



Friday 9th February 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

As we finish the first half term of 2024, I wanted to say a huge thank you to all the parents and carers, school staff and governors, and of course, our fantastic students. I have had a great first half-term leading the school and I have felt supported throughout. I have not been able to reply to all the messages of support I have had from parents, but I assure you that I have read them all and I really appreciate this show of your confidence in me.

What a half term it has been! Our amendments to the school uniform has been a resounding success and many students have told me that they appreciated having their voices heard and to be listened to. As the days start to stretch out and we all begin to thaw out from winter, the spring term always has a feeling of optimism with it. We have embraced that in school and again this week there has been a lot going on...

Bake sale success

We had a bake sale raising money for the Gaza Emergency Appeal with Save the Children on Wednesday. This came from the current affairs club discussion with students and through PSHE lessons and it was a huge success, we made £333 on the day and this will be sent off to the appeal. A huge thank you for all the cakes donated and students that brought in money to buy cakes and support. There are some pictures to show the cakes!



Library over half term opening times

The school library is open on Monday - Wednesday next week for 2 sessions a day 9:00-12:00 and 13:00-15:00 each day for Year 11 students who want to have a quiet space to come in and work. There will be a teacher in the library to maintain a positive working environment and offer support or guidance where needed.

Assembly on online safety (attached slides)

This week we did the assembly on online safety as part of work on Safer Internet Day. Attached to this email are the slides from the assembly and some useful parent guides for you to read.

Mehndi night performance

The show was a massive success. This was the busiest, the most vibrant, and most energised I have seen the school in my time here (which is a long time!). It was so good to see the school full to bursting point. The play was brilliant and the food was delicious and organised with significant support from the PTA. These shows take a lot of effort and many staff were involved; too many to name everyone so I will just say a massive thank you to everyone that was a part of it. I will add a special thanks to the PTA which raised the money to pay for the radio microphones we used in the show, and now we have them for future performances. Special thanks to Samim and Ilyas for supporting with this and anyone who wishes to join and/ or support the PTA would be much appreciated.

February cycling club

There is an offer of a cycling club in Leytonstone on Tuesday 13th February this is an All-Ability Cycling club. Please see flyer below for anyone who is interested in taking up this offer.

TFL TRAVEL FOR LIFE

February half-term All-Ability Cycling Clubs

All Ability sessions offer a relaxed environment, regardless of confidence or ability, to enjoy cycling for all ages. The sessions are led by trained instructors, who provide help with a range of cycles including relaxed tricycles, recumbents, wheelchair bikes, hand-cycles, side-by-side bikes, and many more.

Sessions run from 10am to 12pm and are suitable for children and adults.

Mon 12 Feb - in the Basketball Court in Ridgeway Park, Chingford
Tue 13 Feb - Langthorne Park, Leytonstone
Wed 14 Feb - Lloyd Park, Walthamstow
Thur 15 Feb - Rolls sports ground, Chingford

Email cycling@walthamforest.gov.uk

Don't forget to share your Travel for Life evidence with us!

[@walthamforest.gov.uk](https://www.schooltravelplans.gov.uk)

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF ENJOY WALTHAM FOREST

The flyer includes two photographs: one of a child on a red tricycle and another of an older couple on a green side-by-side bicycle.

Finally from me...

We had our non-uniform day today and the students have had a great end to the half-term, and we wish all the students and families a restful break from school. Please see below some additional information regarding the changes to the curriculum and school day from April. Please read this carefully and there will be opportunities in the week beginning 19th February to come into school for an information evening and to share your thoughts.

Yours faithfully,

Mr. Silk
Acting Headteacher

Changes to the Curriculum and School Day

Introduction

For some time, we have been looking at our curriculum model and the organisation of the day to maximise the opportunities for our students and ensure that our staff have access to exceptional professional development. We have looked at what happens in the most successful schools, not only in Waltham Forest but across the country and what has become clear, is that there is significant evidence to support a change to the working week to continue to drive the school forward.

