



Wath Academy

19 May 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

At Wath Academy we are always looking for ways to develop our curriculum offer in pursuit of our vision: *Delivering exceptional learning experiences that enable all young people to thrive in a competitive world and lead successful and fulfilling lives.*

Following feedback from parents and staff, via the recent curriculum survey, we are consulting on a number of changes for September 2022. Below I have summarised the proposed changes and outlined the rationale for the changes. At the end of this letter there is a link which provides you with the opportunity to feedback on the proposal. We would like to open up these proposed changes for a consultation period of 3 weeks until Friday 10th June.

The government have recently set out a new expectation that all schools should offer a school week which is at least 32.5 hours long (including breaks and lunch times) for September 2023. Currently our Y11 cohort exceed this expectation whilst Y7-10 fall just short. We feel we can make these changes one year earlier with a view to finding a model that remains in place for years to come.

I am aware that in recent years there have been a number of changes to the school day, Covid-19 then meant that further variations were required over the past two years. We recognise that regular changes can be frustrating for parents and students, we therefore hope to find a curriculum model that not only meets the needs of all our students but is also sustainable for the future.

When reviewing parental feedback on the curriculum some common themes appeared:

- Parents were happy with the range of subjects on offer
- The inclusion of Character Education, Votes for Schools and Life Skills is seen as a positive development
- Parents think the enrichment offer is good but would also like to see this expanded further
- Parents would like to see even more trips and visits
- Although the longer lessons were seen as a positive for some, others would prefer if they were shortened
- Parents wish for tutors to be afforded more time to get to know their child.

Using this information and feedback from staff, alongside our curriculum intent we have now devised an exciting new curriculum model. The model aims to address some of the points listed above, enable a greater range of experiences for students and continue to provide the academic rigour expected of the academy.

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The following changes are proposed:

Tutor time

Tutor time will be increased to 30 minutes a day for all students. The content which staff are required to cover will remain largely the same meaning the additional time can be spent on activities which allow staff to get to know their tutor group better and form excellent, supportive relationships.

We are also committed to providing a more diverse range of speakers within the tutor period. This will further support the delivery of Character Education which we are currently re-modelling for next academic year.

Number of lessons and length of lessons

Although we have seen lots of success from the model of 3 x 100-minute lesson a day, we recognise that for some the length is slightly too long. We would like to continue with lessons which are longer than 1 hour as we feel that this provides students with more time to explore topics in greater depth rather than quickly moving on in order to finish within 1 hour. We are therefore proposing to move to 4 x 80-minute lessons a day. We believe this lesson length provides a great balance between the opportunity to explore topics more deeply, but it is also better for students who struggle with the longer periods.

The inclusion of enrichment within the school day

This is the major change that we are proposing. We are passionate about offering students opportunities beyond the academic classroom to gain an array of positive school memories. It is proposed that the academic day finishes at 12:00 on a Wednesday and following lunch, every child will attend an enrichment club from 12:40 – 14:20. All staff will also be timetabled to deliver a wide array of enrichment clubs at this time. We see enrichment as a way of providing many opportunities and benefits:

- The academy can provide an even broader range of exceptional learning experiences beyond the classroom
- Including enrichment in the timetable provides opportunities for all students 'to gain an array of positive school memories'
- Further opportunities are available for students to develop high levels of cultural and global awareness
- Students are able to take part in something they are passionate about
- Students are able to experience something completely new which broadens horizons beyond their current knowledge or experience
- Students can spend time with friends doing something they enjoy
- An enrichment slot allows for time to be devoted to exploring potential career choices
- Enrichment provides time away from the classroom doing something they enjoy, this can have multiple mental health benefits.
- Students are able to form further excellent relationships with staff in a different setting.



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- Having enrichment in the timetable also allows for students who may not be able to afford such experiences to have access to a range of exciting opportunities.

