

**Name of meeting:** Cabinet

**Date:** 11 December 2018

**Title of report:** Setting and approving Term Dates for Community, Voluntary Controlled and Community Special Schools.

**Purpose of report**

Kirklees Local Authority as the admission authority determines term dates for community, voluntary controlled and community special schools.

This report is being presented in order to seek approval for Kirklees Council to change how it determines term dates for the academic year 2020/21 and thereafter.

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	Yes
Key Decision - Is it in the <a href="#">Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?)</a>	Yes
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Yes
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name	Saleem Tariq 19/11/2018
Is it also signed off by the Service Director Finance and Section 151 Officer	Eamonn Croston 19/11/2018
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Governance and Commissioning Support	Julie Muscroft (John Chapman) 19/11/2018
Cabinet member <a href="#">portfolio</a>	Cllr Masood Ahmed – Children Cllr Viv Kendrick – Children

**Electoral wards affected:** All Wards

**Ward councillors consulted:** No

**Public or private:** Public

**1. Summary**

There is a policy in Kirklees for setting term dates for Community, Voluntary Controlled and Community Special Schools which was approved by Education Committee 25 years ago on 10 August 1993 (appendix 1).

It is proposed that Kirklees Council switch from using the Kirklees policy to follow the Local Government Association (LGA) recommendation to use the LGA Guiding Principles for setting term dates in the Yorkshire and North East regions (appendix 2) and follow suit with the local authorities who also use these. The following local authorities are aiming to co-ordinate dates according to the LGA Guiding Principles (apart from Leeds who have a set Easter break). An annual meeting each September will take place to ensure that

neighbouring local authorities shown below are making efforts to all work towards a school calendar which has significant similarities.

Barnsley, Bradford, Calderdale, Doncaster, Kirklees, Leeds, North Yorkshire, Rotherham, Sheffield, Wakefield, York.

It is proposed that the decision to approve Kirklees Term dates for community, controlled and community special schools also be delegated by Kirklees Cabinet to the Service Director, Learning and Early Support for the academic year 2020/21 and thereafter. This will follow engagement each year with the Education and Learning Partnership Board and/or the relevant sub-committee of this Board.

It is expected that by having an agreed principle for setting term dates that aligns with our neighbouring local authorities will make the process of setting term dates a more co-ordinated and routine process.

## 2. Information required to take a decision

Statutory regulation requires that 195 school days are identified in any academic year and pupils attend school for a statutory 190 days and then five additional days called pupil occasional holidays are determined by the governing body of the school.

Kirklees officers liaise annually with neighbouring authorities to inform the consultation process in Kirklees and engage with Kirklees schools and partners via the Places, Access and Inclusion Committee who report to the Education and Learning Partnership Board.

There is increasing pressure from the LGA for local authorities to try to achieve a coordinated approach and a common calendar across the region when determining term dates and they recommend that local authorities therefore use the LGA Guiding Principles for Yorkshire and North East Regions. (appendix 2).

The current Kirklees policy differs slightly from the LGA Guiding Principles for Yorkshire and North East Regions and this has resulted in Kirklees being out of co-ordination with some of our neighbouring local authorities over past years and adaptations have had to be made to the Kirklees term dates to bring us more in line with our neighbouring local authorities who in the main follow the Guiding Principles set out by the LGA for the Yorkshire and North East Regions.

The differences occur mainly around;

	<b>Kirklees Policy</b>	<b>LGA Guiding Principles</b>
<b>Start of the School Year</b>	first <b>Weekday</b> in September.	first <b>Monday</b> in September
<b>Christmas Holiday</b>	start on the Friday which is on, or otherwise immediately prior to, 22 December and include at least ten school days (three weekends) and any New Year's Day holiday which is outside that period.	at least 10 weekdays, start on the Friday which is on, or prior to, 22 December and include the New Year's day holiday which is outside that period, <b>and the day after New Years Day, where this is a weekday.</b>
<b>Easter Holiday</b>	If Easter Sunday falls on or before 8 April the term shall end at the <b>close of the afternoon session on Maundy Thursday</b> (the day	The Spring Term should <b>end on the Friday before Good Friday.</b> The holiday should be at least 10 weekdays.

	before Good Friday) and be <b>closed for 11 school days.</b>	
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Our neighbouring local authorities will meet annually to confirm plans for the following year as well as drafting the next two years term dates to highlight any mismatched dates so that these can be aligned as far as is practicable. It is known that there are still likely to be differences between some local authorities who have already adopted set dates for the easter break i.e; Leeds. An attempt will be made by neighbouring local authorities to match all other dates using the LGA Guiding Principles so that there is consistency for dates for community, voluntary controlled and community special schools in the region.

