

TITLE OF REPORT: Proposals for School Term Dates 2019/20

REPORT OF: Caroline O'Neill, Strategic Director, Care, Wellbeing and Learning

Purpose of the Report

1. The report asks Cabinet to approve the School Term Dates for 2019/20.

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 2019/20, attached as appendix 2 to this report, be approved.

Recommendations

4. It is recommended that Cabinet agrees the School Term Dates for 2019/20 as set out in appendix 2 for the following reasons:
 - (i) To allow future planning to take place.
 - (ii) To make effective and efficient use of Council resources.

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APPENDIX 1

Policy Context

1. The proposal supports the vision for Gateshead as set out in Vision 2030 and the Thrive agenda. 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. The term dates for Community Voluntary Controlled and Special Schools are determined by the Council, 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 Council term dates if they wish. Many Voluntary Aided schools can and do depart from those dates determined by the Council and there is no requirement to consult the Council. However, such schools are required to act reasonably when setting their dates.
3. Given the continuing development of the Department for Education (DfE) Academy conversion process it is possible that some schools may develop and determine different term date calendars following changes to their school status. Whenever possible, any such changes will be published by the Council.
4. The Local Government Association (LGA) Standing Committee on the School Year have 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.
5. Previous consultation has included North East and Yorkshire authorities with approximately 25 local authorities represented. This group of authorities have developed the "NE&Y term date group" which sought to agree a common calendar across the region. The work completed by this group has assisted with the development of a common framework of dates following the LGA principals above, which a significant number of Councils have adopted.

6. The proposed term dates in appendix 2 are based on a discussion with most neighbouring Councils. All neighbouring Councils are presenting this option as a broad basis for consultation, although there can be no guarantee that it will be finally adopted in its entirety by all.
7. 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. It is important to achieve, as near as possible, a match with neighbouring Councils. Parents resident in Gateshead and who work in other areas or have children in other local authority schools and vice versa can make better arrangements for their childcare and give regard to a wide range of personal and domestic requirements. Conflicting dates also work against the effective and efficient use of resources between Council's when collaborating on joint events or on the delivery of truancy sweeps.

Consultation

8. The proposed dates are being shared with other local authorities in the region, Gateshead Head Teachers, Teachers' JCC membership, Unison, GMB and other representatives and the Diocesan Bodies.
9. The trade unions have asked the Council to consider delaying a return in September 2020 by a further week resulting in a 7 week summer holiday. This will be considered next year in line with the consultation for term dates 2020/21.
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** - advance notice of school term dates enables parents and other stakeholders to consider a broad range of domestic and personal arrangements.
- 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)

Appendix 2

Draft B	Gateshead Agreed Term and Holiday Dates					
Academic Year 2019/20						
				Bank Holiday	Holiday	
194 TERM DAY ENVELOPE						
	AUGUST 2019	SEPTEMBER 2019	OCTOBER 2019	NOVEMBER 2019	DECEMBER 2019	JANUARY 2020
Monday	5 12 19 26	2 9 16 23 30	7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25	2 9 16 23 30	6 13 20 27
Tuesday	6 13 20 27	3 10 17 24	1 8 15 22 29	5 12 19 26	3 10 17 24 31	7 14 21 28
Wednesday	7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25	2 9 16 23 30	6 13 20 27	4 11 18 25	1 8 15 22 29
Thursday	1 8 15 22 29	5 12 19 26	3 10 17 24 31	7 14 21 28	5 12 19 26	2 9 16 23 30
Friday	2 9 16 23 30	6 13 20 27	4 11 18 25	1 8 15 22 29	6 13 20 27	3 10 17 24 31
Saturday	3 10 17 24 31	7 14 21 28	5 12 19 26	2 9 16 23 30	7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25
Sunday	4 11 18 25	1 8 15 22 29	6 13 20 27	3 10 17 24	1 8 15 22 29	5 12 19 26
	FEBRUARY 2020	MARCH 2020	APRIL 2020	May 2020	JUNE 2020	JULY 2020
Monday	3 10 17 24	2 9 16 23 30	6 13 20 27	4 11 18 25	1 8 15 22 29	6 13 20 27
Tuesday	4 11 18 25	3 10 17 24 31	7 14 21 28	5 12 19 26	2 9 16 23 30	7 14 21 28
Wednesday	5 12 19 26	4 11 18 25	1 8 15 22 29	6 13 20 27	3 10 17 24	1 8 15 22 29
Thursday	6 13 20 27	5 12 19 26	2 9 16 23 30	7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25	2 9 16 23 30
Friday	7 14 21 28	6 13 20 27	3 10 17 24	1 8 15 22 29	5 12 19 26	3 10 17 24 31
Saturday	1 8 15 22 29	7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25	2 9 16 23 30	6 13 20 27	4 11 18 25
Sunday	2 9 16 23	1 8 15 22 29	5 12 19 26	3 10 17 24 31	7 14 21 28	5 12 19 26
	AUGUST 2020	SEPTEMBER 2020	Proposed return on 1 Sept 2020			
Monday	3 10 17 24 31	7 14 21 28				
Tuesday	4 11 18 25	1 8 15 22 29				
Wednesday	5 12 19 26	2 9 16 23 30				
Thursday	6 13 20 27	3 10 17 24				
Friday	7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25				
Saturday	1 8 15 22 29	5 12 19 26				
Sunday	2 9 16 23 30	6 13 20 27				