



SMA/lfe

15th October 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

Late in the summer term, the Government announced that it was not necessary to keep children in consistent groups ('bubbles') and that there was no longer the need to make alternative arrangements to avoid mixing at lunch. As a precaution and due to the timing of the announcement, we kept our split breaks and lunches for the start of this term, but now feel it is the right time to move back to a single break and single lunch, in line with most other secondary schools in the local area.

The change has very much been prompted by parental feedback as it will allow us to extend lunchtime to 40 minutes, giving more time to our students to eat their lunch. It will give us the capacity to reintroduce supervised lunch rooms for those that bring a packed lunch into school, which is hugely important bearing in mind the cold weather approaching. It will also allow our staff time to run extra-curricular activities at lunchtime, which will benefit our students and support their mental health. Of course, this decision has not been made lightly, but we feel the benefits of the above outweigh the extra Covid-19 related risks in having a larger numbers of students outside during break and lunch.

Consequently, the school day will change straight after half-term to the following:

Time	Activity
8.35am	Registration/PD/Assembly
9.00am	Period 1
10.00am	Period 2
11.00am	Break
11.20am	Period 3
12.20pm	Period 4
1.20pm	Lunch
2.00pm	Period 5
3.00pm	End of School Day

We are keeping the 8.35am start as the students are very much in the routine of this. The longer lunch break means a slightly later finish. Should you have difficulty in picking your child up at this time (for example, due to primary pick-ups), students will be able to attend homework club in one of our hubs, until you are able to get here. You will also notice the lunch break for all students will start at 1.20pm. Years 9, 10 and 11 have experienced this at various stages over the past 13 months and it has noticeably enhanced teaching, learning & progress in the afternoon. Students will continue to be able to buy food and eat a snack at break time to tide them over until lunch. We also have a breakfast service including free toast and porridge.

As winter approaches, we are ready to implement our contingency plan should we need to do so which, for example, could include the reintroduction of face coverings or a short period of remote learning. This would only happen if we were advised to do so by the NHS and the local authority. We are also waiting to be informed of when the NHS will be using our site to vaccinate 12-15 year olds, but please be assured that vaccinations would only occur with parental consent.

Please remember that the best way to protect each other from the virus is through good hygiene practice and twice weekly lateral flow testing.

We hope you will consider these changes a step in the right direction and we thank you for your ongoing support in what continues to be very challenging times.

Best wishes,



Stephen Mansell
Headteacher

