



KOWLOON
JUNIOR SCHOOL
九龍小學

Success for Every Child



Friday 24th May 2024

Dear KJS Families,

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to all the parents who participated in yesterday's Q&A session, whether through Zoom or in person, regarding the proposed timetable adjustments at KJS.

We recognize that these adjustments may present challenges for some families. However, we want to reiterate that our primary focus is on enhancing the teaching and learning experience at KJS. The proposed changes have been carefully considered with this goal in mind.

Prior to the meeting, we engaged in extensive consultation with the school council, individual parents, and the PTA, which represents the parent body of KJS. Their valuable feedback and input have been instrumental in shaping the proposed changes. It is important to note that as a result of this consultation and feedback, we have made amendments to the proposal, such as the inclusion of free ECAs, which directly stemmed from the feedback provided.

We have attached some FAQs based on the questions at yesterday's meeting. As I have said from the beginning, if parents wish to have a phone call to discuss the change or clarify our reasons, I am more than willing to discuss. I can assure, as I reiterated, our aim with this is to provide an even better education that suits the needs of this ever-changing world.

Once again, we thank you for your ongoing support and understanding as we work together to enhance the educational experience at KJS.

Warm regards,

Gavin MacGregor

Principal





FAQs based on Q&A session on Thursday 23rd May.

ECAs

- Any preliminary info on what the ECA sessions will be? **ECAs will be free and not compulsory. Children can attend if they wish .**
- What is the capacity of each ECA group? Will there be enough for the entire year group? **We aim to meet the needs as required and have all the information on these clubs and how to register by mid June. Our aim is to enable all those that need an ECA to have access to one.**
- Will other ECA times be changed to accommodate new school times (eg Monday music club) **Our regular ECA timetable often changes year on year in terms of the days in which clubs take place.**
- Will school buses be available to pick up children after Monday ECA? Currently not all bus companies provide an extra bus for ECA after school. **We are still in negotiations but we are confident that yes there will still be buses available.**

Teaching and learning

- Can the school elaborate on how the extra 15 minutes on the other days add value to the learning for students please?
- Unsure if one hour of continuous learning can be made good by additional 15 minutes on 4 working days
- Prior to the proposed change how many hours teachers were investing in collaboration etc. Hence what's the delta addition.
- How will we measure the positive delta benefit to the students

We completely understand how it may appear some learning time will be lost, but can assure you this change will enable us to minimize the current transition times that can reduce the learning times in some lessons. The time children will be in school will increase through this process. Our role is to make that time as impactful as possible.

Value in education is also not measured in hours and minutes. The added value from this change is in the potential for students to experience higher quality learning through teachers being able to plan collaboratively and teach together across different curriculum areas. We believe this will lead to a richer and more coherent overall learning experience for students, the opportunity for them to make deeper connections between different areas of their learning and to have a wider choice of ways of exploring different concepts and skills.





New start time

- Have the school considered that school time starts 15 minutes earlier means students will have 15 minutes less resting time and from a health perspective, primary school students younger kids should need more sleep in comparison to high school students older adolescents. **Over 90 percent of our students arrive by 8.15 at the moment. We have undertaken a census count across a whole week. [Research from the US](#) by the American Educational Research Association found that earlier start times have little impact on Elementary school students.**
- I would like to express my opinion that as a working parent I am NOT supportive of the 15 minutes earlier starts Mondays to Fridays. **The vast majority of our staff are working parents themselves so we completely understand the challenge a few minutes later or earlier can have on certain families. From our census taken across a week we noted that around 85 percent of our students arrive by 8.15am currently. We are happy to have conversations with individual parents about what support they need. Our proposal enables us to have some flexibility. (e.g start time of 8.20).**
- Just echoing what other parents are concerned about school starting at 8:15am, since we live quite far. There are times that my child will come in later than 8:1 am, especially if transport is challenged by the weather. My concern or rather question is how does that impact the students attendance? As I am aware that there is a record on their punctuality. **This will not affect attendance at all. Staff will be on hand to help any late students get to their classes as quickly as possible, we recognise weather can have an impact no matter what the start time is.**

School bus / pick up arrangement

- Will there be any time change for the school bus in the morning? **No, we have worked with the bus companies and they are confident if parents attend at the current time then there will be no issue. Their issue is when children are dropped off late currently.**
- Has the school considered the logistics change at the parents' end, students who are walkers? **ECAs are being implemented to support the walkers who can't be collected at the new time.**

Practices in other schools

- Will the wider school community be consulted on future changes? **We are gathering views and taking feedback on this change. We are making adaptations because of this.**
- Do other ESF Primary schools plan similar timetable changes? **We know they have similar challenges and some are looking at similar models.**





Cost

- The extra costs of school buses that will be incurred on parents is difficult to swallow on a regular basis, in addition to the 4.87% school fee increase. The ultimate reason behind is to attract better staff, but please also have a bit of consideration for parents' finances would be appreciated. **Although ESF fees are not set by the school we recognise that increases to fees are challenging, that is why our aim for this proposal is to ensure that no extra cost will be passed onto the parent. The school is using its own budget and income to fund this**

Consultation

- Is this a notification of the change or a proposal for parents to consider? **Both. We have met with our school council (including parents), representatives from ESF centre, School staff and the PTA committee.**
- Has the school consulted any parent or PTA before proposing and confirming this change to all students? What was done and when was that done? **We met with the PTA whose feedback was vital before we presented it to the rest of parents. Changes were made following this meeting. We are happy to share a timeline of the process so far.**
- If there is a reasonable number of families opposed to this (to be clear, silence on the matter does not equate to agreement), will the school abandon this 'proposal'? We want parents to be supportive.

We are making this change based on our experience as educators in order to enhance the learning experience of KJS students. KJS is being supported and encouraged by the ESF leadership team to make bold innovations to respond to the challenges of providing high quality education in a rapidly changing and uncertain World.

We strongly believe that these changes will have a significant positive impact on our students and will commit to sharing evidence of this as we move forward. However, we also continue to fine tune and develop our plans in response to feedback from the various stakeholders, including parents.

- I would like to make it clear that the parents will also be deeply hurt and disappointed because even though we parents strongly voiced our concerns for our children from all perspectives, the school still chooses to go ahead with the proposed changes. What's the point of having a consultation really. **We value the feedback that parents are giving us and can assure you that adaptations have and will continue to be made to the proposal to find a positive resolution.**





- Maybe school can be clearer if this was a “notification” than a “proposal”. If we want to voice out, we are not parents who do not have trust towards education professionals. Well, we are the parents who for sure want the best for our children. Not being an education professional should not belittle our views. When there is a project at work, making consensus and agreement are the key to move it forward. Seems that things work differently in the education field.
We would never wish to belittle parents' views, we welcome all views particularly those that are based on evidence and experience in other sectors. As we have always said we would be happy to meet any parent face to face or speak over the phone to discuss in more detail. These Q and A sessions have always been planned so we can offer a voice to parents to help us with this proposed change. We recognise change can be difficult but we also know how supportive our community is. Please know every comment or question is being taken seriously within this process.
- It's not a matter of trust or otherwise. It's a need for transparency and objective evaluation with fair consideration of feedback from all impacted. *Yes we agree, we are considering all feedback extremely carefully. The aim of the Q and A sessions is to be transparent. We have also followed a process of consultation with ESF, the School Council, Staff and the PTA prior to these Q and A sessions.*

