and from school. Unfortunately, the school is still receiving frequent complaints from members of the public about our pupils. I am sure that you will agree with me, that this is deeply disappointing and damaging to the reputation of Darland. After a very distressing incident last Friday on the 4pm Arriva bus, which was shared on social media, I must point out that the school is taking robust and severe action against the individuals involved. Over the next few days, I will be speaking to all year groups to remind them of their responsibilities while travelling to and from school and explaining that no sanction, including that of permanent exclusion, will be ruled out when dealing with students who behave in this way.

Yours sincerely



Mr P Agnew
Headteacher