

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

This matter is a key decision within the Council's definition and has been included in the relevant Forward Plan.

**Report of the Executive Director for
People Directorate to Cabinet
(25th January 2017)**

SCHOOL TERM TIMES AND HOLIDAY DATES FOR COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SCHOOLS 2018-2019

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek approval for the term times and holiday dates pattern for the 2018-2019 school year to maintain the three year rolling programme of dates following extensive non-statutory consultation.

2 Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- 2.1 **The continuation of the current 'traditional' pattern of school term and holiday dates of a long summer be adopted for the academic year 2018-2019 (see Appendix 2 – Option 2 for the proposed 2018-2019 term time and holiday dates)**

3 Introduction

- 3.1 The setting of the three year rolling programme of term times was introduced to enable schools to plan strategically over a longer period.
- 3.2 It was agreed that in each successive year the pattern will be extended by a further year to maintain the rolling three year programme
- 3.3 Term dates are determined by a set of agreed principles adopted by 26 Local Authorities in the North East of England (see Appendix 1).
- 3.4 Discussions have also taken place between the four South Yorkshire Local Authorities, as they do on an annual basis, in order to co-ordinate holiday dates as far as possible.
- 3.5 The three options for consideration and subject to the consultation were (see Appendix 2):

Option	Pattern	
1	Summer/October split	Two weeks in October and a 5 week summer break
2	Traditional	Long summer break
3	Fixed Easter	Easter is fixed and not subject to an annual change

4 **Proposals and Justification**

4.1 The results of the consultation can be found at Appendix 3.

4.2 There were a total of 2308 respondents to the online consultation.

4.3 The key findings of the consultation were:

All Respondents

Option	Pattern	% in favour	Number in favour
1	Summer/October split	33.45	772
2	Long Summer	55.29%	1276
3	Fixed Easter	11.27%	260

4.4 However, further analysis shows a different preference between groups representing school related staff and the responses of parent/carers. The school related respondents preferred to continue with the current long summer pattern whilst the parent/carer group indicated that they were favourable of a change.

Non Parent/Carer Respondents

(Headteachers, teaching and non-teaching staff, trade unions, governing bodies)

Option	Pattern	% in favour	Number in favour
1	Summer/October split	19.96	222
2	Long Summer	67.27	748
3	Fixed Easter	12.77	142

Parent/Carer Respondents

Option	Pattern	% in favour	Number in favour
1	Summer/October split	46.04	546
2	Long Summer	44.18	524
3	Fixed Easter	9.78	116

- 4.5 It is proposed that the continuation of the current 'traditional' pattern of school term and holiday dates of a long summer be adopted for the academic year 2018-2019 due to the majority of all respondents supporting this option. The respondents most in favour of the continuation of the traditional long summer were Headteachers, governing bodies, school teaching staff, non teaching staff and trade unions and therefore it is anticipated that this will facilitate the adoption of a more consistent school term and holiday pattern across the borough including those schools which set their own holiday patterns outside of the control of the council e.g. voluntary aided and academy schools
- 4.6 It is recommended however that further consideration be given to the findings by schools and governing bodies due to the majority of parent/carer respondents to the consultation being in favour of a change to the school term and holiday pattern.

5 Consultation

- 5.1 Due to consideration being given to a proposed change from the traditional model of school term and holiday dates for 2018-19, Barnsley Council undertook discretionary consultation with a wider group of stakeholders than was required statutorily.
- 5.2 The consultation was widely publicised to ensure that stakeholder groups had the opportunity to contribute their views on the pattern of school term and holiday dates for 2018-2019 academic year and to ensure adherence to the guiding principles (adopted by 26 Local Authorities in the North East of England) as far as reasonably practical.
- 5.3 The consultation process itself was circulated prior to its implementation to ensure that stakeholders had an opportunity to comment on the proposed consultation timescale and process. This included the Professional Associations and Trade Unions on the Consultative Committee for People. In addition, Headteachers of primary and secondary schools were also informed of the proposals at Headteacher meetings and by Circular Letter.
- 5.4 There have been regular social media, press and radio updates by the Corporate Communications Team
- 5.5 Information was also sent to Barnsley College, Early Years Providers, Chairs of Governing Bodies and the four MPs.
- 5.6 The consultation system was available from 7th November to 2nd December 2016.
- 5.7 The media coverage reached 302,323 people and was worth over £10,000 in AVE.
- 5.8 Social media reached around 14,000 people and had almost 600 post clicks.

6 Risk Management

- 6.1 The statutory duty for determining term times and holiday dates for community and voluntary controlled schools remains that of the Local Authority although a wide ranging consultation has been undertaken.
- 6.2 There are often minor variances at voluntary aided schools and academies since it is the responsibility of their respective governing bodies to determine their individual dates. Due to the majority of school related respondents favouring continuation of the tradition school holiday pattern it is anticipated that this may mitigate the risk of large variance across all schools across the borough.

8 Financial and Employee Implications

- 8.1 There are no implications arising from this report.

9 List of Appendices

Appendix 1 Guiding Principles Summary
Appendix 2 Options Outline
Appendix 3 Results of the Consultation

		Telephone	Date
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GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 1 The school year will consist of 195 school days. Pupils must attend on 190 of those days.
- 2 The starting point for consideration of each year's holiday pattern will be the pattern recommended by the LGA for that school year modified as per these principles.
- 3 Wherever possible, in any academic year, terms should be of equal length and split weeks avoided or kept to a minimum. Where there are an odd number of weeks the second half term should be shorter of the two.
- 4 **Start of the School Year**
The school year will normally start on the first day of September*
- 5 **Autumn Half Term**
The autumn half term break will be five days which are the last period Monday to Friday in October. According to the year, October half term can start as early as Monday, 21 October and as late as Monday, 27 October.
- 6 **Christmas Break**
The Christmas break will include at least 10 school days, and will normally start at the end of the school day on the Friday which is on, or otherwise immediately prior to, 22 December. It will include the New Year's Day holiday which is outside that period, and the day after New Year's Day, where this is a weekday.
- 7 **February Half Term**
The February half term holiday will be five days Monday to Friday, which divides the term as far as possible into two equal parts. Where there is an odd number of weeks the second half will be the shorter of the two.
- 8 **Easter Break**
The Spring Term will normally end at the close of the afternoon session on the Friday before Good Friday. The holiday will be 10 schools days.

Where the LGA recommended patterns would result in a break between the Easter bank holidays and the school Easter holidays, consideration will be given to modifying Easter to incorporate the bank holidays in the school holiday. The Easter bank holidays could be at the start (with the Spring Term ending at the close of the afternoon session on the Thursday before Good Friday), middle, or end of the school Easter break, but never outside the break itself.
- 9 **Spring Bank Half Term**
The Spring Bank half term will be five days Monday to Friday from the statutory holiday which falls as the last Monday in May.
- 10 **End of School Year**
Taking into account the above pattern, term will end on the date which achieves 195 school days of which five days shall be declared training days. The term will normally end on the third Friday in July

The summer break will not be less than five weeks and preferably not less than six weeks.

* During the consultation it was proposed that for Barnsley schools the first day of term should be a Monday in order that staff and children do not start a new school year in a split week.

