

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE
CORPORATE DIRECTOR'S MEETING WITH EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

30 May 2023

School Term and Holiday Dates 2024/2025

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To brief Executive Members on responses to the proposed school term and holiday dates for 2024/25 and to seek their approval to the proposed calendar.

2.0 ISSUES AND BACKGROUND

2.1 School employers are required to set the term dates of their school year. Employers are: the local authority in community, voluntary controlled and community special schools and maintained nursery schools; the governing body in foundation and voluntary aided schools; the academy trust in academies and Free Schools. The Education (School Day and School Year) (England) regulations 1991 require all maintained schools to educate their pupils for at least 380 sessions (190 days) in each school year. These regulations do not apply to academies and Free Schools; the academy trust is responsible for deciding the length of the school year. It is hoped that for consistency across North Yorkshire all schools will adopt the recommended term dates.

2.2 In addition to these teaching days each school has five professional development (PD) days for teaching staff. As in previous years the authority has proposed three of these days. The remaining two days will be identified by each school from the calendar.

2.3 The Local Government Association (LGA) continues to urge local authorities (LAs) to try to achieve a common approach when determining term dates. North Yorkshire Council is part of the group of LAs across Yorkshire which has agreed a set of guiding principles the aim of which is to achieve more consistent holiday dates across local LA areas. These guiding principles were applied to the production of our proposals for consultation.

2.4 Currently the local authority is still required to set term and holiday dates for community schools, community special schools, voluntary controlled schools, pupil referral units and maintained nursery schools.

2.5 Members are reminded that it had been intended that when the Deregulation Act 2015 came into force, the education clauses would allow all schools to vary school dates. However, the provision within the Act to give the governing bodies of community, voluntary controlled, community special schools, and maintained nursery schools in England the responsibility for setting their own school term and holiday dates was not commenced. These schools have not therefore been given the power to set their own term dates.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The authority continues to propose three professional development days. The purpose of this is to continue to achieve efficiency savings by rationalising transport across the county and to make life easier for parents who have children attending different schools. It also enables greater consistency in planning for services such as transport and school meals.

4.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 As noted above at paragraph 2.1, the LA currently has a duty to set dates of terms and holidays for community, voluntary controlled, community special schools and maintained nursery schools under the Education Act 2002 Section 32.

5.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN AND RESPONSES

- 5.1 Following discussions with other LA's and based on our agreed guidelines, a single version of a draft calendar was produced which identified 190 days when teachers are available to work and three proposed professional development (PD) days. The headteacher of each school has the discretion to determine two further PD days from the calendar. A copy of the draft calendar is at Appendix 1.

- 5.2 The consultation to determine a school calendar for 2024/2025 was launched on 28 February and closed on 11 April 2023. All maintained schools and academies, teachers' associations, trade unions and other local authorities across Yorkshire and the North East were consulted.

- 5.3 The authority received 31 responses from the online survey. These were from 20 primary schools, 1 primary Federation (4 schools), 1 secondary school and one response from a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU). There were 9 individual responses from teachers.

- 5.4 There were no comments from other authorities or trade unions.

- 5.5 Of the online respondents the majority made more than one comment. There were 21 comments regarding Professional Development (PD) Days, seven relating to changes to shorter terms and setting the Easter break. Two agreed to the term dates and two disagreed with the term dates. There was one comment that the term dates did not always match Durham local authority and one on the shortness of summer term (23 days), but accepted that this was due to the lateness of Easter. Appendix 2 records all responses received.

- 5.6 The setting of an Easter break had been explored previously in 2020 but was not an option the majority of schools agreed with. The comments received from schools in relation to a new approach to the setting of terms dates represented only 1.5% of the schools consulted.

It is the view of the officers that none of the issues raised as part of the consultation greatly affect the proposed term dates for 2024-2025. However, in recognition of the comments received in relation to the PD day in December 2024 (originally proposed for 20 December 2024) this has been moved to the suggested alternative date of 6 January 2025.

6.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS/BENEFITS

6.1 Many school buses and other vehicles provide a shared service to more than one school. One of the benefits of having three common PD days is that it enables transport to operate at optimum capacity and reduces the environmental impact.

7.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 The draft calendar has taken account of consultation and feedback, the term dates have not changed except that one set PD has been moved from 20 December 2024 to 6 January 2025. The draft calendar is broadly in line with proposals from those neighbouring LAs in which the majority of cross border pupils reside.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

8.1 To approve the term and holiday dates for community, voluntary controlled, community special schools and maintained nursery schools for 2024/25 as set out in the calendar identified at Appendix 1.

