

# BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## REPORT OF THE: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES

**TITLE: SCHOOL TERM TIMES AND HOLIDAY DATES FOR COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SCHOOLS 2024-2025**

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>CABINET</b>
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>8 March 2023</b>
<b>Cabinet Member Portfolio</b>	<b>Children's Services</b>
<b>Key Decision</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Public or Private</b>	<b>Public</b>

### **Purpose of report**

To seek approval for the term times and holiday dates pattern for the 2024-2025 school year to maintain the three-year rolling programme of dates.

### **Council Plan priority**

The proposed arrangements primarily support the Council Plan's priority for a **Learning Barnsley** through which children and young people achieve the best outcomes, including improved educational attainment, by admission and attendance at schools' which are judged to be 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted

### **Recommendations**

**That Cabinet:-**

- 1. Approve the draft proposed term times and holiday dates for 2024-2025.**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The setting of the three-year rolling programme of term times was introduced to enable schools to plan strategically over a longer period.
- 1.2 It was agreed that in each successive year the pattern will be extended by a further year to maintain the rolling three-year programme
- 1.3 Term dates are determined by a set of agreed principles adopted by 26 Local Authorities in the North East of England and the proposed draft is compliant

with these.

- 1.4 Consideration was given to a proposed change from the traditional model in 2018-2019 and Barnsley Council undertook discretionary consultation with a wider group of stakeholders than was required statutorily.
- 1.5 Following analysis of the responses, Cabinet determined that the 'traditional' pattern of a long summer break would remain and that full consultation would not be required for the following years unless there was a significant demand for change, to acknowledge that the overall response previously was to remain with the traditional pattern.
- 1.6 The LA has not received any significant requests or demand to deviate from the proposed traditional pattern of term dates.
- 1.7 Cabinet should note that there will be an additional bank holiday for the 2022-23 academic year due to King Charles III's coronation. This will be 8<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

## **2. PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 It is proposed that the continuation of the current 'traditional' pattern of school term and holiday dates be adopted for the academic year 2024-2025.
- 2.2 No changes are proposed at this time at this time given that schools are still working under significant pressures resulting from Covid and some element of stability would be beneficial.
- 2.3 The traditional pattern meets more of the Guiding Principles of the Yorkshire and North East Regions.
- 2.4 The traditional pattern ensures that there are fewer split and shorter weeks in schools to support school planning and attendance.

## **3. IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION**

### **3.1 Financial and Risk**

There are no implications arising from this report.

### **3.2 Legal**

The proposed traditional pattern is compliant with the legal requirement that local authority maintained schools must open for at least 380 sessions (190 days) during a school year, this equates to 195 term time days, minus 5 inset days set by each school where children are not required to attend.

### **3.3 Equality**

The proposed policy complies with all relevant legislation and is fair and transparent across the Borough for all service users. An equality impact assessment has been compiled and is appended to this report.

### **3.4 Sustainability**

There are no implications for sustainability in the Borough directly arising through consideration of the proposed school term and holiday dates for the 2024/25 school year.

### **3.5 Employee**

There are no direct implications arising from this report.

### **3.6 Communications**

There are no implications arising from this report.

## **4. CONSULTATION**

4.1 Discussions have taken place between the four South Yorkshire Local Authorities, as they do on an annual basis, to co-ordinate holiday dates as far as possible.

4.2 Sheffield and Doncaster Local Authorities now adopt a fixed Easter pattern. Wakefield is likely to remain with the traditional pattern. Rotherham are consulting on both the traditional and fixed Easter patterns for 2024-25, they have used the fixed pattern for one year but will be consulting on both fixed and traditional.

4.3 The largest cross border movement of Barnsley pupils is within Rotherham and Wakefield. The proposed dates for Barnsley will be aligned with Wakefield, Kirklees, Calderdale and Leeds.

4.4 The relevant Trade Unions have been consulted and responses have been received from NASUWT with no objections to the drafts circulated.

4.5 Primary and Secondary headteachers in Barnsley have been consulted, and respondents agreed that the traditional model supports the guiding principles and ensures fewer short weeks to aid school attendance.

## **5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

5.1 The fixed Easter option was drafted and shared with primary and secondary headteachers, as well as the two main Trade Unions NEU and NASUWT. The fixed Easter does not fulfil as many of the guiding principles and would result in more split and shorter weeks that would impact on school attendance. Concerns were raised that if Barnsley opted for a fixed Easter there would be

a longer summer break prior to the 2025-26 academic year which could negatively impact the borough's most vulnerable families.

## 6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The draft proposal to continue with the traditional pattern for Barnsley Community and Voluntary Controlled schools adheres to the agreed Yorkshire and North-East guiding principles.
- 6.2 The proposed traditional pattern ensures that there a fewer split and shorter school weeks to support school attendance.
- 6.3 Trade unions and schools are supportive of remaining with the traditional pattern.

## 7. GLOSSARY

None

## 8. LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Draft proposed School Term and Holiday dates 2024/2025

Appendix 2: Guiding principles analysis 2024/2025

Appendix 3: Equality Impact Assessment – School Holiday and Term dates for Community and Voluntary Controlled Primary and Secondary Schools (2024/2025)

## 9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

If you would like to inspect background papers for this report, please email [governance@barnsley.gov.uk](mailto:governance@barnsley.gov.uk) so that appropriate arrangements can be made

## 10. REPORT SIGN OFF

<b>Financial consultation &amp; sign off</b>	Senior Financial Services officer consulted and date  <i>Joshua Amahwe (06/01/22)</i>
<b>Legal consultation &amp; sign off</b>	Legal Services officer consulted and date  <i>Jason Field 23/12/22</i>

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