



# **Consultation by Trust Board of Education Impact Academy Trust for Queensbury School.**

**Proposal for Early School Closure on Fridays to  
Support Staff Collaboration and Strategic  
Planning**

## Introduction

The Education Impact Academy Trust Board is consulting on a proposal to make changes to the end of the school day for Queensbury School students from September 2025 to enhance quality and communication across a large special school on two sites.

- Queensbury School is one of 27 Birmingham special schools and offers (From September 2025) 370 places for pupils with an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) for Moderate Learning Difficulties, Severe Learning Difficulties, Autism and Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs, (SEMH). Queensbury School is an Academy Special School within the Education Impact Academy Trust that is in Erdington. (North Birmingham).
- The effectiveness of a school is closely tied to the capacity of its staff to plan collaboratively, reflect on teaching practices, and implement key strategies associated to students' individual needs. This proposal advocates for an earlier closure on Fridays, to dedicate time for staff to engage in strategic planning and professional collaboration. By reallocating a small portion of instructional time, we can improve teaching quality, enhance communication, consolidate on standardised approaches particularly in relation to staff having time to handover and implement key information surrounding student individual needs.
- In recent years, the complexity of student additional needs and diagnosis has increased at Queensbury and across the city. Information shared between staff and teams is critical to providing high quality education, safety and meeting the needs of section F within a child's Education Health Care plan. Having specific time for staff teams to discuss good practice, attendance, behaviour, planning, assessments, pastoral emotional wellbeing, referrals to multi-agencies and dedicated time for staff to communicate with parents and families. This model has been designed from other high performing and effective specialist settings and NHS providers where allocated time is given for handover and communication surrounding an individual's bespoke needs. As the school has increased in size, the challenge for staff to be aware of greater numbers of students and complexity is paramount. This will ensure that all staff who work across multiple students or class groups have sufficient time to plan, review and implement relevant individual strategies and further improve consistency and high-quality specialist educational provision.
- In Summary – Queensbury school is currently rated as Good by Ofsted and in the strive to provide exemplary education and improve further we have been carefully considering approaches to support this drive. When a child's individual needs (which are likely to change during the duration of their education time) are fully met, they are better regulated, safe, happy and the

efficiency of learning increases. Equally, staff confidence and competencies are improved as they have more specific time to review key indicators to support a student's learning. In effect we produce a model of improved quality over quantity which benefits all stakeholders' outcomes and wellbeing.

### School Information

|                     |  |                             |   |
|---------------------|--|-----------------------------|---|
| <b>Type:</b>        | Academy Special Sponsor led            |                             |   |
| <b>Trust</b>        | Education Impact Academy Trust         |                             |   |
| <b>Name:</b>        | Queensbury School                      | <b>DFE:</b>                 | 3307001   |
|                     |  | <b>URN</b>                  | 146858  |
| <b>Address:</b>     | Wood End Road, Erdington B24 8BL       |                             |   |
| <b>Ward:</b>        | Erdington                              | <b>District:</b>            | Birmingham  |
| <b>Age Range:</b>   | 11 – 19 years                          | <b>Capacity Sept 2025 :</b> | <b>370 students<br/>250 @ Queensbury<br/>120 @ New Horizons</b> |
| <b>Last Ofsted:</b> | Previous School inspection<br>May 2023 | <b>Ofsted Rating</b>        | Overall Effectiveness:<br><br><b>GOOD</b>                       |

### Current Arrangements

Currently the end of the school day is at 3.10pm on Fridays for students that are independent or collected by families.

Our students on SEND Transport leave from 2.55pm

Our students in individual taxis leave from 2.45pm

### What changes are proposed?

The Trust Board and Local Governing Body are proposing to carry out the following changes to Queensbury School from September 2025.

- 1) **Students end of day arrangements on Fridays, to depart from 1.30pm**
- 2) **Staff teams to have set class meeting / dedicated time to enhance consistency within teams and further improve communication with families / multi agency teams due to increased complexity of needs.**

Rational.

