



Upton Court
GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Tuesday 23rd April 2019

Dear Parents / Carers,

Re: consultation to change the school day

Upton Court Grammar School and Pioneer Educational Trust are committed to providing a first-class education for all pupils. To achieve this aim, we need to ensure that we can recruit and retain the best staff, provide them with access to the best professional development and provide them with the opportunity to collaborate with other professionals.

In order to achieve this aim, we are proposing to provide an opportunity for staff to collaborate on a weekly basis by finishing the school day for pupils at 1.25pm every Wednesday from September 2019.

There is considerable evidence to support this move. A DfE report outlines the importance of teachers engaging in 'collaborative planning to develop their skills and knowledge, to share their expertise, and to benefit from the expertise of their peers.' Other research tells us that teachers can plan in many ways but the most powerful is when teachers work together to develop plans, develop common understandings of what is worth teaching, collaborate on understanding their beliefs of challenge and progress, and work together to evaluate the impact of their planning on student outcomes¹.

In addition, Ofsted's *Education Inspection Framework: overview of research* outlines 'clear evidence that both the quantity and quality of professional development are related to school effectiveness and improvement, and that in countries that are high performing on international tests ... teachers spend more time on professional development' (p.35).

To reassure you in light of recent press surrounding school funding, this proposal is not being made to create a financial saving. The purpose and intended outcome of this proposal is being made solely to improve the quality of education your child receives through the improved professional development of your child's teachers, the opportunity for greater collaboration within the school and beyond, and to recruit and retain the best staff.

We have carefully considered the curriculum and our delivery, and are confident that we will be able to continue to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of all learners and enables them to make exceptional progress. Indeed, we believe that, as suggested by the above mentioned research, the curriculum and its delivery will be further enhanced through the opportunity for collaboration.

In addition to this, for Upton Court Grammar School we are also proposing to change the school day on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday to 3.05pm. This will provide consistency across the school week with lunch time being shortened on each day to 40 minutes to match the current situation on Wednesdays and Fridays.



Pioneer Educational Trust
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Upton Court Grammar School is part of the Pioneer Educational Trust. Pioneer Educational Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales with Company Number 7462530. The Registered Office is at Upton Court Grammar School, Lascelles Road, Upton, Berkshire, SL3 7PR

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To date, we have consulted with staff on their views about these proposals and there is widespread support for consulting with parents / carers.

The parental consultation will be open until midday on Tuesday 7th May and we welcome your views via email to consultations@pioneereducationaltrust.org.uk. You can find feedback form on the school's website under the "Notice Board". To ensure that we have a comprehensive and fair picture of all responses, please only use this method to contribute any comments.

Depending on the outcome of this consultation, we will liaise with you regarding any extra-curricular provision in light of the proposed changes.

Yours faithfully,



Mrs N Chandler
Head of
Trevelyan
Middle School



Mr Neighbour
Co-CEO of
Pioneer
Educational
Trust



Mr Pritchard
Head of Upton
Court Grammar
School



Mrs A Spinks
Co-CEO of
Pioneer
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Mrs P Sweetman
Head of
Foxborough
Primary School

¹ Hattie, J. (2012) 'Visible Learning for Teachers, Maximising Impact on Learning', pages 67-74.