

Proposed changes to the timing of the school day

Frequently Asked Questions

What will the new timings be on Wednesdays?

To achieve the earlier finish we will be shortening each period on that day by 10 minutes and also shortening the Morning and Lunch Breaks. The timings for Wednesday from 19 June 2019 will therefore be:

8.45 - 8.50	Registration
8.50 - 9.40	Period 1
9.40 - 10.30	Period 2
10.30- 10.50	Morning Break
10.50 - 11.40	Period 3
11.40 - 12.30	Period 4
12.30 - 1.00	Lunch Break
1.00 - 1.15	Registration/Assembly
1.15 - 2.05	Period 5

Staff development time on that day will then run from 2.20 to 4.30. All other days of the week will continue as they are.

How can the school justify taking learning time away from my child?

Our research into other high performing schools indicates that the greatest benefit to students comes from ensuring the curriculum is of the highest possible standard. By investing time in improving this, and enabling teachers to do this collaboratively, the benefit to students will outweigh the relatively small amount of lesson time lost. Where guidelines for lesson time are available, through Guided Learning Hours for GCSE subjects, Crofton students will on average still experience well over even the highest recommendation this guidance.

How does this change benefit my child?

By ensuring they experience better lessons and progress. The time gained for teacher development will be used for teachers to improve our school curriculum, allowing them more time to plan lessons and review progress data. In addition some of this time will be used to help us reorganise parents evenings, providing parents with more opportunities to meet with teachers.

Will the additional time be used effectively to train staff?

Yes – this will be planned well in advance and both the quality of this training and its impact will be monitored by the school and governors on a regular basis.

If the same curriculum is to be delivered in less time will this affect the quality of the teaching?

Time invested in developing teachers will ultimately improve the quality of students' experience, and the benefits of this will far outweigh any impact from the small reduction in teaching time.

It can take a long time to get served at lunchtimes in the canteen, won't this be even worse on the shortened day?

We have already opened an additional food outlet on the school site to help reduce queues. We will also operate a different menu on the shortened day to make sure the queues move faster so that students can still get their food promptly despite the shorter break.

Is this a permanent change?

The research we have carried out indicates we will see the benefits of this change over a long period of time, so we do not intend this to be a short term change. However we will review this during the first year and again at the end and if we do not believe there are strong enough indications of positive impact we can easily switch back to our original model.

On Wednesdays children may be staying at home longer without a parent present. Some families may not be comfortable with this, has this been considered?

Yes, we recognise that especially for younger students this may be a concern for parents. For this reason the school will provide homework club from the earlier finish time on the shortened day so that students can still return home at the normal time if their parents would prefer this.

An earlier finish on Fridays may be preferable for some parents, has this been considered?

Our research into other schools using this model has shown Fridays to be the least effective day for staff development activities, due it coming at the end of a working week. As it is essential that the development time has maximum impact we have chosen a Wednesday instead.

Could Wednesday afternoon be used for extra-curricular activities or sports?

This will not be possible on a Wednesday as all teaching staff will be involved in development work. However there will be greater flexibility on when to schedule extra-curricular activities or sports during the rest of the week, as all staff meetings will take place on a Wednesday. Any sporting fixtures scheduled for a Wednesday will continue as normal.

Could there be a negative impact on the local community?

We are aware that an earlier finish may lead to larger number of students being in the village rather than heading home. The vast majority of Crofton students display excellent behaviour in the community, so we hope this will not be a problem. However it will be important to monitor this, so we will publicise this change through our community links and ensure staff are present in Stubbington during the early stages of the change to monitor this.

Is this change being used as a cost cutting exercise?

No, there is no direct cost saving that will result from this change and it is not being done for this reason, although we are aware this has been the justification for such changes in some schools. Teachers will still be in school for the same number of hours. However we do believe this will have benefits for staff recruitment and retention. Education job applicants are more and more looking for how schools will develop them, at a time when recruitment to teaching posts is becoming increasingly challenging. We want our students to be taught by the best teachers and believe this change will help us to recruit the best. Similarly, addressing staff workload in this area will have an impact on staff wellbeing, and decrease absence. Unfilled posts and staff absence both attract additional costs, aside from the negative impact on quality of teaching, so there may be longer term cost savings in this area.

How will this change affect parents' evenings?

We hope to use some of the additional time to provide more opportunities for parents to meet with teaching staff. We are also currently reviewing our reports to parents, as you will be aware from communications you have had from Miss Knight. As parents' evenings are also connected to this, to ensure we have a coherent approach for how we feedback on your child's progress we will communicate more information on any changes to this separately at a later date.