We aim to offer a large range of activities which students can opt into. Students will choose an enrichment club each term, meaning in total they can take part in up to three different enrichment activities a year (although this could be each half term). The sessions will be delivered by staff at the academy and will be well planned and resourced ensuring that each experience is delivered to the highest standard. We have already begun to explore some of the exciting options we can offer. These will be wide ranging and with a view to providing everyone with something they enjoy. As with anything, we will take feedback on the experiences that we offer and endeavour to meet everyone's needs. We intend to offer a wide range of enrichment activities. This list below is purely to give an insight into the type of activities which we could put on offer, but is by no means exhaustive:

- Academic electives e.g. classics, additional modern foreign languages
- Additional academic study in areas of interest
- Technology and Design
- Computer programming based projects
- Creative activities – Art, Photography, Performing Arts, Drama, Dance, Music etc.
- Competitive sports, including training sessions and representing the school in additional fixtures against other schools, including public schools.
- Other sporting activities
- Cultural visits e.g. churches, mosques, castles, stately homes etc.
- Fitness sessions e.g. yoga, circuit training, fitness
- Food & Nutrition
- Mindfulness, meditation and wellbeing activities
- Community and Charity projects
- Career and enterprise activities
- Work Experience
- Duke of Edinburgh's Award

It is important that adding in enrichment to the timetable doesn't detrimentally affect the time attributed to the coverage of the academic curriculum. This coupled with the government expectation of an extended school week has led to an extension of the school day, for all year groups, on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday:

- Lessons will start at 08:30 each day meaning that all students need to be in the building by 08:25
- On Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday the school day will finish at 15:20 for all students (including Year 11)
- On Wednesday, the school day will finish at 14:20 for all students (including Year 11)

School Buses

If the proposed changes, following consultation, went ahead the current school buses would run in the morning and after school in line with the new timings.

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The timetable will still be a two-week timetable to suit the longer lessons. It is proposed the academy school day will look as follows:

Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri		
	Time	Length
Period 1	08:30 - 09:50	80mins
Period 2	09:50 - 11:10	80 mins
Break	11:10 - 11:30	20 mins
Period 3	11:30 - 12:50	80 mins
Lunch	12:50 - 13:30	40 mins
Tutor Period	13:30 - 14:00	30 mins
Period 4	14:00 - 15:20	80mins
Total Lesson Time	350 minutes	
Total Break Time	60 minutes	

Wednesday		
	Time	Length
Period 1	08:30 - 09:50	80mins
Break	09:50 - 10:10	20 mins
Period 2	10:10 - 11:30	80 mins
Tutor Period	11:30 - 12:00	30 mins
Lunch	12:00 - 12:40	40 mins
Enrichment	12:40 - 14:20	100 mins
Total Lesson Time	290 minutes	
Total Break Time	60 minutes	

In terms of curriculum coverage, below is a table which details the amount of lesson time spent in each subject per week. Having shorter lessons has allowed us to provide students with a greater number of exposures to non-core subjects. For example, at KS4 students will now have 4 x 80-minute lessons per fortnight in their option subject rather than 3. This is something which staff and parents have stated would be beneficial.

Key Stage 3

	80-min lessons per fortnight
Maths	6
English	6
Science	6
Geography	3
History	3
Spanish	3
Life Skills	1
RS	1
Drama	1
Music	1
DT	1
Art	1
Computing	1
PE	2
Enrichment	2.5
Total	38.5
Tutor time	5 x 30 mins

Key Stage 4

	80-min lessons per fortnight
Maths	6
English	6
Science	7
Option 1	4
Option 2	4
Option 3	4
PE / Health	3
Life Skills	1
RS	1
Enrichment	2.5
Total	38.5
Tutor time	5 x 30 mins

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In Key Stage 5, students will receive the equivalent of 4 x 80-minute lessons per subject, per week (or 8 x 80-minutes per fortnight) as well as their enrichment opportunity.

We are incredibly excited about this curriculum offer and we feel that it provides students with an exceptional range of opportunities. We believe that the timetabled inclusion of enrichment will have a significant positive impact on student development, enjoyment and mental health.

As always, we would like to gain feedback on this offer via the following link:

<https://forms.office.com/r/6vHimb6kQn>

Once we have collated feedback, we will communicate further, in June, with our finalised curriculum plan for next academic year.

Yours sincerely

Mr Ransome
Principal

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