STUART CARLTON
CORPORATE DIRECTOR – CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE

Report prepared by Lisa Herdman, Lead for Admissions
17 May 2023

Appendix 1 – Proposed term dates calendar for 2024/25
Appendix 2 – Responses to the consultation.

DRAFT North Yorkshire School Term Dates

Academic Year 2024/2025

| | AUGUST 2024 | SEPTEMBER 2024 | OCTOBER 2024 | NOVEMBER 2024 | DECEMBER 2024 | JANUARY 2025 |
|-----------|---------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| 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 2025 | MARCH 2025 | APRIL 2025 | MAY 2025 | JUNE 2025 | JULY 2025 |
|-----------|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| Monday | 3 10 17 24 | 3 10 17 24 31 | 7 14 21 28 | 5 12 19 26 | 2 9 16 23 30 | 7 14 21 28 |
| Tuesday | 4 11 18 25 | 4 11 18 25 | 1 8 15 22 29 | 6 13 20 27 | 3 10 17 24 | 1 8 15 22 29 |
| Wednesday | 5 12 19 26 | 5 12 19 26 | 2 9 16 23 30 | 7 14 21 28 | 4 11 18 25 | 2 9 16 23 30 |
| Thursday | 6 13 20 27 | 6 13 20 27 | 3 10 17 24 | 1 8 15 22 29 | 5 12 19 26 | 3 10 17 24 31 |
| Friday | 7 14 21 28 | 7 14 21 28 | 4 11 18 25 | 2 9 16 23 30 | 6 13 20 27 | 4 11 18 25 |
| Saturday | 1 8 15 22 | 1 8 15 22 29 | 5 12 19 26 | 3 10 17 24 31 | 7 14 21 28 | 5 12 19 26 |
| Sunday | 2 9 16 23 | 2 9 16 23 30 | 6 13 20 27 | 4 11 18 25 | 1 8 15 22 29 | 6 13 20 27 |

| | | | |
|-------------|----|----|-----|
| Autumn Term | 40 | 75 | 195 |
| | 35 | | |
| Spring Term | 30 | 60 | |
| | 30 | | |
| Summer Term | 23 | 60 | |
| | 37 | | |

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| | Bank Holiday |
| | School Holiday |
| | PD /training days |

Pupils must be taught for a minimum of 190 days. The number of term days shown is 192. Three recommended professional development (PD) days for teaching staff have also been highlighted; pupils will not attend school on these days. Schools will need to identify a further **two** PD days from the calendar. Please could you send your remaining **two** PD days to the Business Support Team, Jesmond House, Harrogate via email schoolwelfare@northyorks.gov.uk when you have agreed them.

Consultation comments – Term Dates 2024-2025

Appendix 2

| Response | Please provide your comments on the proposed school term |
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| 1 | We do not think that the teacher training day proposed for the last day of the December term is a very good idea at all and would asked that this is moved. It will end up not being very well used as everyone will be shattered at the end of term - we agree it is a long term so a training day in that term would be good, but definitely not on the last day of the term. Thanks |
| 2 | We are most concerned re the compulsory PD/Training day being placed on the 20th December and feel this is an absolute no for our school. This term is a particularly hard term for teachers and staff and to have a training day on the last day of this term is not productive or appropriate. We would request that this compulsory PD/Training day either be on the 4th November 2024 or the 6th January 2025. Thank you. |
| 3 | As a head teacher who works across the border from where she lives and her children go to school, it would be helpful to have the holidays the same as County Durham and I know that I am not the only teacher in this situation and it is making childcare extremely difficult. There have never been any problems until this February half term and next year 3 of the holidays including February half term, one week at Christmas and one week at Easter do not line up. For 2024/2025 this is the case for February half term and Easter. Durham dates are 21st Feb - 3rd March and Easter is 11th-28th April and it would be so helpful if North Yorkshire could line up with these dates. |
| 4 | I would suggest an alternative to 20 December 2024 as by that date, most staff are exhausted and not in a fit state to take on board training. Monday 4 Nov, Monday 6 Jan or Tuesday 22 April would be more productive in my view. |
| 5 | I completely understand that it must be a complete nightmare to generate an LA term-time calendar for each academic year - I wouldn't want the responsibility! I appreciate that for those colleagues who will tell you that you've got it right, a significant proportion will tell you you've got it wrong! I'm afraid that I'm in the latter camp! I've never bothered writing to you previously because of the empathy I've attempted to show above, but I thought that if I don't show my hand, everything will just continue to roll out in the same way each year. For us, as a federation of primary schools, we find this type of arrangement hard to manage for the following reasons: 1. We really value holding a 5 training day. We get loads of CPD and school/federation improvement done each time. 2. Therefore, we get frustrated with the insistence of continually forcing us to take 2 training days right at the end of the school year. a. I know there's usually only 1 listed in yellow (in the case the Tuesday 22nd July) - but who, in their right mind, would make children come in on Monday 21st July?! b. Staff are exhausted at this stage of the year. There is no point in attempting to do anything worthwhile with them, in terms of CPD etc. c. I know that we could 'twilight' these sessions. However - this opens a can of worms when you consider the number of part-time staff, different working days, number of hours involved to compensate the day etc. etc. A complete and utter minefield of issues to resolve to simply twilight a single day, let alone two days (40% of our annual allocation.) We would ask you to consider removing the 22nd July as an LA training day and exchanging it for either: • Mon 4th Nov • Mon 6th Jan • Fri 4th Apr • Tues 22nd Apr The impact of this would be to allow schools to choose to hold 2 training days at the end of the academic year (or to twilight them if they wish) - or to have the children in school on these days and choose 2 other days throughout the school yr |
| 6 | We would rather not have 20th December as a training day, this is a very busy term (in Primary schools) and staff will not take on information at training sessions as easily as other times.. Perhaps a day in November or April would suit better for staffs |
| 7 | My only comment would be around the PD day on the 20th December. It would be more beneficial as a school to hold this on the 6th January so after the Xmas holidays not before. |
| 8 | When will Headteachers meet as a group in localities to determine whether the outdated system of terms and holidays be reviewed to further reflect the current needs in society. As a school on the coast, we have a number of families for who the 6 week summer holidays is the time when |

