

St Martin's Church of England Primary School

'Learning together, achieving together'



Acting Headteacher: Mr Chris Penny

7th July 2023

Dear Parents/Carers,

CHANGES TO SCHOOL DAY 2023-24

I am writing to confirm changes to the school day for St Martin's C of E Primary school which will come into effect at the start of Term 1 in September. In making these changes, I have consulted with school staff, the local governing body, parents and carers, incoming Executive Headteacher, Sue Elliot and Trust CEO, Simon Marriott.

School timings from September 2023:

8:40: School Doors will open – children can make their way into classrooms

8:45: End of drop off window – Teachers will register classes

3:15: End of the school day

Changes to Breakfast Club and After-school Club:

Breakfast club: 7:30-8:40

After-school club: 3:15-6:00

Common questions/ comments following consultation:

Why is the school making these changes when some people have objected/the current system works well?

- The government has issued expectations that 'all state-funded mainstream schools currently offering a school week of below 32.5 hours should work towards increasing their hours to provide at least 32.5 hours by September 2023 at the latest.' This equates to a 6.5 hour day each day in school.
- Currently the school operates a 6.5 hour day in terms of contact time for teachers from 8:30-3:00. However, the 8:30 start time is not compulsory for all pupils and a fifteen minute drop off window remains in place as a legacy from alterations made during the pandemic.
- School registration is officially 8:45 for all pupils, which leaves the school short of the amount of hours it needs to provide for all pupils. I have attached the government guidance for school leaders setting out their expectations.

Why do you need to change the start time to 8:40? Why not leave it at 8:30?

- The fifteen minute drop off window was introduced during the Covid pandemic to reduce the numbers of families arriving into school at the same time. The school is reverting to close to its pre-pandemic timing, albeit now with a short drop off window.
- If we maintained the drop off window but extended the school day, I would be asking teachers to plan and work an additional 1 hour 15 minutes per week in contact time. Over the year this would amount to 48 ¾ hrs, a significant addition for staff workload.
- Moving to an 8:30 registration and keeping the 3:00 finish are likely to increase the number of pupils arriving officially 'late' and we would not be able to operate any drop off window.

"though many we make up one" (1 Corinthians, 12:12)

Cont/d...

Spring Hill, Worle, Weston-super-Mare, BS22 9BQ

Tel: 01934 628651

Email: office@stmartinsschool.org.uk

www.stmartinsschool.org.uk



(2)

Traffic is already a challenge – these changes will make things worse. I remember how bad it was before the drop off window.

- The school has reduced in size significantly since the drop off window was introduced. In January 2020, the school had 480 pupils on roll. In September this will have reduced to 296. School numbers, particularly in North Worle are projected to decline over the next 3-5 years due to a falling birth rate.
- Families may need to park further away from the school gates and walk.
- School leaders will remain visible at the school gates at the start and end of the day. The school has a designated PCSO officer to support the school community in safe parking and conduct on the roads around school.

These changes are going to affect my job. These changes will make me late to work.

- I'm sorry that this is the case. I am giving parents and carers 8 weeks' notice to inform employers and make alternative arrangements.
- Families can use the school's breakfast club facilities if they wish to drop their child off sooner.

Thank you to everybody who has responded to the consultations, including staff and families. If you need any further details please contact office@stmartinsschool.org.uk

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Penny', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Chris Penny
Acting Headteacher