

**NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL
DECISION OF: THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES
WITH ADVICE FROM: HEAD OF STRATEGIC PLANNING &
GOVERNANCE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES
IN CONSULTATION WITH EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS AND
THE COMMUNITY**



DECISION NO: CY88 (2022/23 SCHEME)

SUBJECT: SCHOOL TERM AND HOLIDAY DATES 2023 - 2024

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.

North Somerset Council has a statutory duty to set term dates for eight schools (including special schools) as of 4 April 2022.

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

Decision:

That the following term dates are agreed by the Children's Services Directorate for community, voluntary controlled and community special schools in the school year 2023 – 2024 (full calendar view Appendix 1):

Term dates Summary	Days
Term 1 04 September 2023 – 20 October 2023	35
Term 2 30 October 2023 – 20 December 2023	38
Term 3 04 January 2024 – 09 February 2024	27
Term 4 19 February 2024 – 28 March 2024	29
Term 5 15 April 2024 – 24 May 2024	29
Term 6 03 June 2024 – 23 July 2024	37
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 2023-2024 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, Easter and Spring Bank Holiday).
- 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 workdays”, 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,
- balances the needs of primary and secondary schools in terms of teaching blocks.

North Somerset Council consulted with colleagues in Bristol, Somerset, Bath and North East Somerset, South Gloucester and other Local Authorities in the Southwest to consider possible options for the 2023-2024 term dates based on a 195-day model. These initial discussions formed the basis of the initial calendar, that worked around how bank holidays fall and applied the standing principles where possible. This collective timetable was proposed and consulted on by North Somerset and neighbouring Local Authorities to ensure parity across the region where possible.

The public holidays in 2023-2024 have been set in the calendar with the other holidays being distributed to try and achieve similar length teaching and learning blocks. There are three split weeks (where absence rates are often higher) one at the end of the school year, and two either side of the Christmas holiday.

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.

Climate Change and Environmental Implications:

None.

Consultation:

A consultation with North Somerset stakeholders via the Council's on-line E-consult facility was undertaken between 10 January and 20 February 2022. Details of the consultation were published in the Council publications of Noticeboard and the Knowledge in January 2022. Notification of the consultation was listed in Members Briefing. Diocesan bodies, relevant profession body unions and other key stakeholders were also contacted. The consultation was also open to the public. The dates initially consulted on were as follows:

Term dates Summary	Days
Term 1 01 September 2023 – 20 October 2023	36
Term 2 30 October 2023 – 15 December 2023	35
Term 3 02 January 2024 – 09 February 2024	29
Term 4 19 February 2024 – 28 March 2024	29
Term 5 15 April 2024 – 24 May 2024	29
Term 6 03 June 2024 – 23 July 2024	37
Total	195

The article published in Noticeboard included the following:

We would particularly like to hear from community, voluntary controlled and community special schools as to whether they would like a longer holiday in October (which would result in a shorter summer holiday) as we are aware that a number of own admission schools now have such arrangements.

No responses were received.

There are 79 schools in North Somerset, serving approximately 31,242 students (January 2022 census). This consultation covers the attendance at 8 maintained schools where the Local Authority remains the employer of staff and sets the school term dates. The

governing bodies and trust boards of the remaining 71 schools and academies are able to set their own term dates.

There were 32 responses registered on E-consult. Responses covered both the schools that the Local Authority serves and those that set their own dates. Responses were made by schools, academy trusts and parents. There was an equal split of 16/16 in support and against the proposed dates.

The full table of responses to the consultation can be viewed in Appendix 2. There were three main themes from the responders that objected to the proposed dates:

1. That there should be a two week break between terms 1 and 2.
2. That the start of term 1 should be moved from Friday 1 September to Monday 4 September.
3. That the Christmas break was too early and should start and end later.

On reviewing the dates and in consideration of the Equality Impact comments made, the proposed dates have been amended. It is now proposed that Term 1 will start on Monday 4 September and that the Christmas holiday should be from 21 December to 3 January inclusive.

The suggestions for the October holiday to be lengthened and the summer holiday to be reduced were given further consideration. It was not possible to amend these without making term 6 unreasonably long (the May holiday should include the Spring Bank Holiday). Own admissions schools can amend the October break if they wish, and several schools make this break longer by adding inset days. Community, voluntary controlled and community special schools were asked to respond to the questionnaire if they wanted this to be considered. No responses were received, which would imply that the schools that are directly affected by this decision are satisfied with the October break as suggested.

