

North Somerset Council Decision

Decision Of: The Director of Children’s Services

With Advice From: Head of Strategic Place Planning, Capital Programmes and School Organisation/Admissions Service, in consultation with educational stakeholders and the community

Directorate: Children’s Services

Decision No: CY124 (2022/23 Scheme)

Subject: School Term and holiday dates 2024 - 2025

Key Decision: Yes

Reason: This decision is likely to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the Local Authority area

Background:

School employers are required to set the term dates of their schools. A Local Authority is the employer of 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 four schools (including special schools) as of 20 February 2023.

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 the schools it is currently responsible for in the school year 2024 – 2025 (full calendar view Appendix 1):

| | | | | |
|--------|-------------|---|--------------|-----|
| Term 1 | 02-Sep-2024 | - | 25-Oct-2024 | 40 |
| Term 2 | 04-Nov-2024 | - | 20-Dec-2024 | 35 |
| Term 3 | 06-Jan-2025 | - | 14-Feb-2025 | 30 |
| Term 4 | 24-Feb-2025 | - | 04-Apr-2025 | 30 |
| Term 5 | 22-Apr-2025 | - | 23-May-2025 | 23 |
| Term 6 | 02-Jun-2025 | - | 22-Jul-2025 | 37 |
| | | | Total | 195 |

Reasons:

North Somerset Council is currently the employer of staff at the following schools and therefore has a duty to set term dates for them.

- Kewstoke Primary School
- Baytree School
- Ravenswood School
- Voyage Learning Campus

Many academies and foundation schools still look to the Local Authority to suggest dates which provide a basis for their school level decisions.

Options Considered:

The Calendar for 2024-2025 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 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 checked 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 2024-2025 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 met the standing principles where possible. This collective timetable was proposed and consulted on by North Somerset and neighbouring Local Authorities to ensure uniformity across the region where possible.

The public holidays in 2024-2025 have been set in the calendar with the other holidays being distributed to try and achieve similar length teaching and learning blocks.

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 2023. Details of the consultation were published in the Council publication of Noticeboard in January 2023. Councillors were notified of the consultation by email. Diocesan bodies, relevant professional bodies, unions, and other key stakeholders were also contacted by email. The consultation was also open to the public. The dates initially consulted on were as follows:

| | | | | |
|--------|-------------|---|--------------|-----|
| Term 1 | 02-Sep-2024 | - | 18-Oct-2024 | 35 |
| Term 2 | 28-Oct-2024 | - | 20-Dec-2024 | 40 |
| Term 3 | 06-Jan-2025 | - | 14-Feb-2025 | 30 |
| Term 4 | 24-Feb-2025 | - | 04-Apr-2025 | 30 |
| Term 5 | 22-Apr-2025 | - | 23-May-2025 | 23 |
| Term 6 | 02-Jun-2025 | - | 22-Jul-2025 | 37 |
| | | | Total | 195 |

There are 80 schools in North Somerset, serving approximately 31,402 students (October 2022 census). This consultation covers the attendance at 4 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 76 foundation schools and academies can set their own term dates.

There were 21 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. 12 respondents were in support of the proposed dates and 9 were against the proposed dates.

The full table of responses to the consultation can be viewed in Appendix 2. The main points raised were as follows:

| Reply to Questionnaire | Our answer |
|--|---|
| The winter term is really long at 40 days as it gets colder and darker leading to Christmas it would be better if there could be a break part way through | Additional break requested in term 2 which is not possible, but half term will be moved to the week commencing 28 October. |
| Please make sure that all schools in NS share the same holiday time. For Christmas 2022 both Castle Batch and St Mark's had overlapping dates which must have caused some parents childcare issues if their | Foundation, trust, academy, and voluntary aided schools set their own term dates that may differ from those set by the Local Authority. Parents are advised to check with the individual schools for their term dates. |
| Five respondents felt that the October half term should be a week later to match other local authorities | October half term will be moved to the week commencing 28 October. |
| Remove 1 week from summer and add it to October half term | <p>Some schools and academies chose to have a longer October break and adjust their school inset dates to enable pupils to finish the school year earlier. Many in the school profession support the 6-week summer break and removing a week of this holiday forward from the summer to the earlier autumn period has proved unpopular in the past.</p> <p>Such a significant change would need to be part of a consultation proposal and as this was not the case this time, the change has not been proposed.</p> |
| Not equally spaced / The term between Easter and May half term is too short | The terms are as equally spaced as possible with the public and bank holidays setting parameters to work around. |
| Christmas holidays should start earlier and finish earlier - would suggest last day of term 2 should be 18 December, first day of term 3 should be 2 January. This makes terms more equal in length and places Christmas Day in the middle of the school holiday | This would result in split weeks, which we try to avoid as it has been shown in the past to encourage non-attendance. Previous consultations have shown that people like to have additional days after the New Year Bank Holiday and returning on 2 January would be too soon. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Agreement is subject to alignment with neighbouring authority dates - having different dates can create issues for families/staff with children in different schools. | We liaise with neighbouring authorities prior to the dates being set for consultation, but like us they will consult on their dates and may decide to make amendments following the responses they receive. |
| Make Easter holidays a week later so the bank holidays are in the middle of the holidays. | This would make term 5 extremely short which would not be acceptable. |
| Regulate start times to avoid traffic congestion, especially where you have more the one school neighbouring the other. | This is outside the scope of this consultation and lies with schools to determine |

In response to the consultation, the October holiday will be moved to the week commencing 28 October. This is to align with our neighbouring authorities who will also be setting this week as holiday.

