

Changes to the school Day – Millfields Community School from September 2018

Dear parents and carers,

As you will know, we asked for your opinions and thoughts on changing the school day from September 2018, to allow for an earlier finish every Friday. After analysing the comments and suggestions on the paper questionnaire and from the replies to the subsequent email asking for your opinions, we have made a decision based on the overwhelmingly positive response from those who gave their feedback, and have considered and addressed some of the questions that were raised.

The DfE guidance is below:

Government Document – School Attendance Nov 2016

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.

School Year

Schools must meet for at least 380 sessions or 190 days during any school year to educate their pupils. If a school is prevented from meeting for one or more sessions because of an unavoidable event, it should find a practical way of holding extra sessions. If it cannot find a practical way of doing this then it is not required to make up the lost sessions.

Do schools need to consult parents if making changes to the school day?

No. Although parents must be informed of the changes, there is no legal requirement to consult parents or to give an explanation as to why the decision has been made. Of course, schools can consult parents if they wish to, and where they have raised the expectation that they will consult, they should honour that commitment

Questions raised:

Will any of the curriculum be missed? *The answer is no, the learning time remains the same, but the arrangement of the school day will be altered to allow more effective use of learning time. The arrangements will mean more time for core learning in the morning, and a staggered lunchtime that means that Y1, Y2 and Y3 share the playground during the earlier lunch (11.45-12.45) and Y4, Y5 and Y6 share the playground at the later lunchtime (12.45-1.45).*

Spanish, PE, Music and Art, as well as all the current enrichment activities will continue to be part of the provision at Millfields

What about Friday cake sales? *The Friday Cake Sales can still take place at the end of the school day on Friday, it will just be earlier.*

Will there be after-school clubs available for working parents? *Yes, there will be after-school clubs starting at 2.30pm until 3.30pm. These clubs will include PE, art, craft and others to be confirmed.*

The usual clubs will start at 3.30pm – 5.00pm with a snack as usual. There will be a nominal charge for these clubs.

What do teachers think about this? *It has now been agreed after consultation with teachers, that the hour on a Friday would be additional time, not PPA time, as again this is not the most productive part of the week. It would be an opportunity for them to meet as a team to discuss and plan the week ahead, to meet with other agencies and support staff who work in their class; all things that are not usually feasible during the current working week.*

If you would like to see a copy of the parent responses, please ask for a copy at the main reception or there will be a copy on the school website.

So, the changes to Millfields' school day from September 2018 will be that we start earlier each morning and finish earlier only on a Friday afternoon.

The soft start for the day has increased learning time when children are most awake and has had a positive impact on behaviour for learning for the day ahead. The last hour on a Friday has been the least productive in terms of learning and the most unsettled in terms of behaviour. The children and staff are tired at the end of the week so learning and teaching is rarely productive. In addition, we have increasing number of requests from parents to pick their children up early on Fridays.

The new school Day:

Monday 8.50-3.30 (5 hours 25 minutes learning time)

Tuesday 8.50-3.30 (5 hours 25 minutes learning time)

Wednesday 8.50-3.30 (5 hours 25 minutes learning time)

Thursday 8.50-3.30 (5 hours 25 minutes learning time)

Friday 8.50-2.15 (4 hours 10 minutes learning time)

Total hours = 25 hours 50 minutes per week

The school day finishes at 2.15pm on a Friday, so parents are to pick up their children at 2.15pm from the playground as usual, unless they require further childcare in the form of an after-school clubs or personally arranged child minders. There will be a range of clubs on offer from 2.30pm - 3.30pm in addition to the current club offer that runs from 3.30pm -5.00pm on Fridays.

Please note the earlier school start time (8.50am) and ensure that your child arrives on time for the beginning of the school day. Punctuality will be monitored.

The doors will open and the children will be able to access their classroom from 8.45am each day.

Please also note the new finish time on Fridays -2.15pm, collection from the playground as usual.

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation.

Kind Regards,

Jane Betsworth

Headteacher