



Rye College & Rye Studio  
The Grove  
Rye  
East Sussex  
TN31 7NQ

Headteacher: Barry Blakelock

Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> January 2018

Dear Parent and Families,

**RE: Consultation on Changing the Times of the School Day from Monday, 16th April 2018**

**SUMMARY LETTER**

I'm pleased to enclose the outcome of the recent consultation on changing the times of the school day from Monday, 16th April 2018.

The trustees received a pleasing level of engagement with the consultation especially from East Sussex County Council who provided significant insight into proposed transport arrangements for the area.

In summary, the outcome of the consultation is as follows:

1. Maintain the current start time of 9.00am for the summer term 2018 and conduct an impact assessment of new service arrangements due to be introduced in May 2018;
2. If new service arrangements do not improve student punctuality, implement a later start time from September 2018 without further consultation but reference to this consultation – such a change should be within and not exceed the 15 minutes proposed here and be designed to better align with new service arrangements;
3. Undertake an annual review of the timings of the school day in the spring term and actively participate in East Sussex County Council's consultation with stakeholders so as to influence a 'best outcome' for Rye College in the future.

I have attached the full consultation response which will be shared with all stakeholders.

I would like to thank those parents, students and other stakeholders, who engaged with the consultation to get, what I am sure, is the best outcome for the college and studio school.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Barry Blakelock', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Barry Blakelock  
Headteacher



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Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> January 2018

**Dear Stakeholder,**

**RE: Consultation on Changing the Times of the School Day from Monday, 16th April 2018**

Following my letter on Wednesday, 15th November 2017 on behalf of the Trustees, the consultation to review the timings of the college and studio school day with effect from Monday, 16th April 2018 has closed. The full findings of the consultation are detailed below.

The proposal was to change the start of the school day to better accommodate local transport arrangements and increase the number of students able to start punctually. For some time the start of the school day has sat uncomfortably close to the arrival of the Ashford and Hastings trains at 8.55am and 8.56am respectively. The four or five minute margin in addition to any delay on either line has meant that many students arrive after the current 9.00am start time. The formal start time is undermined by the arrival of the trains and focus on education is hampered by a regular ‘soft start’ to the school day.

As part of the consultation we received responses from parents and families by email and public meeting, from students by dedicated discussion time in tutor time and from East Sussex County Council Transport Hub acting on behalf of train and bus companies.

On the whole feedback was balanced with the general consensus being an understanding of the rationale but with reservations about whether changes would better align with public transport. Those travelling from Kent were by and large supportive of the changes feeling it would ease their journeys to Rye whilst those travelling from Hastings were more reticent, especially users of the bus service – those using trains tended to be more positive.

In summary, the following themes were raised through the consultation process.

Concern	Response
Alignment with public transport services.	The purpose of the review is to better align the start of the school day to public transport. Changes would only be implemented following an impact assessment that determined they would serve to improve punctuality for the student body as a whole.
More students would be out later during the darker evenings of the winter months.	Student safety is very important to us. Any changes would be kept to a minimum so as to better align the start of the school day to

	public transport. More students should benefit from any changes than numbers inconvenienced by them. We have been very mindful of student safety throughout this consultation. When considering what might be seen as 'reasonable' the maximum waiting times under present arrangements have be used.
Earlier arrivals or later departures on buses may lead to more students in town for longer.	Somewhat earlier arrivals or later departures present a number of opportunities for students including the possibility of a structured 'breakfast club' or greater attendance to 'keep-up' sessions after hours. Any changes to the timings of the school day would be considered alongside timings of the primary school day and additional out-of-hour services.
Pick-up and drop off times may be out of kilter for Rye Primary School and College.	
Change in start and end times may impact on attendance to clubs, events or detentions as well as homework or out-of-school activities.	Whilst a child's home-school balance is an important consideration, the primary purpose of this consultation is to improve the educational offer. Any change to start or end times would be kept to a minimum with the intention of improving punctuality and better aligning to public transport services.
If students get home later, it may impact their ability to sufficiently complete homework or participate in out-of-school activities.	
Proposals were orientated towards train users at the expense of bus or road users.	The proposals have been brought about by the significant number of late comers who use the train each day. Full consideration would be given to the implications for users of other forms or transport and the impact on their families. The proposals would only be implemented if it was felt they would benefit the student body as a whole.
Individual transport arrangements especially from road users and working families.	
Later start times would mean later break and lunch times leading to increasing numbers of hungry students.	The internal organisation of the school day is a separate matter for consideration as part of a broader curriculum review. Break and lunchtimes will be considered alongside lesson length and overall impact on learning. Tutor time is a discrete part of the school day; it is not designed to absorb habitual lateness to college.
Shorter tutor times were not currently allowing for the absorption of late arrival on public transport.	
Changes mid-academic year are particularly disruptive.	The proposal mid-academic year reflects the urgency and importance of the issue. It is felt that poor punctuality significantly undermines the educational offer at present.

As part of the consultation further information was submitted by East Sussex County Council Transport Hub on behalf of the train and bus companies. They understood the rationale for the proposals but asked any changes be



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considered in the context of new service arrangements currently being consulted on with providers and user groups for introduction from May 2018.

Whilst details of the proposed service arrangements have been provided as part of this consultation they need to be validated by Network Rail and the Department for Transport before being published therefore exact details are not provided here. Furthermore, we were asked to consider the “very careful timing of bus routes so as to meet the needs of other service users alongside the need to “maximise utilisation of the bus resources funded through the County Council’s limited budget”.

Having had sight of the proposed service arrangements from May 2018 and wishing to avoid any decision that is counter-productive to the educational offer the following recommendations were made and have been accepted by the trust board:

1. Maintain the current start time of 9.00am for the summer term (2018) and conduct an impact assessment of new service arrangements (it is asserted that new service arrangements will have a positive impact on punctuality), however;
2. If new service arrangements do not improve student punctuality, implement a later start time from September 2018 without further consultation but reference to this consultation – such a change should be within and not exceed the 15 minutes proposed here and be designed to better align with new service arrangements;
3. Undertake an annual review of the timings of the school day in the spring term and actively participate in East Sussex County Council’s consultation with stakeholders so as to influence a ‘best outcome’ for Rye College in the future.

I would like to thank all stakeholders for their time and energies in responding to this consultation. I hope the outcome contributes to our mission to improve our education offer.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Barry Blakelock', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Barry Blakelock  
Headteacher