



# Midhurst Rother College

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November 2024

## MRC School Day Change Consultation - FAQs

Thank you for the responses to the consultation about the proposed changes to the school day from September 2025. In total, just over 7% of parents / carers gave their views and the responses ranged from wholehearted support to some who were completely opposed. The majority of respondents, however, were seeking clarification and assurance on certain aspects of what is proposed.

The main issue for clarification related to transport. To confirm: transport to school in the morning would be unaffected. Transport home would change, with buses (both Local Authority (LA) and paid routes) changing timetables to fit in with the school day. There would be a late bus for children who stay for clubs and extra-curricular activities. More detail is provided below, as well as responses to other issues.

I hope that this document helps to answer the majority of queries raised. Your feedback is gratefully received and helps shape our response. It means that we can work with you to overcome any barriers that you foresee so that we can remove them. This allows us to provide high quality curriculums both inside and outside of the school day, to balance staff workload and allow all students to access the activities they are interested in whilst making sure they can travel home safely.

### Transport home from school: how will this work?

Children who travel to school on LA buses will be collected from school and transported home after the end of the school day. In this case, we anticipate the buses will leave the school site at around 3.15. Buses currently leave school about ten minutes after the end of the school day and this would be similar.

Some parents / carers raised queries about paid buses, specifically related to the times these buses currently depart from Midhurst. As an example, I received comments about the 70 bus which currently leaves at 3.05 and 4.05pm. The bus companies have informed me that they will alter their timetables should the new school day times go ahead. In this case, it is likely all paid buses will leave around 15 minutes after the end of the school day. This would include buses to places such as Elsted, Rogate Chichester, Haselmere, Petersfield and others. This means that children will not have to wait for an hour for buses to take them home – the bus companies will create a timetable that fits with the school day.

### Transport from school: will the school run a late bus for children who attend clubs?

Yes. We are currently looking at how we can run late buses for students who choose to participate in extra-curricular activities. More information will follow on this once we have completed and planned the routes.



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**Educational provision: the students will miss out on education.**

Students at MRC are currently taught for 28 hours per week (including enrichment). The statutory requirement for students is 25 taught hours per week. We are, and have been, above this for a significant period. This means that teachers at MRC teach more than teachers in other schools – about 10% more. By making clubs and activities optional, students will be able to attend the clubs they want to go to and staff will be required to teach the same amount as teachers in other schools.

**Teachers' salaries: are you doing this so you can pay teachers less?**

No. We are not seeking to do this to pay teachers less.

**Extra-curricular clubs: will you reduce the offer?**

No – we will not reduce the offer. It is possible the offer may well increase and that children can participate in clubs, without parents having to drive to collect them, on the same or more days than they currently do.

**Will the extra-curricular clubs be optional?**

Yes. They will be optional and students will be able to attend any that suit their interests. Through organising late buses, it will be possible for students to stay for clubs and still get transport home. Children who pay for a bus pass will be able to use these either straight after school (at 3.15) or after clubs (around 4.10). The bus companies are looking at the possibilities of the timetable at the moment and are part of our consultation process.

**Is there a limit to the number of activities my child can do during extra-curricular time?**

No. Your child can participate in as many activities as they would like to do.

**Will there be a charge for extra-curricular activities?**

No. There will be no charge for these activities.

**Will this affect school fixtures against other schools?**

The proposed change to the school day will allow MRC students to participate in more fixtures and matches against other schools. Our current finish time of 3.40pm sometimes hinders this.

**My child likes the earlier finish on Fridays. Please can you maintain this.**

In order to make sure students have the required amount of teaching each week, it will not be possible to have an earlier finish for students on Fridays.

**Are you doing this so that you can introduce a two-week half-term in October?**

No – we are not planning a two-week half-term in October. Our view is that this is potentially difficult for parents / carers with children in primary schools. We want to stay in line with other schools in West Sussex.

**Could you start the school day later and finish at the same time as now?**

We could do this, but this would mean that students would not have any extra-curricular activities. If school started at 9.30 (instead of 8.30) and finished at 3.40, any clubs would have to run after this time which is quite late for students to leave school.

**Has a decision on this already been made?**

A final decision will be made in the coming weeks, following this process and meetings with governors. I am in discussion with the Chair of Governors about feedback from all stakeholders, including staff in school. We are proposing to change the school day and are also seeking to gain as much feedback to inform this process as possible.

Thank you for everyone's feedback on this. If you have any further questions or comments following this response, please send them to: [schooldayconsultation@mrc-academy.org](mailto:schooldayconsultation@mrc-academy.org)

The responses will now be reviewed by Local Governing Body. Parents / carers will be updated on this in January.