Consultation comments – Term Dates 2024-2025

Appendix 2

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| | they make the majority of their money as a business or as an employee. This often means, that families are taking holidays at other times of the year. Children's resilience at a young age often means that half terms of longer than 5 weeks often result in absence within the last week. A fresh approach to children's planned learning needs to take place and should not just be considered from a NYCC whole county view but by a locality view. I propose that children should spend 8 lots of 5 weeks in school, interspersed with breaks where needed. Why does every holiday have to be a week long? Why does Easter have to be two weeks? Why still a 6 week break? As Headteacher of a coastal school, I would be very happy to meet and propose a new way of thinking that reflects the needs of our school and our community. |
| 9 | Good idea to break up the school year more effectively. |
| 10 | I feel that 6 half terms are now outdated and we should be looking at 8 shorter half terms to ensure children's learning is better in schools. |
| 11 | I have been teaching for 25 years and the pressures on teachers are greater than ever. Like myself, most teachers give everything they have in pursuit of ensuring the best education possible for the children in their care. Like many teachers, I have always struggled with the 'work life' balance and from Monday to Friday work 12 hour days. Weekends are often spent catching up on extra paperwork, watching educational videos, researching resources, etc. Any 'family time' is accompanied with feelings of guilt at not working and worrying how I will find the time to get through the never ending workload. This is exhausting and the majority of teachers continually count down the days to the next 'holiday', not because they are lazy, but because they are usually ready to drop! In order to have enthusiastic, well resourced, energetic and mentally and physically well staff at the front of classrooms, the current structure of the education timetable needs careful consideration. Teachers cannot be at their best if they are dropping from exhaustion. Staff absence is increasing and this places added pressure on existing staff in schools. The same can be said for children. Often we find that our pupils attendance rate decreases as we move through a half term. Children are also exhausted approaching a half term or end of term break. Parents frequently comment "they are exhausted". I believe that decreasing the length of each half term would make a huge difference and have a significant impact on the quality of education and the mental health and well being of both staff and pupils. Half terms should be not longer than 6 weeks. This would also mean that the summer holidays could decrease from 6 weeks to 4 weeks, which is long enough for teachers to feel well rested and ready for the new academic year. |
| 12 | The training day scheduled for 20th December is likely to be very unproductive given that it is at the end of a term and right before the Christmas holidays. As Executive Headteacher of 3 schools, I think that moving this to the start of a term would be far more beneficial for schools. I imagine the majority of schools will allocate 21st July as a training day too, rather than opening for one day that week. |
| 13 | by picking 22nd July - you are in effect forcing schools to use one of their 'chosen days' as the 21st July . can you imagine thew backlash from parents expecting children to come in for one day. Easter when is North Yorkshire going to follow the lead of other LAs and fix a spring break regardless of Easter to avoid theses silly bitty terms |
| 14 | Summer 1 is incredibly short at 23 school days but I appreciate that it looks as though Easter is late. No other significant points to mention. |
| 15 | I do not wish to have a training day on the last day of term in December when my staff are exhausted. This should instead be at the start of January -Monday 6th January |
| 16 | I am unclear how this would affect holidays or what terms would then be... I would need to know this in order to comment. |
| 17 | I agree with the proposed term and holiday dates - allowing terms to stretch to 8 weeks for better learning opportunities. |