The success of our students depends on well-prepared and highly collaborative educators. Currently, the demands of the school day leave limited time for staff to develop and align the curriculum, analyse student progress and plan interventions. As our students' complexity has increased in recent years, it is vital our staff are well planned and prepared to fully meet needs. By dedicating 90 minutes every Friday we aim to enhance:

- **Improving the quality of education** – Class teams have approximately 5-10 minutes at the end of each day for debriefs and class planning after all pupils have departed. Changing the time of the school day on one day (Friday) will increase this to 90 minutes, meaning that class teams can spend more time on personalised learning planning for pupils in their class. In addition, this time can be used to provide regular training for class teams in medical needs, positive approaches to behaviour, speech, language and communication provision and sensory strategies that can be implemented in class to improve the provision we currently offer. We know that giving the time to get this right will improve access to and engagement with learning for all pupils and help them to make better progress in school.
- **Collaborative Planning:** Effective lesson planning and curriculum development require uninterrupted time for collaboration. Early closure will allow staff to share best practices, align teaching strategies, review sequenced learning and ensure consistency across year / class groups and teaching pathways.
- **Develop a stronger, more cohesive educational community:** Dedicated time can be used for reflective practices, enabling staff to stay updated on pedagogical innovations which will in turn, better meet the academic and emotional needs of our students.
- **Improved Student Outcomes:** Research indicates that well-prepared and supported teachers are more effective in delivering high-quality education. The long-term impact of enhanced planning will directly benefit students and improve learning outcomes.
- **Home to school communication** – Changing the time of the school day will allow class teams more time to share information with parents thus building a stronger partnership approach to their child / children.
- **Avoiding traffic congestion** – allowing pupils to leave school before peak travel times is likely to reduce the dysregulation experienced by some pupils because of heavy traffic, busy public transport routes and lengthy journeys.
- **Improving attendance** – some children are frequently being collected early from school and are missing part of the timetabled curriculum. Changing the time of the day is likely to reduce the number of absences relating to children being collected early from school.

## Why do we want to do this?

This proposal has been developed for the following reasons;

- To provide better continuity for pupils at the school.
- To provide better individual bespoke SEND targeted resources to enhance how we meet individual needs. (Particularly identified in section F of Educational Health Care Plan)
- Allow staff teams greater time to be able to respond with more bespoke targeted strategies to our young people's emotional wellbeing and needs.
- Enhance quality rather than quantity.
- Improve behaviour and regulation.
- Debrief and handover meetings help staff mitigate potential changes in school that can trigger or cause students to dysregulate.
- Prevent staff missing key bits of information that is required for them to carry out their role sufficiently.
- To enhance the offer places for pupils with an EHCP for SLD / ASC / SEMH needs in secondary education.
- To help the Local Authority to address the demand for places for secondary age pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) for Social Emotional and Mental Health needs, Severe Learning Difficulties and Autism.
- Regulation Plans, Risk Assessments and Key documentation surrounding the child can be discussed in confidential space and allow staff to be able to have greater care and attention in a large special school.

## When will these changes happen?

If the proposal is approved by the decision makers, The Education Impact Academy Trust Board and Local Governing Body. It is intended that the proposal commences from the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025.

## How will this affect pupils at the school?

- Students' end of school day would typically finish at 1.30pm on a Friday. All other days would remain as current.

| Day of Week | Start Time | Finish Time   |
|-------------|------------|---------------|
| Monday      | 8.30am     | 3.10 - 3.20pm |
| Tuesday     | 8.30am     | 3.10 - 3.20pm |
| Wednesday   | 8.30am     | 3.10 - 3.20pm |
| Thursday    | 8.30am     | 3.10 - 3.20pm |
| Friday      | 8.30am     | 1.30pm - 2pm  |

- The curriculum time per week would be a 23.5-hour teaching timetable with 9 hours pastoral time. (32.5hrs)
- This is still in line with the DFE's recommended hours of 32.5 hours per week in "Length of a School week" published July 2023.  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/64a2f21fbb13dc000cb2e5e1/Minimum\\_School\\_Week\\_Non-Statutory\\_Guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/64a2f21fbb13dc000cb2e5e1/Minimum_School_Week_Non-Statutory_Guidance.pdf)
- Legislation - Specialist settings, including special schools and alternative provision, support a wide range of pupils with diverse needs and therefore currently structure their school week in more varied ways than mainstream schools. Therefore, the expectation for a minimum school week of 32.5 hours does not apply to these settings. Despite this, we would still be in line with DFE recommendations.