Equality Implications:

An EIA assessment was undertaken prior to the start of this process. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 the Local Authority has the following public sector equality duties:

- I. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- II. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- III. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

In planning the term dates for 2022/2023, officers considered the impact this could have on a range of equality groups including: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and marriage or civil partnership. These groups are described as 'protected characteristics' in the Equality Act 2010.

In summary, initial thoughts were that of the 79 schools in North Somerset, the three special schools (catering for children and young people with additional learning needs/disabilities) are still maintained by the Local Authority. Therefore, proportionally the

effect on disabled people of the Local Authority setting the term dates is greater (academies and free schools are free to set their own term dates). However, as these dates are set in accordance with established practices and procedures the impact should be neutral for this protected group.

People on a low income may also be adversely impacted, due to the rising price of holidays in school holiday periods, this is a negative impact, but again, the dates are set in accordance with established practices and procedures, so the impact is low. The consultation material asked if consultees have equalities concerns so the impact could be re-assessed at the end of the consultation period.

There were six consultees who expressed concerns regarding the Public Sector Equality Duties. Their comments have been considered and adjustments to the term dates have been made where possible. The responses are shown in the table below, together with the comments showing how we have addressed their concerns (NB: All comments are a direct representation of those received and have not been altered to correct typographical or other errors):

Question:2. Do you have any further comments to make regarding the proposed school term dates for 2023/2024?	Question:4. If you have answered yes to question 3, please confirm which of the Equality Act 2010 characteristics apply.	Question:4. Please expand on your response and give details of the impact in the space below	Comments
<p>It is silly to go back on the 1st Sept for 1 day! Might as well start on 4th and add it to the end of the year. Will allow parents to have a marginally cheaper summer holiday if they so wish as we are beholden to ridiculous prices in school hols.</p>	<p>Other specific impacts, for example: carers, parents, impact on health and wellbeing.</p>	<p>Cost of holidays in school times. Allowing us the 1st September will allow a holiday that week.</p>	<p>The proposed term dates have been amended to take this into account, the term will now start on Monday 4 September.</p> <p>It should be noted that many schools use the first day of term as an Inset day.</p>
<p>Starting a September term on Friday 1st is ridiculous - it means that both staff and parents lose the possibility of using that week for their holidays. Finishing for Christmas on Friday 15th December is way too early.</p>	<p>People on a low income</p>	<p>Holidays running in the week ending Friday 1st September are cheaper than the rest of the school break. This may be the only opportunity for low-income families to have any sort of break.</p>	<p>The proposed term dates have been amended to take this into account. The term will now start on Monday 4 September.</p>
<p>6 weeks in Summer is far too long for kids to be away from school / a hot meal. Summer holidays childcare is always so expensive, is there a chance we can look into 5 weeks holiday? October half term to coincide with Halloween?</p>	<p>People on a low income</p>	<p>Low-income families struggle for Childcare over Summer</p>	<p>Schools are able to extend the October holiday by adding inset days to the break if they wish to coincide with Halloween. Adding an extra week to term 6 would make this an unreasonably long term. The May holiday should include the Bank Holiday on the 27th May as some businesses still use this week as a shutdown period for all staff.</p>
<p>Christmas term should finish later, Wednesday 20th</p>	<p>People in particular faith groups</p>	<p>Christmas term should finish later, Wednesday 20th</p>	<p>The proposed term dates have been amended to take this into account.</p>

<p>It would be beneficial for parents if North Somerset had at least one week during the year that is out of step with the other holidays so families can have a holiday for slightly less money than core holiday weeks.</p>	<p>Disabled people, People from different ethnic groups, Men or women (including pregnant women or those on maternity leave), People on a low income</p>	<p>People on low income are disproportionately disabled, different ethnic groups, pregnant women/those on maternity leave, people on a low income. All of these people are suffering from escalating costs of living and holidays are likely to be sacrificed</p>	<p>The proposed term dates have been amended to take this into account (in combination with other comments). The term will now start on Monday 4 September.</p>
<p>Two x seven week term in the autumn and winter with only one week's rest in between are really gruelling for students and teachers alike. Either it needs to be a longer holiday maybe 10 days or one of the terms to be 6 weeks.</p>	<p>Other specific impacts, for example: carers, parents, impact on health and wellbeing.</p>	<p>as mentioned above, exhaustion impacts on mental health</p>	<p>Community, voluntary controlled and community special schools were asked to respond to the questionnaire if they wanted this to be considered and none of them responded. Own admission authority schools tend to add to this holiday by having twilight training sessions for staff and adding their inset days to the holiday. Adding an extra week to term 6 would make this unreasonably long.</p>

Following the consultation, the EIA has been reviewed and has not been changed (because adjustments have been made as a result of the comments made).