The governing bodies of voluntary aided schools and trust schools and the academy trusts of academies and free schools, are able to determine their own dates; In the interests of pupils and their families and staff the majority of own admission authority schools do coordinate with those dates set by the Council.

When producing a proposed calendar local authorities take account of the following

- Whether the proposed calendar supports appropriate educational provision.
- The economic impact such as costs of home to school transport.
- Where possible the potential impact on families e.g. child care, families with children/partners in more than one school or local authority area.
- Relevant cultural needs.
- Importance of cross border working.

### **3. Implications for the Council**

#### **3.1 Early Intervention and Prevention (EIP)**

Reviewing how Kirklees determine Term Dates for the Academic Year September 2020/21 onwards for community, voluntary controlled and community special schools will support the local authority to achieve a coordinated approach. There is increasing pressure for local authorities to try to agree a common calendar across the region and the LGA recommend that local authorities use their guiding principle for setting term dates. Publishing term dates as early as possible gives parents and carers opportunities to plan their annual calendars around school term dates.

#### **3.2 Economic Resilience (ER)**

We want Kirklees to be a place where local people have the chance to develop skills, and where communities have good employment opportunities and wages. In line with this, we are committed to making sure that there is a consistent approach for families who live and/or work across local authority borders can plan their annual calendars effectively.

#### **3.3 Improving Outcomes for Children**

Our aim is that all children in Kirklees have equal access to, and equal opportunities in education, regardless of where they were born or their start in life. We are committed to improve the quality of education in our schools to give every child the best possible start and provide opportunities for maximising learning and attendance. We are committed to ensuring better outcomes for all families who live and/or work across local authority borders so that they can ensure that their children attend school no matter which local authority they live/go to school in.

### **3.4 Reducing demand of services**

Co-ordinating Term Dates for Community, Voluntary Controlled and Community Special Schools with neighbouring local authorities will allow the local authority to focus resources on those most in need of support.

### **3.5 Other (eg Legal/Financial or Human Resources)**

This is a statutory requirement for the council. There are no financial or Human Resources implications for the council

## **4. Consultees and their opinions**

Consultation regarding proposed school term dates takes place annually with the main school Professional Associations and Trades Unions through the respective liaison groups and Headteacher group meetings. All Headteachers of all schools in Kirklees are consulted during the process as well as members of the Place, Access and Inclusion Committee which reports to the Education and Learning Partnership Board.

## **5. Next steps**

When approved by the Service Director, Learning and Early Support, the term dates will continue to be communicated to the governing bodies of all schools as well as neighbouring local authorities and will appear on the Kirklees Council website and will include details of the bank holidays during the relevant school year.

## **6. Officer recommendations and reasons**

Members are requested to;

Approve the switch from using the Kirklees Policy (1993) for setting term dates for Kirklees community, controlled and community special schools to using the LGA recommended Yorkshire and North East regions Guiding Principles for the 2020/21 academic year and thereafter.

Approve the recommendation that approval for setting term dates each academic year will be delegated to the Service Director, Learning and Early Support following engagement with the Education and Learning Partnership Board.

Note that the term dates when approved will continue to meet with the required number of school days as in statutory regulation.

Note that consultation with neighbouring local authorities and liaison groups and headteachers will continue to take place before the dates for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools are approved for the year 2020/21 and thereafter.

## **7. Cabinet portfolio holder's recommendations**

Portfolio Holders support and recommend that Cabinet approve;

- Adoption of the LGA recommended Yorkshire and North East regions Guiding Principles for the 2020/21 academic year and thereafter for setting term dates for Kirklees community, controlled and community special schools.
- Delegation for setting term dates each academic year to the Service Director, Learning and Early Support following engagement with the Education and Learning Partnership Board and with neighbouring local authorities.

## **8. Contact officer**

Juliet Stott, Strategic Lead Pupil Admissions Service Manager

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## **9. Background Papers and History of Decisions**

Appendix 1 - Kirklees Policy (1993) for setting Term Dates

Appendix 2 – Local Government Association Guiding Principles for setting future term dates in the Yorkshire and North East regions

## **10. Service Director responsible**

Jo-Anne Sanders, Service Director-Learning and Early Support

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The policy for determining the 195 school days was approved by Education Committee on 10 August 1993.

