

21st July 2023

Dear Parents / Carers,

As we approach the end of the academic year, I am writing to update you on the arrangements for the new school day from September 2023 at Forge Valley School.

New School Day

You will be aware that the school consulted with parents earlier in the summer term regarding extending the school day to meet the criteria, set by the government, that the school week, for all schools, should be 32.5 hours long. We originally proposed starting the school day at 8.30am. The school received around 80 responses from parents. After discussing these responses with staff and pupils I have decided that the school day will run as follows:

Form Time / Registration	8.40am – 9.10am
Period 1	9.10am – 10.10am
Period 2 and staggered 20-minute break	10.10am – 11.30am
Period 3	11.30am – 12.30pm
Period 4 and staggered 30-minute lunch	12.30pm – 2pm
Period 5	2pm – 3pm
Extra-Curricular activities	

Based on feedback from parents, the school day will continue to start from 8.40am. Form Time will now last 30 minutes. Break will now take place during Period 2 and last 20 minutes. Keeping break during Period 3 would mean some pupils not having a break until 12.10pm. It has been mentioned by several parents that lunch should be extended. This, unfortunately, is not possible. Due to the size of the dining hall, lunch needs to be taken in three sittings. Since lessons are 60 minutes long, lunch therefore cannot be any longer than 30 minutes.

Reward Trips

Creating criteria to base decisions on which children are rewarded is always going to be contentious. This year the school decided that 100% attendance or improved attendance during difficult circumstances would be largely used as criteria to select who could attend the Alton Towers trip. I was also especially keen to ensure that pupils on Free School Meals were disproportionately represented on this trip. This approach was very much appreciated by those that met the criteria but was not appreciated by those who narrowly missed out. I completely understand however that



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reward systems can create division. To resolve this, I will be seeking both parental and pupil opinion regarding any reward trips next year. The last thing that I want is any sense of injustice existing amongst the school community. I do want however to keep the focus on rewards around “good attendance”. This remains a barrier to success for too many pupils at Forge Valley School.

Academic Year 2023-2024

In September we welcome over 270 Year 7 pupils and up to 180 Year 12 pupils. This will make the number of pupils on roll at Forge Valley around 1550.

At the start of the new term, the school will be sending out a series of letters from the school's Assistant Headteachers. These letters will provide information regarding your child's academic and pastoral provision and support.

Forge Valley School will open on the 5th September 2023 to all pupils. During the morning there will be a staggered start. Pupils need to arrive to school as follows:

Year 7	8.40am start	Pupils to wait outside the front of the school building. They will be escorted to the sports hall where they will be met by their Form Tutor.
Year 8	9am start	Pupils to arrive via the pupil entrance and go to their form room.
Year 9	9:15am start	Pupils to arrive via the pupil entrance and go to their form room.
Years 10	9:30am start	Pupils to arrive via the pupil entrance and go to their form room.
Year 11	10:10am start	Pupils to arrive via the pupil entrance and go to their form room.
Year 12	9:40am start	Students to arrive via the pupil entrance and go to their form room.
Year 13	10:10am start (period 2)	Students to arrive via the pupil entrance and go to their form room.

Uniform

As always, I politely ask that all children attend school in correct uniform from the very start of the term. Details of our Uniform Policy are on the school website.

Sheffield Healthy Holidays with Food Programme

The DfE-funded Sheffield Healthy Holidays with Food programme is open for bookings to pupils on Free School Meals. The programme will run from Monday 24 July to Friday 2 September 2023. More details can be found [here](#).

Finally, I hope you have a great summer. I looking forward to welcoming your child back to school on 5th September 2023.

Yours faithfully,



Mr D Barrowclough
Headteacher