



Ark Burlington Danes Academy

Wednesday 17th June 2020

Dear parents / carers,

September Re-Opening and the Structure of the School Day

At Ark Burlington Danes Academy we continue to be committed to ensuring that all students have the opportunity to live life to the fullest. It has been fantastic to see how well many students have engaged with the home learning we have been setting and how many of year 10 have been returning to school this week for their tutorials.

As of the time of writing, we have not received any concrete guidance from the government around how schools should reopen in September. Although this leaves us in a state of uncertainty around the details, we are getting on with the business of reviewing 2019-20 and considering how we can continue to provide a positive learning experience at BDA for 2020-21. While we will inevitably need to make adjustments depending on the situation around the coronavirus pandemic in September, we need to have a school day structure that serves the needs of our students.

As a result of our recent staff consultation, it has become apparent to us as a collective staff body that we need to reform our school day. We have identified that we need to resolve a number of key issues with our present structure. Firstly, some lessons are too short, and this leads us to use some double lessons which can be too long. The second issue is that lunchtime is too busy, as our school canteen was designed to serve around 400 students when it was part of the Burlington School for Girls. It is a real challenge to serve nearly 900. Thirdly, we want to provide more time for students to engage with their pastoral curriculum, which covers important topics including careers guidance, independent study techniques, mental wellbeing and the Black Lives Matter movement. Finally, an outcome of the present lockdown situation is that key stage 4 and 5 students need more learning time before their final examinations, particularly in English and Maths.

The proposed changes to the school day

In light of the above, we are proposing four significant changes to the school day:

1. Increasing the length of lessons from 45 minutes to 1 hour to improve learning
2. Increase learning time in our core subjects to secure excellent results for our students
3. Split KS3 and KS4 lunches to create more space for enrichment
4. Increase the amount of pastoral time to improve wellbeing

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We are therefore proposing that the structure of the school day from September 2020 will be as follows:

Timings	Length (mins)	KS3	KS4
8.20am		All students present on site	
8.25-8.35	10	Morning Tutor Time	
8.35-9.35	60	Period 1	
9.35-10.35	60	Period 2	
10.35-10.50	15	Break	
10.50-11.50	60	Period 3	
11.50-12.50	60	Period 4	
12.50-1.30	40	Lunch	Tutor time/Pastoral
1.30-2.10	40	Tutor time/Pastoral	Lunch
2.10-3.10	60	Period 5	
3.10-4.10	60	End of school day – KS3 line up and are dismissed offsite by 3.15pm NOTE: KS3 have P6 on Monday	P6

Please note the following additional points:

- After-school study clubs will be running for KS3 students from 3.10pm to 4.10pm. Students who travel home with siblings in the primary or in KS4 will be able to attend until their siblings finish school.
- Years 12 and 13 will have lessons scheduled between 8.35am to 4.10pm. If a Year 12 or 13 student does not have a lesson scheduled during periods 1 and 2, they will not be required to come into school. However, all KS5 students will be required on site from breaktime onwards (i.e. 10.35am).
- Our Year 10 students have lost a lot of critical learning time due to the period of school closure, and there may yet be further disruption to their learning in 2020-21, depending on the state of the pandemic. It is going to be very difficult to cover their all the material in their curriculum before their GCSE exams. We have therefore decided to increase the amount of time spent in English and Maths by two hours per subject, to ensure that our Year 11s achieve highly in these 'gateway' qualifications. In order to do this we are asking our all our Year 11 students (currently in Year 10) to drop one of their option subjects in 2020-21 to relieve some of the pressure on them. They will have the opportunity to discuss which option to drop with an academic tutor this week. If you would like to discuss this further, please email Ms Morris at: laura.morris@burlingtondanes.org

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These proposed changes have been discussed with our teachers and school leaders, who are in strong agreement that they are absolutely necessary for the education of our students.

The next academic year will present challenges to our school community that we cannot yet predict, if the last year is anything to go by. By dedicating time to the pastoral wellbeing of our students, increasing the time our children spend in the classroom, and focusing strongly on a rigorous academic curriculum, we will be best placed to ensure our children are able to achieve to their fullest potential.

I invite parents to give feedback on these changes via the attached form [here](#).

I look forward to your comments and seeing our students and families again soon.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Bhatia
Principal