Consultation comments – Term Dates 2024-2025

Appendix 2

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| 18 | It is good to see that most of the half terms are 6 weeks, however the first one is 8 weeks! This is always a difficult one to navigate. This again would be much better if not so long Also the Easter holiday Ends with the Bank holiday Monday. This, like other bank holidays is not supportive of part time staff. When it is incorporated within the main holiday all staff get the same deal. Training Days, should also not always be placed on a Monday, and some suggestions for a Friday would again be beneficial to part time staff |
| 19 | The proposed changes will have little impact on pupils wellbeing and learning. The Autumn Term is too long (8 weeks and a 7 weeks). A short fix would be to move a week from the 6 weeks holidays to give 2 weeks during October break to make a 7 week and 7 week. Long term, the whole structure needs re-looking at. The impact on pupils learning and mental health from having 6 weeks off is too long. Pupils regress, it is too long since the transition. Current structure: 8 weeks (1 off) 7 weeks (2 off) 6 weeks (1 off) 6 weeks (2 off) 5 weeks (1 off) 7.2 weeks (6 off) Idea: 6 weeks (2 off) 7 weeks (2 off) 6 weeks (2 off) 6 weeks (2 off) 7 weeks (2 off) 7.2 weeks (3 off) Start and end of year would need to be moved around to incorporate Christmas and Easter (this could just be a longer weekend with movement of a couple of days). |
| 20 | The structure of the school terms needs to change. The way it stands currently has a significant impact on the mental health of our staff. We see that towards the end of the longer terms (7 or 8 weeks in length) the children are tired and need to have a break from their learning. As they are tired, this affects their ability to concentrate in class and therefore their behaviour. The quality of work they produce is lower and they do not learn as well as what they could. This consequently impacts on the teachers and support staff. Shorter terms would be more effective in helping the children sustain their concentration and effort on working which would in effect improve the mental health of the professionals. |
| 21 | I feel the proposed PD day of 20th December is not suitable. Staff are exhausted at the end of term and this would not be a productive use of valuable training days. Could this day not be moved to 6th January when staff are refreshed and in a better place to take on professional development! Also my staff are not keen on the Easter holidays commencing 2 weeks before actual Easter. Would this not best fit either side of the event and would also allow for summer holidays to commence July 21st. |
| 22 | The term dates given are all acceptable, however, the training day on 20th December 2024 is not suitable & would be more appropriately placed on 6th January 2025. |
| 23 | Rather than the training day on the Friday before Xmas, it would be much more useful on the first day back in Jan 25. Staff will be refreshed and ready to start the term. Thanks |
| 24 | We will not be able to accommodate a training day on the 20th December there is simply too much amazing stuff going on in the last week of term to lose a day in that week, please reconsider and move to the 6th January as staff appreciate a training day at the start of each term. Thank you. |
| 25 | It would be more beneficial to have the training day on 6th January 24 instead of 20.12.23. We would prefer it if the Easter Holiday was 14th - 27th April and the extra day from moving this would negate having to have 22nd of July as a training day. |
| 26 | The proposed date in December for a professional learning day would be best used elsewhere in the calendar. Fridays do not work well for PD Days in our opinion. If this date goes ahead, school will look to move it to an alternative date in our term date return. |
| 27 | Our only comment was that we didn't feel the training days on the 20th December and 22nd July would be the most productive days. |
| 28 | We would request our two extra inset dates will 3rd September and 21st July if this suggested calendar of dates go ahead. |
| 29 | We would want to add another PD day on Sept 3rd. We would want to move the 20th Dec PD day to 6th Jan. We would want to add another PD day at start of summer term - 22nd May and one at the end of the summer term - 21st July. |

Consultation comments – Term Dates 2024-2025

Appendix 2

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| 30 | I feel that the PD/ training days are a good idea to have the same across schools in North Yorkshire as it has massive benefits. I however feel that the PD day on the last day of term on 20th December would not be an effective use of the day and should be on 6th January 2025. After a half term of teaching, especially in that season, fatigue levels are high which would result in ineffective training. |
| 31 | I feel that the PD/ training days are a good idea to have the same across schools in North Yorkshire as it has massive benefits. I however feel that the PD day on the last day of term on 20th December would not be an effective use of the day and should be on 6th January 2025. After a half term of teaching, especially in that season, fatigue levels are high which would result in ineffective training. |