The school year shall consist of 195 school days. Pupils must attend on 190 of those days. In nominating the five pupil occasional holidays, governing bodies must accommodate the use of the school as a polling station, where needed.

**1. Start of the School Year**

The school year shall start on the first week day in September.

**2. Autumn Half Term Holiday**

The Autumn half term holiday shall be the five days which are the last period Monday to Friday in October. According to the year October half term can start as early as Monday 21 and as late as Monday 27 October.

**3. Christmas Holiday**

The Christmas holiday shall start on the Friday which is on, or otherwise immediately prior to, 22 December and shall include at least 10 school days (three weekends) and any New Year's day holiday which is outside that period.

**4. February Half Term Holiday**

The February half term holiday shall be five days Monday to Friday which divides the term as far as possible into two equal parts.

**5. Easter Holiday**

If Easter Sunday falls on or before 8 April the term shall end at the close of the afternoon session on Maundy Thursday (the day before Good Friday) and be closed for 11 school days. If Easter Sunday falls after 8 April the term shall end at the close of the afternoon session on the Friday before Good Friday. The holiday will be 10 school days.

**6. Spring Bank Half Term Holiday**

The Spring Bank half term holiday shall be five days Monday to Friday from the statutory holiday which falls as the last Monday in May.

**7. The Start of the Summer Holiday**

Taking into account the holidays given above, the start of the summer holiday shall be such that the school year consists of 195 school days of which five days shall be declared as pupil occasional holidays by the governing body of each community, controlled and special school.

1.0 The following Authorities listed will work together to establish common school holiday dates each year:

Yorkshire Authorities:

Barnsley

Bradford

Calderdale

Doncaster

East Yorkshire

Kirklees

Leeds

North Yorkshire

Rotherham

Sheffield

Wakefield

York

North East Authorities:

Cumbria

Darlington

Durham

Gateshead

Hartlepool

Middlesborough

Northumberland

Redcar/Cleveland

Stockton

Sunderland

2.0 The school year will consist of 195 school days. Pupils must attend on 190 of those days.

3.0 The starting point for consideration of each year's holiday pattern will be the pattern recommended by the LGA for that school year modified as per these principles.

4.0 Wherever possible, in any academic year, terms should be of equal length and split weeks avoided or kept to a minimum. Where there are an odd number of weeks the second half term should be the shorter of the two.

**5.0 Start of the School Year**

The school year will normally start on the first Monday in September.

**6.0 Autumn Half Term**

The Autumn half term break will be the five days which are the last period Monday to Friday in October. According to the year, October half term can start as early as Monday 21 and as late as Monday 27 October.

**7.0 Christmas Break**

The Christmas break will be at least 10 weekdays, and will normally start at the end of the school day on the Friday which is on, or otherwise immediately prior to, 22 December. It will include the New Year's day holiday which is outside that period, and the day after New Years Day, where this is a weekday.

**8.0 February Half Term**

The February half term holiday will be five days Monday to Friday, which divides the term as far as possible into two equal parts. Where there are an odd number of weeks the second half term will be the shorter of the two.

**9.0 Easter Break**

The Spring Term will normally end at the end of the school day on the Friday before Good Friday. The holiday will be 10 weekdays.

Where the LGA recommended patterns would result in a break between the Easter bank holidays and the school Easter holiday, consideration will be given to modifying Easter to incorporate the bank holidays in the school holiday. The Easter bank holidays could be at the start (with the Spring Term ending at the end

of the school day on the Thursday before Good Friday), middle, or end of the school Easter break, but never outside of the break itself.

#### **10.0 Spring Bank Half Term**

The Spring Bank half term will be five days Monday to Friday from the statutory holiday which falls as the last Monday in May.

#### **11.0 End of the School Year**

Taking into account the above pattern, term will end on the date which achieves 195 school days of which five days shall be declared as training days. The term will normally end on the third Friday in July.

The summer break will not be less than five weeks and preferably not less than six weeks.

#### **12.0 Exceptions**

Some LEAs (such as Bradford) have historically provided for a number of occasional (training) days within the schedule. These days allow schools to be responsive to their respective community needs. The schedule normally provides for between 3 – 5 occasional days which are found by reducing the half terms to three days in length.

#### **13.0 Polling Day**

In nominating the five training days, governing bodies must accommodate the use of the school as a polling station, where needed. Where schools close on polling day governing bodies should use this as a training day.