Thomas Mills
High School & Sixth Form

Headteacher: P J Hurst BA MA MBA MSc NPQH

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Dear Parents/ Carers,

9th November 2026

Headteacher's Update Letter 2026/2027 (Letter 3)

I hope this letter finds you well and that the half-term was an enjoyable break. This letter focuses on the ongoing review of our curriculum and the specific aspect of the timetable and school day, with potential changes from September 2027.

Feedback so far

Feedback from parents and staff has generally been positive. There is still an opportunity to contribute if you have something to say, or to ask. Common themes have been around:

- Clarification that a two-week timetable will not result in lessons of around 100 minutes.
- What the school's preferred preference is.
- Introduce changes to the curriculum and timetable/school day in one go.
- Positivity around one-hour lessons (25 period week) and the opportunity for good retrieval practice both at the start and end of lessons.

However, our current school day times do not fit a 25-period week so well. One consequence would be a much later lunchtime. As a very rural school I must consider transport and the effects on both staff, as well as families.

We have been in touch with Suffolk County Council, and they would be able to arrange revised times with the contracted bus companies, provided they are given sufficient time.

We have started a three-month consultation. We have an Academy Board meeting in February where a final decision can be made.

Proposed New School Day

A proposed school day is outlined below:

8.40	Registration
8.45	Period 1
9.45	Period 2
10.45	Break
11.00	Period 3
12.00	Period 4
1.00	Lunchtime
2.00	Tutorial and Assembly
2.30	Period 5
3.30	Final Bell

Overall, the proposed school day starts 15 minutes earlier and finishes 15 minutes earlier. We think this has a number of benefits including:

- Maximising learning time in the mornings
- Maintaining the current lunchtime arrangements with the focus on clubs and activities
- Enabling staff meetings, training and even Parents Evenings to start and finish earlier

It is likely that some option lines in the Sixth Form could include double lessons which would support practical elements, but this would not be the default blocking for the rest of the school.

Such change is not without an impact, and I am particularly mindful of families who must juggle the school run with other schools, as well as their own work commitments. We would also have to undertake a formal consultation with staff. I would welcome any feedback or representations as we explore our options going forward.

I am planning to discuss these changes with School Council, and we will support representatives talking to their tutor groups about advantages and disadvantages of any changes.

Relationship with Curriculum Changes

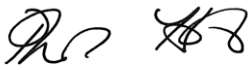
Changes to the school day start and finish times is a specific consultation. We envisage making decisions on the curriculum before the end of term.

I think if we felt that changing the school start and finish times disadvantaged too many families and staff, we would need to work with our current timetable model.

Summary

Thank you in advance for your consideration of the above changes which, if introduced, would start from 1st September 2027.

Yours sincerely,



Mr P J Hurst
Headteacher