Starting school at 10am halves student illness and improves academic performance, finds study
by Josh Gabbitiss / Monday November 27th 2017

A new study has shown delaying school start times for teenagers can have major benefits, including better academic performance and improved mental and physical health. According to Dr Kelley, conditions as diverse as obesity and depression have been linked with excessively early school times and lack of sleep. Dr Guy Meadows, co-founder of The Sleep School noted that British schoolchildren are the sixth most sleep-deprived in the world, with American children topping the rankings.

Earlier this year, the American Academy of Sleep Medicine issued a position statement declaring that “delaying school start times positively impacts student achievement, health and safety”. Many schools in the US currently start as early as 7am.

Adults might only require seven hours of sleep, but according to a talk given by neuroscientist Professor Russell Foster of the University of Oxford, teenagers “need nine hours for full brain performance (...). Many of them, on a school night, are only getting five hours of sleep,” said Professor Foster. “It’s simply not enough.” Dr Meadows said that recognition of individual sleep requirements was growing, with workplaces increasingly likely to offer flexible hours based on their staff’s needs.

WORD BANK:
Academic performance = school results
recognition = identification
requirement = necessity, need