

Ref: HWH/NLE/whlsch/parents

March 2008

Dear Parent

Please find information on a range of issues as we continue to work with you.

Consultation: Proposed changes to the school day, September 2008

I write to inform and consult you with regard to proposed changes to the school day which would operate from September 2008. Together with staff and governors we have begun to review the timings and operation of the school day to ensure it best fits our school's learning needs.

Factors that have helped shape our thinking include the retention of a prompt start to the teaching day for all students with a long morning and short afternoon to maximise learning. This arrangement also allows for joint working with Team Peterborough. There is a need to retain and develop the mixture of 50 and 100 minute lessons as well as minimise the amount of movement around the school. The ending of the school day needs to take into account the finish times of other neighbouring schools, in particular the Discovery School.

Some of the issues we have sought to address in our new proposal are the challenges currently posed by the two lunch periods and the need to provide opportunities for traditional "extra/additional curricular opportunities" at lunch time and after school. We have listened to feedback from staff, parents and students about the length of the school day and about the range, value and organisation of Enrichment and Self Supported Study.

Proposed School Day	
08.40	Students in Lessons
08.45-09.35	Session 1A
09.35-10.25	Session 1B
10.25-10.45	BREAK
10.45-11.35	Session 2A
11.35-12.25	Session 2B
12.25-13.15	LUNCH FOR ALL
13.15-13.35	Tutorial/Assembly
13.35-14.25	Session 3A
14.25-15.15	Session 3B
15.15	End of school
15.15-16.05	Enrichment – voluntary & targeted.

Important opportunities that this proposed change provides are for a single lunch break for all students who would remain in school as at present (other than post 16 students), thus allowing many more lunch time clubs and activities to take place. The pattern of the proposed school day would have a consistent finish time across the working week. Enrichment time would move to a voluntary basis which would enable more activities to be time tabled across the week and also allow for the needs of targeted groups of students to be met. Additional support and challenge would be provided for those students who most require it.

I hope that you will agree that the proposed model enables The Voyager School to move forward into the next academic year with a new and improved pattern of school day. If you have any suggestions

or comments to make about these changes then please write to me at the school, no later than **Wednesday 23rd April 2008**. The Governing Body will be looking to ratify these proposals in the summer term in time for their implementation in September 2008.

I shall write to inform you of the outcome of this consultation in due course.

Travel and Transport arrangements

We would like to thank all parents/carers for the support with travel arrangements at The Voyager School. In particular I would like to draw your attention to a recent travel survey we completed for the whole school which highlighted the fact that 70% of our students travel to and from school on foot, by bicycle or by bus. This is indeed good news and with the weather improving as we move into the Summer Term this figure should increase further.

The bus services, number 1 for town and 408 for Bretton, are working better now and student behaviour on these services is generally good and there is a need for this to be consistently good. We are working closely with City Link, Stagecoach and Peterborough City Council Transport Department to ensure things go well in terms of bus transport.

We have seen an increase in the number of vehicles coming onto the school site and this is causing some concerns in respect of safety. In terms of managing the traffic outside the school in the mornings and evenings we would like only **registered taxis and vehicles of parents/carers for students with specific needs** to be dropped off and picked up at main reception. It would be very helpful if all other cars and vans making a drop-off or a pick-up could do this at the front of the school or in the bus lay-by. This would reduce congestion at these times of the day at the main school entrance and on Mountsteven Avenue near Croyland Road. It is worth saying again that there is the Dover Road access/exit gate allowing students to be dropped off and picked up at the end of Dover Road/Arundel Road.

Our senior member of staff for travel and transport is Mr Campbell.

Foundation Status

This process continues and a formal statutory proposal to change the status of the school from Community to Foundation will be issued. There will be a four week period for consultation and details will be sent to you shortly (by Friday 14th March).

Charity Events

Our Student Leaders in school have discussed their desire to be involved in a number of charities and charitable events. They are keen to support the efforts to raise awareness and funds for the 'Nicholas Appeal'. Money raised will be used to help a local Peterborough child and we are asking for your support in holding a non-uniform day at the end of the Spring Term – Wednesday 19th March. Students are asked for a £1.00 voluntary contribution.

Our first school show ...Back to the 80's

Students and staff are working very hard to produce our first school show – Back to the 80's. This will be an outstanding musical which will be enjoyed by all. We hope very much that you will support the students and staff by attending one of the three performances planned for Wednesday 9th, Thursday 10th and Friday 11th April. Tickets are £4.00 for adults and £3.00 for children/students and can be purchased from the main school office (reception).

Parents Forum

Our Parents Forum meetings are open to all parents/carers and they provide an opportunity to share information, discuss aspects of the school's work and for senior staff to listen to parents/carers. The next meeting is planned for Tuesday 18th March and will begin at 7.00pm. It will follow a Consultation

meeting at 6.30pm about the proposed new school day. We hope you will be able to join us.

Key Dates

- Wednesday 12th March 7.30pm Spring Concert – an evening of music by the music department. Tickets are £4.00 per adult and £2.00 concessionary.
- Thursday 13th March 6.30pm Year 8 Parents' Evening.
- Friday 14th March Lunch time Fun Run for Sports Relief.
2.00pm Sing Up project. This is a national event with a number of our local primary schools.
- Tuesday 18th March 6.30pm Parents/Carers Consultation meeting – new School day **followed by Parents' Forum at 7.00 pm**, agenda to follow.
- Wednesday 19th March Non Uniform day - £1.00 for students. The money will go to a local charity that the student leaders have chosen to support 'Nicholas Appeal'.
School will finish at 4.05pm for the Easter Holidays
- Thursday 20th March to Monday 7th April **EASTER HOLIDAYS – SCHOOL CLOSED** (2nd, 3rd and 4th April – Easter Revision school for Years 9 and 11).
- Tuesday 8th April **STAFF TRAINING DAY**, students not in school
- Wednesday 9th April School opens for the Summer Term for students
- Wednesday 9th, Thurs 10th & Friday 11th April 7.00pm School Show – Back to the 80's

This letter will also be posted on the school's website www.thevoyagerschool.com.

Thank you for your continued support and we wish you a safe and peaceful Easter.

Yours sincerely

H W Howe CBE
Head Teacher