What we propose is very much in line with the model followed by a number of Waltham Forest schools and has been in place at our neighbouring school, Norlington school, for the past ten years. During this time the school has seen significant improvement. Our proposal ensures that we continue to be above the 32.5 hours per week recommended for schools.

The New Model

The plan is to change the timing of the school day. A small change to increase the length of the school day on Thursday by 10 minutes so it is in line with the school day for the rest of the week. On Friday the school day will be decreased and we will not have a lesson p.5.

This reduces the number of lessons the students have from 25 lessons a week to 24 lessons per week. The reduction in lesson time is part of an ongoing curriculum allocation revision that we started in 2022-2023 and these changes include the removal of an hour from design and technology at KS3 and an hour from RE at Key Stage 4 in part to facilitate the reduction to 24 lessons a week. The changes we have made to the school will mean that we are still able to fully cover the national curriculum at KS3, and there will not be an impact on learning time in core or option subjects lesson time at KS4.

We will have an increase in the time our students are with their form tutor. This is to support our pastoral curriculum, where students work on a variety of important topics over the year, guided by their head of year and tutor, who know the groups the best and are able to tailor the topics to make them the most effective for their students. The increased time allows for more meaningful engagement in pastoral activities, greater variety in the activities with tutors and more time in assemblies, so when we have outside speakers in school they have more time with students without impacting on lesson time.

How will this Impact on teaching and learning?

We have a 2 week timetable and each fortnight staff will have time for a department meeting one week and the second week will be time where staff can use for:

- Offering additional activities
- Extracurricular enrichment or visits
- Academic Intervention classes
- Specific support for year 11 students
- Use the time for planning and preparation time either on site or taken flexibly

The changes to students time in school also allows for staff to have meeting time on Friday afternoons to:

- Meet within the school day to maximise positive student outcomes
- Professional development to upskill the teaching and support staff
- Plan focused and targeted intervention
- Support staff workload and wellbeing through planned time working with colleagues

These measures will help to support teachers' workload and wellbeing. We believe this will have a positive impact on our ability to recruit and retain high quality teachers and these changes would also reduce the cost of staffing. We have worked very hard recently to review the curriculum for our children, ensuring it is engaging, relevant to our students and the community, and gives our students the best opportunities for success. These plans are in place and now we need to commit to resourcing the different subjects; We want to invest in improving the building itself, the resources we have for lessons and ICT infrastructure in the school.

How will this affect you?

We appreciate these changes may affect you in terms of childcare, working or travel arrangements. To support with such challenges, we will have provision in the Library for students to remain at the school to study until 5.00pm on Mondays - Thursdays and 4.30pm on Fridays. The school day on Friday will still be a normal school day, including essential lessons and pastoral curriculum time as well as ensuring students have the opportunity to get a hot lunch on site. Students will be dismissed following afternoon registration on Friday at 2.20pm. However, there will be a significant support offer to enrich the students' curriculum.

What will be on offer on Friday afternoons?

There will be a space on site for any student that wishes to stay in school, especially for our most vulnerable students. This is a sample of the current plans but we will be adding to the offer and would be happy to hear any ideas you may have:

- Football coaching
- Eastern Archery (in small groups each week in partnership with Fatima Elizabeth Phrontistery)
- Additional Maths support (initially Year 11 students)
- Literacy support in the Library
- Higher Project Qualification (HPQ) for students currently in year 9 who can gain an extra GCSE
- Supervised independent study space with teachers available for support
- Gardening club / community garden vegetable patch

School Week Changes at a Glance:

	Current model	Model from April 2024	Change
Monday	8:20am - 3.20pm	8:20am - 3.20pm	
Tuesday	8:20am - 3.20pm	8:20am - 3.20pm	
Wednesday	8:20am - 3.20pm	8:20am - 3.20pm	
Thursday	8:20am - 3.10pm	8:20am - 3.20pm	+10 minutes
Friday	8:20am - 3.10pm	8:20am - 2.20pm	- 50minutes

How can I get in touch?

We will be holding a meeting with parents in the week beginning 19th February where you will have the opportunity to learn more about the changes and share your thoughts and you are welcome to contact us in the meantime with any concerns you may have.