

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Executive Director (Children & Public Health)

To Cabinet On

12 January 2023

Report prepared by:

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Agenda
Item No.

Maintained School Term Dates 2024/25

Relevant Scrutiny Committee: People
Cabinet Member: Councillor Laurie Burton
Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To propose the school term and holiday dates for the academic year 2024/25.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the school term and holiday dates for 2024/25 as set out in Appendix 1 be approved for community schools and as a guide to all schools in the borough.

3. Background

3.1 There is no national determination of school term dates. Historically the Council has set the term dates for community schools in Southend. In the main, academies, foundation and voluntary aided schools have chosen to adopt dates set by the Council, although there is no requirement to do so.

3.2 In view of the cross border movement with Essex County Council of both pupils and staff, the coordination with Essex has been an important principle. The proposed dates are predominantly in line with the Eastern Region term dates.

3.3 The Eastern Region, and Essex County Council have not yet determined their final dates, however we are aware that both bodies prefer to have a longer Autumn Term, and shorter Spring Term.

3.4 School term dates are determined in accordance with legal requirements, identifying that there should be 190 pupil days and five non-pupil days allocated to staff development.

3.5 Schools have the autonomy to set the five allocated non-pupil days in accordance with the individual needs of the staff development for the school. However, schools are encouraged to consider using the non-pupil days where

school weeks are not full teaching weeks, for example 4 & 5 January and 22 July

3.6 It is recommended that we proceed with the dates as set out in Appendix 1.

4. Other Options

4.1 To ensure consistency with neighbouring authorities, incorporate public holidays and provide the statutory number of days, alternatives are very limited.

4.2 The Eastern Region, and Essex County Council have not yet determined their final dates, so aligning to their current proposals does not guarantee that dates would align.

5. Reasons for Recommendations

5.1 The proposed term dates for 2024/25 are set out in Appendix 1.

3.7 A consultation was held with all schools in the borough between 21 November to 9 December 2023. The majority of schools are in support with the proposed dates, recognising that the slight variation in the Dec/Jan break will have minimal disruption on the cross-border movement. Just over 4% of schools wished for the Dec/Jan dates to be like the Eastern Regions proposed dates and 100% of professional bodies supported the proposed dates. There is no requirement to consult with parents and carers.

5.1.1 The recommended term dates provide consistency with neighbouring authorities, whilst remaining compliant with legislation.

6. Corporate Implications

6.1 Contribution to the Southend 2050 Road Map
The proposed term dates will assist pupils within the Borough to access quality learning opportunities to achieve the best possible outcomes for all children (opportunity and prosperity).

In addition, it contributes to Active and Involved, enabling children to participate in community and family activities together, at set times during the calendar year.

6.2 Financial Implications
There are no direct financial implications for the Council. The administration of the term dates, and core revenue funding for the running of a School is funded through the Dedicated Schools Grant.

6.3 Legal Implications
The determination of term dates for community schools is a statutory requirement.

6.4 People Implications
Coordination with Essex is important for pupils and staff.

6.5 Property Implications

None

6.6 Consultation

A consultation with all schools in the borough and union representatives for schools and teaching staff was undertaken in the period 9 November to 7 December 2020.

6.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

In line with the Equality Act 2010, the proposed term dates are clear that there is no discrimination on the grounds of disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; or sexual orientation, in that they are the same for all pupils in the borough

6.8 Risk Assessment

If the Council does not agree to the term dates as a guide for all schools, schools will very likely set a variety of dates, resulting in an uncoordinated and general unified process, and the Council's reputation will suffer.

6.9 Value for Money

No direct implications.

6.10 Community Safety Implications

None envisaged.

6.11 Environmental Impact

None envisaged

7. Background Papers

- The Education Act 2002 - section 32
- The Education Act 1996 – section 551(1)

The Education (School Day and School Year) (England) Regulations 1999

8. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Proposed Southend-on-sea Term dates 2024/25

Appendix 2 - Determined Southend-on-sea Term dates 2023/24