Protected Characteristic Groups	Before Consultation	After Consultation
	Impact: High (H) Medium (M) Low (L) or None (N)	
Disabled people	L	L
People from different ethnic groups	N	N
Men and women	N	N
Lesbian, gay or bisexual People	N	N
People on a low income	L	L
People age groups	N	N
People in particular faith groups	N	N
Transgender people	N	N
People who are married or in a civil partnership	N	N
Women who are pregnant or on maternity leave	N	N

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.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – calendar of proposed term dates 2023/2024

Appendix 2 – a summary of the responses to the online consultation.

Background Papers:

Please see link to the consultation on E-consult <https://n->

Signatories:

Decision Maker(s):

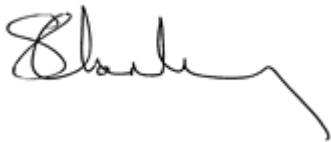
A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sheila Smith", with a horizontal line underneath.

Signed:

Title: Director of Children's Services

Date: 25.04.22

With Advice From:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Blair", with a horizontal line underneath.


Signed:

Title: Head of Strategic Planning and Governance

Date: 25.04.22

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

Appendix 1

North Somerset																				
School Terms and Holidays 2023/2024																				
September 2023				October 2023				November 2023												
M		4	11	18	25	M		2	9	16	23	30	M		6	13	20	27		
Tu		5	12	19	26	Tu		3	10	17	24	31	Tu		7	14	21	28		
W		6	13	20	27	W		4	11	18	25	W	1	8	15	22	29			
Th		7	14	21	28	Th		5	12	19	26	Th	2	9	16	23	30			
F	1	8	15	22	29	F		6	13	20	27	F	3	10	17	24				
Sa	2	9	16	23	30	Sa		7	14	21	28	Sa	4	11	18	25				
Su	3	10	17	24	Su	1	8	15	22	29	Su	5	12	19	26					
December 2023				January 2024				February 2024												
M		4	11	18	25	M		1	8	15	22	29	M		5	12	19	26		
Tu		5	12	19	26	Tu		2	9	16	23	30	Tu		6	13	20	27		
W		6	13	20	27	W		3	10	17	24	31	W		7	14	21	28		
Th		7	14	21	28	Th		4	11	18	25	Th	1	8	15	22	29			
F	1	8	15	22	29	F		5	12	19	26	F	2	9	16	23				
Sa	2	9	16	23	30	Sa		6	13	20	27	Sa	3	10	17	24				
Su	3	10	17	24	31	Su		7	14	21	28	Su	4	11	18	25				
March 2024				April 2024				May 2024												
M		4	11	18	25	M		1	8	15	22	29	M		6	13	20	27		
Tu		5	12	19	26	Tu		2	9	16	23	30	Tu		7	14	21	28		
W		6	13	20	27	W		3	10	17	24	W		1	8	15	22	29		
Th		7	14	21	28	Th		4	11	18	25	Th		2	9	16	23	30		
F	1	8	15	22	29	F		5	12	19	26	F		3	10	17	24	31		
Sa	2	9	16	23	30	Sa		6	13	20	27	Sa		4	11	18	25			
Su	3	10	17	24	31	Su		7	14	21	28	Su		5	12	19	26			
June 2024				July 2024				August 2024												
M		3	10	17	24	M		1	8	15	22	29	M		5	12	19	26		
Tu		4	11	18	25	Tu		2	9	16	23	30	Tu		6	13	20	27		
W		5	12	19	26	W		3	10	17	24	31	W		7	14	21	28		
Th		6	13	20	27	Th		4	11	18	25	Th	1	8	15	22	29			
F		7	14	21	28	F		5	12	19	26	F	2	9	16	23	30			
Sa	1	8	15	22	29	Sa		6	13	20	27	Sa	3	10	17	24	31			
Su	2	9	16	23	30	Su		7	14	21	28	Su	4	11	18	25				
Key:				Term dates Summary								Days								
School Day				Term 1 04 September 2023 - 20 October 2023								35								
School Holiday				Term 2 30 October 2023 - 20 December 2023								38								
Bank Holiday				Term 3 04 January 2024 - 09 February 2024								27								
				Term 4 19 February 2024 - 28 March 2024								29								
				Term 5 15 April 2024 - 24 May 2024								29								
				Term 6 03 June 2024 - 23 July 2024								37								
				Total								195								
Bank and public holidays 2023/2024																				
Christmas Day Holiday				25 December 2023				Easter Monday				01 April 2024								
Boxing Day Holiday				26 December 2023				May Day Holiday				06 May 2024								
New Year's Day Holiday				01 January 2024				Spring Bank Holiday				27 May 2024								
Good Friday				29 March 2024				Summer Bank Holiday				26 August 2024								
Foundation, trust, academy and voluntary aided schools set their own term dates and may differ from ours. Please check with the individual schools for their term dates.																				

