



Harton Academy

Part of
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CEO: Sir Ken Gibson BA (Hons), MEd, HonDEd Head Teacher: Mr Jon Skurr BA (Hons)

Our Ref: JS/at/624
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Dear Parents/Carers

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to express our thanks for your valuable responses to the recent school day consultation. Your feedback is incredibly important to us, as we aim to create the best possible educational experience for our students. The academy strives to make the best choices for its students based on stakeholder consultation, best practice, evidence and research.

We are pleased to inform you that the majority of parents were very supportive of the proposed changes to the school day. However, we also acknowledge that a small percentage (6%) expressed concerns regarding certain aspects of the plan. Many of those concerns were related to individual situations, and they will be addressed in due course. In relation to the concerns around the start time and the timings of lunch, your voices have been heard, and we have carefully made amendments to deal with them.

In the amended school day proposal (below), which will be implemented in September 2024, you will see that we have moved the proposed start time back from 8:30am to 8:40am. We have also moved the intervention session to after lunch. This allows us to serve lunch earlier and hopefully alleviates the concerns some of you had about students eating too late.

New school day

Time	Activity
8:40am – 9:40am	Period 1
9:40am – 10:40am	Period 2
10:40am – 11:00am	Break
11:00am – 12:00pm	Period 3
12:00pm – 1:30pm	Lunch and period 4 (details below)
1:30pm - 2:10pm	Intervention time
2:10pm - 3:10pm	Period 5
3:10pm (School day finish)	Enrichment and engagement

Time	Lunch block 1	Lunch block 2	Lunch block 3
12:00pm – 12:30pm	Period 4 (1 st half)	Lunch	Period 4
12:30pm – 1:00pm	Lunch	Period 4	
1:00pm – 1:30pm	Period 4 (2 nd half)		Lunch

*** Y12 and Y13 take lunch in a block of their choosing.**

A small number of parents shared concerns about the reduction in the lunchtime period from 60 minutes to 30 minutes. Due to our limited dining facilities, our students currently spend the vast majority of the lunchtime period waiting in queues and only around 15 minutes in the dining room. On average, approximately 1200 students stay in school to eat, and those students are all fed within a 40-minute window.



Moving to three 30-minute lunch periods will significantly reduce the time students spend queueing and create more dining space, which will ensure a better dining experience for all. It will also give us the opportunity to improve the quality of the food that we offer, as we will have more time to prepare and serve the food between sittings. We will not be the only school in the area to operate 30-minute lunch periods. Currently, students at Mortimer, Hebburn, and Jarrow all have 30 minutes for lunch.

A number of parents inquired as to why we are transitioning from traditional form time to a new intervention period at our school. This dedicated time will enable us to provide a tailored and bespoke approach to meeting the holistic and academic needs of each student. During this period, students will have the opportunity to focus on personal development, career guidance, and pastoral matters. It will also allow us to enhance their literacy and numeracy skills in real-world contexts. We will also deliver a number of other activities during this period, including music, mental health support, SEND sessions, subject interventions (KS4), and a number of other therapeutic activities. This period provides the opportunity to develop a broader breadth to our curriculum offer and ensure it is tailored to the individual needs of our students.

It is important to note that with over 1650 students and over 3000 parents, finding a solution that satisfies everyone's preferences can be challenging. We understand that each family has unique circumstances and priorities, and we are committed to accommodating as many perspectives as possible.

We appreciate your understanding and support as we work towards creating a school day schedule that benefits the entire school community. Your input is invaluable to us, and we are grateful for your continued partnership in shaping the future of our school.

Thank you once again for your participation in the consultation process. If you have any further questions or feedback, please do not hesitate to reach out to us.

Warm regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jon Skurr', written in a cursive style.

Jon Skurr
Head Teacher