

NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL DECISION

**DECISION OF: THE DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES
WITH ADVICE FROM THE SERVICE LEADER –
STRATEGIC PLANNING AND GOVERNANCE
DIRECTORATE: PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES**



DECISION NO: PC80 (2017/18 SCHEME)

SUBJECT: SCHOOL TERM AND HOLIDAY DATES 2019 - 2020

KEY DECISION: YES

BACKGROUND:

School employers are required to set the term dates of their schools. The Local Authority is the employer for staff at community, voluntary controlled and community special schools and maintained nursery schools. Governing bodies are the employers in foundation/trust and voluntary aided schools. Academy Trusts/Multi-Academy Trusts are the employers of staff in academies and free schools.

As at 1st April 2018, the Local Authority has 18 schools that it has a statutory duty to set term dates for. It is not yet known how many schools the Local Authority will have a statutory duty for by September 2019 (the period this decision refers to).

Although some school employers may want to set their own term dates, most still look to the Local Authority to suggest dates to provide a basis for any school level decisions.

DECISION:

That the following term dates are agreed by the People and Communities Directorate for community, voluntary controlled and community special schools in the school year 2019 – 2020:

Term	Day	From	Day		No.Days
1	Mon	2nd September 2019	Fri	25th October 2019	40
2	Mon	4th November 2019	Fri	20th December 2019	35
3	Mon	6th January 2020	Fri	14th February 2020	30
4	Mon	24th February 2020	Fri	3rd April 2020	30
5	Mon	20th April 2020	Fri	22nd May 2020	24
6	Mon	1st June 2020	Mon	20th July 2020	36
				Total	195

REASONS:

North Somerset Council is the employer of staff at local community, voluntary controlled and community special schools and therefore has a duty to set term dates for these schools.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED:

The Calendar for 2019-2020 has been determined in accordance with the standing principles (wherever possible) of:

- starting the school year early in September;
- equalised teaching and learning blocks where possible and without detriment to public holidays where appropriate (i.e. Christmas and Easter)
- allowing a summer holiday of at least six weeks;
- identifying and agreeing annually designated periods of holiday, including the summer holiday, where head teachers are recommended not to arrange teacher days;

Legally there must be 195 days in the school year (190 days plus 5 five non-educational / In Service Training days of which the dates are determined by individual schools and used for curriculum planning/training).

The objective is to provide a model that:

- allows for local flexibility in determining "non-teaching work days", especially at the beginnings and ends to school terms, so as not to interrupt the integrity of smoother curriculum delivery, learning and assessment,
- ensures that, as far as possible, teachers and parents with children at school in neighbouring authorities are not inconvenienced by differing term and holiday dates.

North Somerset Council consulted with colleagues in Bristol, Somerset, Bath and North East Somerset, South Gloucester and other Local Authorities in the South West to consider possible options for the 2019-2020 term dates based on a 195-day model. The basis of the calendar is worked around how bank holidays fall and applying the standing principles where possible, the collective timetable was proposed and consulted on.

Whilst every effort was made to try to minimise the longer terms 1 and 2, in aiming to prevent part-week attendance (as absence rates are often higher) and maintain holiday periods at popular times due to public holidays and other popular events, longer terms in the four months at the end of the calendar year are inevitable.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no financial implications when setting term and holiday dates.

Costs

None.

Funding

None.

LEGAL POWERS AND IMPLICATIONS

School term and holiday dates are set in accordance with the Education Act 2002 - section 32, the Education Act 1996 – section 551(1), the Education (School Day and School Year) (England) Regulations 1999 and the Changing of School Session Times (England) (Revocation) Regulations 2011.

CONSULTATION

A consultation with North Somerset stakeholders via the Council's on-line E-consult facility was undertaken between 5th February and 19th March 2018. The consultation was highlighted in Noticeboard and the Knowledge in February 2017. Notification of the consultation was listed in Members Briefing and Diocesan bodies and the relevant profession body unions and other key stakeholders were also contacted. The consultation was open to the public. Appendix 1 shows the terms dates included in the consultation.

There are 77 schools in North Somerset, serving approximately 30,000 students. This consultation covers the attendance of 18 schools where the Local Authority remains the employer of staff. The governing bodies and trust boards of the remaining 59 schools and academies are able to set their own term dates.

There were 17 response registered on E-consult. Responses could cover both the schools that the Local Authority serves and those that set their own term dates. Most made suggestions about how the term dates could be changed, the majority of which referring to a reduction in the length of term one (currently 8 weeks), lengthening the autumn break and shortening the summer break. A list of all responses is attached in appendix 2.

Whilst it is acknowledged the length of term one is long, changing this would result in disparity in term dates across the remaining school year with our neighbouring councils. The need for parity with our neighbouring authorities across the South West has taken precedence.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The Council has a legal duty to set term dates for its community, voluntary controlled and community special schools. To not set dates could leave the Council subject to legal challenge.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

An Equality Impact Assessment has not been undertaken on this occasion.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

If/when all North Somerset schools have become academies, the Local Authority will no longer have a statutory duty to set terms dates. The responsibility will be with trusts and governing bodies as the employer of their staff.

It is recommended that in the future consultation processes and agreements will need to be in place between schools to share their terms dates. This will enable parents to have an understanding of their responsibilities to ensure their children attend school without the confusion of different dates across the different institutions. It will also enable service provisions such as home to school transport and school meals to be arranged accordingly.

