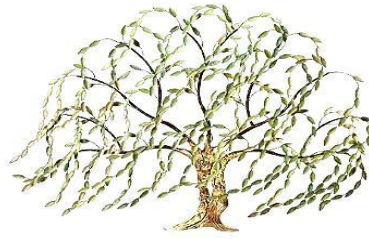




Greasbrough
Primary School



Willow Tree Academy

The School Day Information

Over the course of the last two years the schools in our academy have closed to children for the last 2 hours of the day on Fridays. This was first implemented as a response to our controls and measures in light of the Covid 19 global pandemic.

The all-round benefits have been recognised over the intervening period by parents, children, staff and governors. This led to a formal consultation (2020/21) with parents, staff and children in regard to extending the Friday 1:15 pm finish post the pandemic, and making it a regular part of the school timetable. The initiative has been a standing agenda item on all School Improvement Board meetings each term, so that governors could assess the impact and seek parent governor views over time.

From the initial consultation across all Willow Tree Academy schools, feedback has been that the early finish is something which families enjoy and want to continue. Positives have been continually outlined by staff, governors and parents.

It should be noted a large number of parents didn't respond to our initial survey; in all surveys this is seen as positive affirmation. Also a minority of working parents did not agree with continuing the strategy; in response to their concerns and to support working parents we have implemented high quality enhanced provision, with take up of between five and twenty-five children a week, depending on the school. We have also reduced the cost for multiple siblings, as the main issue in complaints was paying for the sessions.

Unfortunately, the decision to proceed to formally approving the new initiative at Trust Board level had to be put on hold. This was because of the ongoing pandemic and especially the impact of the new Omicron variant on pupil and staff infection rates, staff illness and absence. This has meant we have continued our controls and measures within our Recovery and Contingency plan into the Spring Term. However, as the government has launched the 'Living with Covid' strategy we are now reviewing, with the help of the LA and Public Health England, how we proceed for the rest of the school year.

On March the 22nd the Trust Board will further consider the positive impact of the initiative, with a view to moving to a more permanent arrangement, we know this is a positive move for our schools, children and families. We are now finalising our latest information and feedback to you, and below are some answers to questions which were raised during the initial consultation. Should you have any further thoughts please email your Head of School before the 15th March 2022.

Benefits to home

- ★ Longer weekend for short breaks and holidays.
- ★ Time to complete home learning or share learning from the week.
- ★ Children's resilience and mental health is supported.
- ★ Parents who work at weekends are supported, as they get a chance to be with their children
- ★ Family time with extended family members is available
- ★ Time to book important appointments outside of school time.
- ★ Enhanced child care provision is offered should it be needed
- ★ This offers children the opportunity to take part in activities they may not get chance to attend out of school at a reduced cost and helps to identify where children are gifted and talented
- ★ The cost is reduced for siblings

Benefits to school

- ★ Children are taught by their class teacher all day every day because PPA time happens on Friday afternoons.
- ★ There is a positive effect on children and behaviour to maximise learning. CPD and inhouse training is more effective and efficient
- ★ The ongoing challenges and impact on staff well being are recognised and supported
- ★ Parent Governors are supportive and note that to change back after two years will further impact on behaviour and mental health of children

Staff thoughts on the school day

- ★ I work with my colleagues on planning and assessment without any other pressures
- ★ We can meet together to plan learning across key stages and classes as well as meeting subject leaders to support with planning ideas
- ★ I have been able to access CPD with my peers regularly and this is improving my skills
- ★ We update IDPs and plan learning for children on the SEND register
- ★ I have my Sunday back!
- ★ We are able to discuss and think about the classroom environments, they are well resourced and set up for the following week
- ★ Staff well-being has improved and it has helped with my workload.

Pupil thoughts on the school day

- ★ I really enjoy spending the time with my family,
- ★ I complete my home learning so that I can have the weekend seeing my family and friends,
- ★ I can go to my swimming lessons earlier
- ★ I like Fridays because it allows me to spend time with my mum and nan. I don't usually get to spend time with my nan as she is always looking after me, my grandad and my two younger cousins which is hard work for her. She enjoys going out with me because she never really gets to spend quality time with me. The other reason why is because it lets me get my homework out of the way for the rest of the week,
- ★ I really enjoy the Friday extra curricular clubs on offer.

Do children have less learning time?

No. Children will be in school for the same amount of time as before the changes. This has been made possible by starting earlier/finishing later and reducing lunchtime to 50/55 minutes. The teaching time will still be a minimum of 25 hours which is in line with national expectations.

It should be noted that other schools, in particular secondary schools;

- ★ Have a reduced teaching time because they have afternoon breaks (less than 25 hours)
- ★ Our curriculum is arranged to ensure children engage in high quality outdoor learning so that an afternoon break is not necessary.

Will there be any childcare available for Friday Afternoons?

Yes. School will provide paid childcare on Friday afternoons which can be booked online via Arbor. These will be run by outside providers or school staff and will be quality activities with a learning focus. Many parents said that they would like a paid childcare option. For your information it is noted other schools charge for all clubs and events

- ★ Willow Tree does not charge for after school clubs and has no intention to do this. We provide after schools for 18 weeks of the year, six a term.

Consultation outcomes

Would you like the early finish on Fridays to continue?

	Responses	Yes/Don't Mind	No	Complaints
Rockingham	91	61%	39%	2/0.3%
Herringthorpe	93	53%	47%	12/3%
Greasbrough	164	76%	24%	1/0.4%
Roughwood	106	52%	48%	4/1.2%

Overall Willow Tree Academy

Count of Would you like the early finish on Fridays to continue?

