



# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

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Archdiocese of  
Birmingham

18<sup>th</sup> February 2022



Dear Parents and Carers

Thank you for taking the time to respond to the survey about extending the school day. The responses show a majority of parents in support of the decision. We have had 145 responses in total; 79% agree with the proposal; 10% maybe and 12% do not agree. 91% would not raise serious objection to the proposal. We cannot please everyone we know but your comments are extremely valuable. I would like to take this opportunity to respond to some of the key questions that have been raised with regards to this decision.

The decision has been made purely to allow for enrichment time to the curriculum. As you are fully aware, the impact of COVID-19 on children's education and wellbeing is huge and the focus is on filling the gaps and catching up. We do not believe in drilling our children, we want them to have the best, most enriching curriculum where learning is promoted as a joy not a military march. I believe we have that balance and by adding 15 more minutes to the day, we will not only be able to enhance that but also from a teacher perspective, we will alleviate further the pressure of a tight and demanding timetable. You have our assurance that this will be the case. All staff have been given the opportunity to respond to the survey and to quote them:

"I welcome giving time for adjustments between subjects meaning extra learning time for the children."

"I'd like the extra time with the children to read books / play whole class games and just interact with them."

It is to focus on the need for enrichment and quality to support children in their learning and in their relationships so impacting on their social and emotional development.

Working in partnership with yourselves is extremely important; this survey is evidence to that; your opinions count. That partnership is supporting with home learning too and I appreciate many of the comments regarding reducing the time at home and questioning the amount of homework that is set. This is something we will work on with you. Being a mother myself, I know and understand the other commitments children have outside of school. We have not made this decision to make life more difficult for yourselves; it is driven by the needs of the children and their education. Any after school provision will be adjusted so that the time is the same. After school clubs will run for the same length of time as they have always done. Sunflowers will be continuing to use St Joseph's until the end of the academic year while they look for alternative accommodation from which to deliver their after school provision so will adapt their start time accordingly for the Summer Term.

It is interesting that we are the only school still operating the staggered system. We have chosen to keep it as it makes for a calmer start to the school day and allows year groups to come in, access cloakrooms and settle in an ordered way. I completely understand the difficulties with staggered pick up and drop off but we are accommodating those for you the best we can. Children who need





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to be dropped at the same time at different gates can be dropped at one gate and walk through and in the same way at the end of the day, can walk through to one pick up point. This will continue.

In response to your comments too, I have been giving thought to the back gate and the issues there. So, with regard to the issues and difficulties with the timings as they appear, I am now proposing that Year 2 start at 8.30am and finish at 3.00pm. Again, for any parents who have

children in Year 2 and Year 5 or 6, children can walk through to be collected from one gate. Therefore the times from 26<sup>th</sup> April will be:

Reception	8.50am – 3.20pm
Year 1	8.40am – 3.10pm
Year 2	8.30am – 3.00pm
Years 3 and 4	8.40am – 3.10pm
Years 5 and 6	8.30am- 3.00pm

This will alleviate the dismissing of Years 1 and 2 at the same time at the end of the school day. Some parents mentioned the need to be back on site to accommodate the pick-ups. This is something that I will not rule out for the end of the day and I do agree with the comment regarding community spirit which is something that is so important to me and all of the staff and Governors here at St Joseph's. We will discuss as a staff and with the Governing Body and I will communicate with yourselves during next half term. By starting in the summer term, we can work together to address issues as they occur. My zoom meetings will continue and this will be a topic of discussion at each one so please do either email the school office with comments which can be shared with the parents on the Zoom or join us for the meetings.

Yours in faith and partnership

Mrs Louise Bury  
Headteacher

