

TITLE OF REPORT: Proposals for School Term Dates 2018/19

REPORT OF: Sheena Ramsey, Chief Executive

Purpose of the Report

1. The report asks Cabinet to approve the School Term Dates for 2018/19

Background

2. In order to allow schools, parents and other stakeholders to plan into the future, it is necessary to agree school term dates a significant period in advance.

Proposal

3. It is proposed that the calendar for 2018/19, attached as appendix 2 to this report, be approved.

Recommendations

4. It is recommended that Cabinet agrees the proposed School Term Dates for 2018/19 as set out in appendix 2.

For the following reasons:

- (i) To allow future planning to take place.
- (ii) Make effective and efficient use of resources.

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APPENDIX 1

Policy Context

1. The proposal supports the vision for Gateshead as set out in Vision 2030. It also supports the Achievement and Ambition objective as set out in Children Gateshead, the plan for children, young people and families in Gateshead.

Background

2. The Education (School Day and School Year) (England) Regulations 1999 (SI 1999 No. 3181) require schools to have at least 380 half-day sessions (190 contact days with pupils and 195 days for staff) in each school year. This is consistent with the 195 days a year required by a teacher's statutory conditions of service: the additional five days are for continual professional development.
3. The term dates for Community Voluntary controlled and Special Schools are currently determined by the local authority (LA) whilst voluntary-aided schools and Academies are decided by the governing body of each school. This means that Governing Bodies of Voluntary Aided schools and Academies can depart from the LA term dates if they wish. Many Voluntary Aided schools can and do depart from those dates determined by the LA and there is no requirement to consult, however, such schools are required to act reasonably when setting their dates.
4. The Deregulation Act 2015 provides the responsibility for determining term dates to pass to school governing bodies for community, voluntary controlled, community special and maintained nursery schools. This provision has, however, not yet come into force.
5. Academies including free schools can set their own term dates which will be published on the Council's website if we are advised, though there is no requirement for academies to consult.
6. The Local Government Association (LGA) Standing Committee on the School Year has previously circulated proposed School Term Calendar with a view to encouraging local authorities towards a degree of standardisation of dates. This is based on the following principles:
 - Start the school year on a September date as near as possible to 1 September.
 - Equalise teaching and learning blocks (roughly 2x7 and 4x6 weeks).
 - Establish a two-week spring break in early April irrespective of the incidence of the Easter Bank Holiday. (Where the break does not coincide with the Bank Holiday the date should be, as far as practicable, nationally agreed and as consistent as possible across all local authorities.)
 - Allow for the possibility of a summer holiday of at least six weeks for those schools which want this length of break.
 - Identify and agree annually designated periods of holiday, including the summer holiday, where Head Teachers are recommended not to arrange teaching days.
7. The proposed term dates in appendix 2 currently only match with Newcastle City Council who are consulting on this option. The other neighbouring local authorities

have yet to consult on their term dates; however, initial indications are that they are likely to be the similar.

8. The proposal fixes the spring bank holiday in line with the Local Government Association strategy establishing a two-week spring break in early April which also covers two bank holidays. It allows 2 CPD days in term time requiring the 3 remaining training days to be completed as twilight sessions

Consultation

9. Proposed term dates were shared with Gateshead head teachers, however, the Teacher's JCC meeting held on the 1 March 2017, felt that the Spring break should be for two weeks from the 8 April 2019 to better balance out the number of weeks in each half term. The revised proposed term dates have been shared with other local authorities in the region, Gateshead Head Teachers, Teachers' JCC membership, Unison, GMB and other representatives and the Diocesan Bodies
10. The Cabinet Members for Children and Young People have been consulted.

Alternative Options

11. In theory there are many options that can facilitate arriving at a school term calendar which allocates 190 teaching (contact with pupil) days and 5 continued professional development days. Normally it is not viewed helpful to develop what could result in a broad range of choices, as it is contrary to the principle of trying to achieve a degree of regional and national alignment.

Implications of Recommended Option

12. Resources

- a) **Financial Implications** – The Strategic Director, Corporate Resources confirms that there are no financial implications as a result of this report.
- b) **Human Resources Implications** – None
- c) **Property Implications** - None

13. **Risk Management Implication** - None.

14. **Equality and Diversity Implications** – Every effort is made in setting dates to take account of holiday requirements created and a result of faith.

15. **Crime and Disorder Implications** - Evidence does show the potential for an increase in youth crime and disorder and antisocial behaviour during periods when young people are not in school. The Council seeks to address this 'risk' by collaborating with partners to offer activity programmes during common holiday periods.

16. **Health Implications** - None

17. **Sustainability Implications** – None.

18. **Human Rights Implications** – None.

19. **Area and Ward Implications** - All.

20. **Background Information-**

The Education (School Day and School Year) (England) regulations 1999(SI 1999 No 3181)