Appendix 2 Comments Received

NB: All comments are a direct representation of those received and have not been altered to correct typographical or other errors.

Question:1. Do you agree with the proposed school term dates for 2023/2024?	Question:2. Do you have any further comments to make regarding the proposed school term dates for 2023/2024?	Question:3. Based on the information given do you have any concerns about equality impacts that you would like to raise?	Question:4. If you have answered yes to question 3, please confirm which of the Equality Act 2010 characteristics apply.	Question:4. Please expand on your response and give details of the impact in the space below
Yes	would like to see a 2wk break in either autumn or summer half term and reduce the summer holiday by a week	No View		
Yes	No	No		You have not correctly listed the protected characteristics in the Equality Act. Please ensure people who are designing these questionnaires are familiar with with protected characteristics.
No	It is silly to go back on the 1st Sept for 1 day! Might as well start on 4th and add it to the end of the year. Will allow parents to have a marginally cheaper summer holiday if they so wish as we are beholden to ridiculous prices in school hols.	Yes	Other specific impacts, for example: carers, parents, impact on health and wellbeing.	Cost of holidays in school times. Allowing us the 1st September will allow a holiday that week.
No		No		
Yes		No		

Yes	No	No		
No	Adjust Christmas holiday so return to school is later than 2 Jan.	No		
Yes	no	No		
No	Start on monday 4th Sept, End one day later in July	No		
No	Starting a September term on Friday 1st is ridiculous - it means that both staff and parents loose the possibility of using that week for their holidays. Finishing for Christmas on Friday 15th December is way too early.	Yes	People on a low income	Holidays running in the week ending Friday 1st September are cheaper than the rest of the school break. This may be the only opportunity for low income families to have any sort of break.
No	The December 2023 Christmas break starts very early would look at coming in on the 18th and 19th	No		
No	Could Term 2 end 19th/20th December, enabling Term 3 to start a few days later?	No		
Yes	6 weeks in Summer is far too long for kids to be away from school / a hot meal. Summer holidays childcare is always so expensive, is there a chance we can look into 5 weeks holiday? October half term to coincide with Halloween?	Yes	People on a low income	Low income families struggle for Childcare over Summer
No	Finish on the 19th December 2023 and then finish on the 19th July 2024	No		

No	I would like to see the Summer holiday shortened and the October Half Term lengthened. Breaking up on the 15th December is also too early in my view.cemebr	No		
Yes	no	No		
Yes		No		
No	Instead of starting on the Friday 1st could a day be added to the end of July?	No		
Yes	Dates look fine and neatly	No		
No	Christmas term should finish later, Wednesday 20th	Yes	People in particular faith groups	
No	It would be beneficial for parents if North Somerset had at least one week during the year that is out of step with the other holidays so families can have a holiday for slightly less money than core holiday weeks.	Yes	Disabled people, People from different ethnic groups, Men or women (including pregnant women or those on maternity leave), People on a low income	People on low income are disproportionately disabled, different ethnic groups, pregnant women/those on maternity leave, people on a low income. All of these people are suffering from escalating costs of living and holidays are likely to be sacrificed
No	Christmas holiday should be spread out after christmas and be returning the second week on January	No View		
Yes	No	No		
No	Summer break should be shorter,and a wk added on to Oct or Feb	No		
Yes	Increase school hours to make up for lost time due to covid	No View		

Yes	Seem like sensible dates and even distribution of weeks for terms	No		
Yes	No	No		
Yes	I like that there are no split weeks and all terms are even lengths. The first day for an inset is perfect	No		
No	Two x seven week term in the autumn and winter with only one week's rest in between are really gruelling for students and teachers alike. Either it needs to be a longer holiday maybe 10 days or one of the terms to be 6 weeks.	Yes	Other specific impacts, for example: carers, parents, impact on health and wellbeing.	as mentioned above, exhaustion impacts on mental health
Yes	No	No		
Yes	Good that they are the same as nearby schools	No		
No	ELAN would prefer the last day of term 2 to be the 20th or 21st December	No		