



Bexley Grammar School
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A Specialist Language College
and IB World School
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7th May 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

I need to update you on a few changes to plans for the summer term.

Changes to the school day from Monday 17th May

To support the smooth running of the school as examination year groups leave and some internal examinations take place we will be switching year 9 and year 12 lunchtimes and some timings within the lunch periods will change for some year groups - students will be given the details.

More significantly for parents/carers, the timings at the end of the day will change slightly as first lunch returns to 50 minutes instead of an hour. Year groups will therefore finish the school day as follows:

- 7 & 8 will finish at **3.00 pm**
- 9, 10 & 12 will finish at **3.10 pm**, and
- 11 (for their last week) will finish at **3.20 pm**.

Please be aware if you arrange to collect your child at the end of school. Start times remain unchanged.

Last student day of the school year reverts to Wednesday 21st July 2021

You will remember that as Covid cases were increasing rapidly in the run up to Christmas we decided at short notice to end the term two days early with permission from the DfE which offered some flexibility in the circumstances. At the time we planned to 'swap' INSET days with those at the end of the year, moving the end of the academic year from Wednesday 21st July to Friday 23rd July.

I understand that the government is making announcements imminently that may cause a flurry of holiday bookings and some of you will want urgent confirmation of the last day of school this summer. I have reviewed the decision in December and the subsequent developments that have affected schools this year and, in consultation with my senior leadership team and with the Chair of Governors, have decided to revert to the original date for the last day of the year: **Wednesday 21st July 2021**.

There are two main reasons for this: Throughout this academic year, with the staggered starts and finishes, staff have had longer days than previously by 25 minutes per day (the last years leave at 3.30pm instead of 3.05pm) - over 2 hours per week; and, we had to run considerable additional staff training after school for virtual learning before Christmas and since March, have had to run further sessions as a result of the cancellation of examinations and the additional burdens this places upon staff to meet specific Ofqual training requirements. There are also other considerations including the need for some staff to work during the summer holidays this year because of the changes to examination results dates and because of a summer school for transition from Year 6 to Year 7 which the DfE is strongly encouraging.

In short, if you did not amend your diary when I wrote in December, no action is required but if you did, please restore your diary to show that Wednesday 21st July will be the last day in school for students this academic year.

I apologise for any inconvenience this may cause - it has been a turbulent year of change and adjustment for all of us.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Elphick', written in a cursive style.

Steve Elphick