To provide context, there are currently 9 different Multi-Academy Trusts (MAT's) and 4 single academies operating in North Somerset alongside 6 Foundation schools and 1 Trust Special Schools which could have differing term dates.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Please see link to the consultation on E-consult

http://consult.n-somerset.gov.uk/consult.ti/Term_Dates_2019_2020/consultationHome

SIGNATORIES:

DECISION MAKER(S):

Signed: 

Title: Director, People and Communities

Date: 13.4.18

WITH ADVICE FROM:

Signed: 

Title: Service Leader, Strategic Planning and Governance

Date: 13.4.18

Footnote: Details of changes made and agreed by the decision taker since publication of the proposed (pre-signed) decision notice, if applicable:

Appendix 1

Proposed North Somerset School Term Dates 2019-2020

	August/September					October					November				
Monday		2	9	16	23	30	7	14	21	28		4	11	18	25
Tuesday		3	10	17	24	1	8	15	22	29		5	12	19	26
Wednesday		4	11	18	25	2	9	16	23	30		6	13	20	27
Thursday		5	12	19	26	3	10	17	24	31		7	14	21	28
Friday	30	6	13	20	27	4	11	18	25		1	8	15	22	29
Saturday	31	7	14	21	28	5	12	19	26		2	9	16	23	30
Sunday	1	8	15	22	29	6	13	20	27		3	10	17	24	

	December					January					February						
Monday		2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27			3	10	17	24	
Tuesday		3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	28			4	11	18	25	
Wednesday		4	11	18	25		1	8	15	22	29			5	12	19	26
Thursday		5	12	19	26		2	9	16	23	30			6	13	20	27
Friday		6	13	20	27		3	10	17	24	31			7	14	21	28
Saturday		7	14	21	28		4	11	18	25		1	8	15	22	29	
Sunday	1	8	15	22	29		5	12	19	26		2	9	16	23		

	March					April					May						
Monday		2	9	16	23	30		6	13	20	27			4	11	18	25
Tuesday		3	10	17	24	31		7	14	21	28			5	12	19	26
Wednesday		4	11	18	25		1	8	15	22	29			6	13	20	27
Thursday		5	12	19	26		2	9	16	23	30			7	14	21	28
Friday		6	13	20	27		3	10	17	24			1	8	15	22	29
Saturday		7	14	21	28		4	11	18	25			2	9	16	23	30
Sunday	1	8	15	22	29		5	12	19	26			3	10	17	24	31

	June					July					August/September							
Monday		1	8	15	22	29		6	13	20	27			3	10	17	24	31
Tuesday		2	9	16	23	30		7	14	21	28			4	11	18	25	1
Wednesday		3	10	17	24		1	8	15	22	29			5	12	19	26	2
Thursday		4	11	18	25		2	9	16	23	30			6	13	20	27	
Friday		5	12	19	26		3	10	17	24	31			7	14	21	28	
Saturday		6	13	20	27		4	11	18	25			1	8	15	22	29	
Sunday		7	14	21	28		5	12	19	26			2	9	16	23	30	

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School Day
School Holiday
Bank Holiday

Appendix 2 Comments Received

Response Id	Question School Term Dates 2019 - 2020 If you would like to comment on the proposed Term Dates or have any suggestions, please write...
597959	Is there any chance the summer holiday could be shortened and have longer breaks , maybe two weeks rather than one between terms. So that holidays are spread throughout the year?
598882	The first term is 8 weeks long and second term is 7 weeks yet middle of the year the terms are very short. Can it be more evenly spread.
599581	October has two 30ths missing the 29th . Otherwise fine
600182	Having reviewed the dates for all the local authorities Cabot Learning Federation academies work within we would like to advise that we are happy with these dates.
600590	<p>Hi, when my children were in Reception to around year 4, they were very tired after 7-8 weeks of school before half-term and again at Christmas. Each year involves a period of adjustment to a new teacher, new expectations and sometimes a new set of classmates too.</p> <p>I would like to see the autumn half-term holiday lengthened from 9 days to around 11-12 to give younger children time to rest up properly, and the extra 2-3 days made up for either in July or in September.</p> <p>Kind regards</p>
600638	I don't mind when the dates are per say, however I live and work (with children in holidays clubs and as a teacher) on the borders of several counties. It is very frustrating and difficult when the dates are different for each county. Why are the different areas not able to collaborate. Many people I know experience a similar problem. I would be interest in your feedback.
600640	My daughter will start school in September 2019. The proposed first half of term is 8 weeks. That's a very long time for children who are new to school, and having to attend/learn every day!
600643	Please consider bring in term 1 holiday one week earlier in October (so a 6 week term then holiday then 7 week term into Christmas holiday). This is because some parents have jobs with end of month/beginning of month deadlines
600785	<p>Having the Oct half term a week later than it used to be, means the clocks have gone back, so it's darker and a little colder.</p> <p>Oct half term is usually a lovely time to enjoy the final bit of sun and nice walks in the UK. With the week now being later a lot of holiday parks or things to do with children have ahutvthe geek before.</p> <p>I also feel that 8 weeks is a really long term for their first one back after the holidays, especially those starting school.</p> <p>It would be fantastic if we could go back to half term being w/c 21st Oct.</p> <p>Many thanks</p>
600787	Has consideration ever been given to having one more week off for Christmas/New Year and one less week during the summer?
600821	I would like to suggest that the children go on holiday the last week in July and consequently don't go back to school at the very beginning of September.
602631	Look sensible
602913	As Chair of Governors of x Primary School, I am responding to say that I am content to endorse the response of our Head Teacher
604674	There is nothing in your North Somerset proposals that will help parents find a cheaper holidays. All the holidays fall in standard slots and the two weeks at Easter are either side of the bank holiday weekends. Something creative to help parents would be appreciated rather than a same old historic and out dated approach.
604964	Looks fine to me
607219	<p>Term 1 seems very long! If it is that long then a longer half term would be good, with a shorter summer?</p> <p>On the other hand term 5 seems too short!</p>
607894	I support at move from the old Harvest related dates to a modern Callander based on educational science. 6 weeks is too long a break creating reversibility in education.