

Meeting: Cabinet
Date: 9 January 2025
Classification: Part 1
Key Decision: No
Title of Report: **LA Maintained Community School Term Dates 2026/27**

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Executive Councillor: Councillor Laurie Burton

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. School term and holiday dates are set annually. This paper relates to the academic year 2026/27.
- 1.2. Council is only responsible for setting term dates for LA maintained schools.
- 1.3. Prior to cabinet approval of proposed dates, consultations were taken with the Regional group (which includes Essex County Council) and all Southend schools (including, community, foundation, voluntary aided, academy and free schools) as well school professional bodies.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1. **Agree the school term and holiday dates for 2026/27 as set out in Appendix 1 for LA maintained community schools and as a guide to all schools in the city.**

3. Background

- 3.1. There is no national determination of school term dates. Historically the Council has set the term dates for LA maintained 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 in line with the Southend proposed dates.
- 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.
- 3.6. It is recommended that we proceed with the dates as set out in Appendix 1.
- 3.7. For information, a copy of the previously agreed term dates for the next academic year 2025/26 are also included as appendix 2.

4. Reasons for Decisions

- 4.1. The proposed term dates for 2026/27 are set out in Appendix 1.
- 4.2. A consultation was held with all schools in the city between 1 -27 September 2024.
- 4.3. Only two responses were received, which was in support of the proposed dates. The consultation confirmed that no school is in disagreement with the proposed dates.
- 4.4. The recommended term dates provide consistency with neighbouring authorities, whilst remaining compliant with legislation.

5. Other Options

- 5.1. To ensure consistency with neighbouring authorities, incorporate public holidays and provide the statutory number of days, alternatives are very limited.
- 5.2. 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.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. 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.

7. Legal Implications

7.1. The determination of term dates for community schools is a statutory requirement.

8. Policy Context

8.1 Coordination with Essex is important for pupils and staff.

9. Carbon Impact

9.1. None envisaged

10. Equalities

10.1. 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 city.

11. Consultation

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

12. Appendices

12.1. **Appendix 1**: - Proposed Southend-on-Sea Term dates 2026/27

12.2. **Appendix 2**: - Determined Southend-on-Sea Term dates 2025/26

13. Report Authorisation

This report has been approved for publication by:		
	Name:	Date:
S151 Officer	Joe Chesterton	30/10/24
Monitoring Officer	Susan Zeiss	30/10/24
Executive Director(s)	Michael Marks	30/10/24
Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Cllr Burton	19/11/24