### **How will the proposal increase educational standards?**

- Staff will be more informed about individuals within their class. Currently our support staff have minimal time (Typically 10- 20 minutes per day) to receive, read and update themselves on significant quantities of individual information relating to their children in their class.
- Being better informed ensures consistency within the class and appropriate strategies followed by all staff. This supports the students better.
- Confidential space to discuss practices and strategies that are working with individuals or require attention and change. This prevents staff having to be extracted from the learning when the school is required to deal with incidents or matters.
- Ability for wider teams in school to support relevant class teams.
- Ultimately having students in school whose anxieties are reduced due to appropriate strategies supporting them, will allow our students the capacity to learn more efficiently and improve quality further.

### **Will there be any effect on other schools, academies and educational institutions within the area?**

There should be no negative effects on other schools.

### **How will this affect staff?**

- Staff working hours and contracts would remain the same.
- Staff would still have training / meeting time on a Wednesday evening from 3.20pm - 4.10pm (This has been reduced by 10 minutes on a Wednesday and reallocated to a Friday, so staff contracts for end of day arrangements are the same as other days to end at 3.20pm).
- Teachers and Teaching Assistant contracts are different from one another.
- Teachers' contracts will remain the same and there combined annual hours / directed time (1265 hours) will remain the same.
- The time of the school day for support staff would change to:

| Day of Week | Start Time | Finish Time | Focus                                    |
|-------------|------------|-------------|--|
| Monday      | 8.30am     | 3.20pm      |  |
| Tuesday     | 8.30am     | 3.20pm      |  |
| Wednesday   | 8.30am     | 4.10pm      | Staff Training<br>(3.30pm - 4.10pm)      |
| Thursday    | 8.30am     | 3.20pm      |  |
| Friday      | 8.30am     | 3.20pm      | Class Team<br>Meetings (2pm –<br>3.20pm) |

### As a parent I may struggle to be at home to receive my child from 1.30pm onwards?

- The school will also provide some access to clubs after the school day on a Friday for families that have legitimate challenges, subject to available spaces. There will be a small / reasonable cost to families for this provision to allow this to run sustainably by our external providers. Students would need to be collected for 3.20pm and families would need to coordinate their own transport or collection of their child if they took up this offer.

### Will this happen?

No, consultation views are important from all stakeholders to make an informed decision.

### Consultation

This document is the consultation document. We welcome comments on the proposal between **Monday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2025** and **Monday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2025**.

All comments received during the consultation period will be considered by the Education Impact Academy Trust Board and Local Governing Body.

The decision made by the Trust Board will be made in spring 2025 after the consultation process has closed. We will notify you of the decision when / if this has been made.

### What will happen if this proposal does not go ahead?

The school will continue to operate its current provision.

### How can I make my views known?

We welcome comments within the **four-week** consultation period, comments must be made via the consultation and/or by completing the Microsoft Form, details of which will be provided via a consultation letter sent from the school.

A copy of the consultation information is also available via the school's website and can be accessed through the following links:

**online survey** <https://forms.office.com/e/PmDSbCuB6t>

You can also find a link to the Microsoft Consultation Form on:

- [www.queensburysch.com/consultation](http://www.queensburysch.com/consultation)
- <https://educationimpact.org.uk/consultation>

Or send **in writing** to the school postal address below:

**TRUST BOARD – REF: Queensbury Consultation,**  
Queensbury School,  
Wood End Road,  
Erdington.  
Birmingham  
West Midlands.  
B24 8BL



Consultation will close at **12 Noon on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2025**. All responses will need to be submitted by this date.

A consultation response form can be found at the end of this document and can be used if anyone would like to send their comments in **writing** if you are not able to access electronically.



## Consultation Response Form – Early Closure on Fridays

Please help us to analyse your response by completing the following:

Your name (*optional*): \_\_\_\_\_

Your contact details (*optional, if you would like a reply*)

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Are you in favour of the proposal? (please circle / highlight one):

YES

NO

DON'T KNOW

Your interest in the proposal (please indicate one of the below):

|                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <b>Pupil</b>                  |  |
| <b>Parent</b>                 |  |
| <b>School Governor</b>        |  |
| <b>School Staff</b>           |  |
| <b>Other (please specify)</b> |  |

Please provide your comments to the proposal.

Please send to FAO: **TRUST BOARD – REF: *Queensbury Consultation***,

Queensbury School, Wood End Road, Erdington. Birmingham West Midlands. B24 8BL.

**Please note all postal responses need to be received in school and addressed to the Trust Board no later than 12 Noon on the 17th February 2025.**