Risk Management:

None.

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 2024/2025, 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 80 schools in North Somerset, three of the four special schools (catering for pupils with SEND) are still maintained by the Local Authority with the Council responsible for the term dates at two - Baytree and Ravenswood Schools (as Westhaven is a Foundation Special School). Therefore, proportionally the effect on disabled people of the Local Authority setting the term dates is greater (academies, foundation 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. Holiday prices can be set regionally once the term dates are published. 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 two consultees who expressed concerns regarding the Public Sector Equality Duties. Their comments both related to the October holiday which has been amended.

Following the consultation, the EIA has been reviewed and has not been changed (adjustments to the term dates have been made because of the comments made).

| Impact Level | Impact type | | | | Impact type | | |
|---|-------------|---|---|---|-------------|---|---|
| | H | M | L | N | + | = | - |
| Disabled people | | | X | | | X | |
| People from different ethnic groups | | | | X | | X | |
| Men or women (including those who are pregnant or on maternity leave) | | | | X | | X | |
| Lesbian, gay or bisexual people | | | | X | | X | |
| People on a low income | | | X | | | | X |
| People in particular age groups | | | | X | | X | |
| People in particular faith groups | | | | X | | X | |
| People who are married or in a civil partnership | | | | X | | X | |
| Transgender people | | | | X | | X | |
| Other specific impacts, for example: carers, parents, impact on health and wellbeing, Armed Forces Community etc. | | | | | | | |
| Please specify: Parents, carers, impact on health and wellbeing for school staff | | | X | | | | X |

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 2024/2025

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

Background Papers:

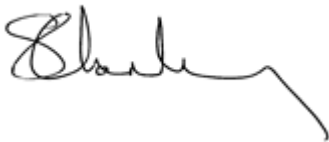
Please see link to the consultation on E-consult https://n-somerset.inconsult.uk/SchoolTermDates2024_25/consultationHome

Signatories:**Decision Maker(s):**

Signed:

Title: Director of Children's Services

Date: 28.03.23

With Advice From:


Signed:



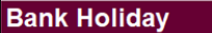
Title: Head of Strategic Place Planning, Capital Programmes and School Organisation/
Admissions Service

Date: 28.03.23

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 2024/2025 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sep-2024 | | | | | Oct-2024 | | | | | Nov-2024 | | | | | | | | | | |
| M | | 2 | 9 | 16 | 23 | 30 | M | | 7 | 14 | 21 | 28 | M | | 4 | 11 | 18 | 25 | | |
| Tu | | 3 | 10 | 17 | 24 | | Tu | | 1 | 8 | 15 | 22 | 29 | Tu | | 5 | 12 | 19 | 26 | |
| W | | 4 | 11 | 18 | 25 | | W | | 2 | 9 | 16 | 23 | 30 | W | | 6 | 13 | 20 | 27 | |
| Th | | 5 | 12 | 19 | 26 | | Th | | 3 | 10 | 17 | 24 | 31 | Th | | 7 | 14 | 21 | 28 | |
| F | | 6 | 13 | 20 | 27 | | F | | 4 | 11 | 18 | 25 | | F | 1 | 8 | 15 | 22 | 29 | |
| Sa | | 7 | 14 | 21 | 28 | | Sa | | 5 | 12 | 19 | 26 | | Sa | 2 | 9 | 16 | 23 | 30 | |
| Su | 1 | 8 | 15 | 22 | 29 | | Su | | 6 | 13 | 20 | 27 | | Su | 3 | 10 | 17 | 24 | | |
| Dec-2024 | | | | | Jan-2025 | | | | | Feb-2025 | | | | | | | | | | |
| M | | 2 | 9 | 16 | 23 | 30 | M | | 6 | 13 | 20 | 27 | | M | | 3 | 10 | 17 | 24 | |
| Tu | | 3 | 10 | 17 | 24 | 31 | Tu | | 7 | 14 | 21 | 28 | | Tu | | 4 | 11 | 18 | 25 | |
| W | | 4 | 11 | 18 | 25 | | W | 1 | 8 | 15 | 22 | 29 | | W | | 5 | 12 | 19 | 26 | |
| Th | | 5 | 12 | 19 | 26 | | Th | 2 | 9 | 16 | 23 | 30 | | Th | | 6 | 13 | 20 | 27 | |
| F | | 6 | 13 | 20 | 27 | | F | 3 | 10 | 17 | 24 | 31 | | F | | 7 | 14 | 21 | 28 | |
| Sa | | 7 | 14 | 21 | 28 | | Sa | 4 | 11 | 18 | 25 | | | Sa | 1 | 8 | 15 | 22 | | |
| Su | 1 | 8 | 15 | 22 | 29 | | Su | 5 | 12 | 19 | 26 | | | Su | 2 | 9 | 16 | 23 | | |
| Mar-2025 | | | | | Apr-2025 | | | | | May-2025 | | | | | | | | | | |
| M | | 3 | 10 | 17 | 24 | 31 | M | | 7 | 14 | 21 | 28 | | M | | 5 | 12 | 19 | 26 | |
| Tu | | 4 | 11 | 18 | 25 | | Tu | | 1 | 8 | 15 | 22 | 29 | Tu | | 6 | 13 | 20 | 27 | |
| W | | 5 | 12 | 19 | 26 | | W | | 2 | 9 | 16 | 23 | 30 | W | | 7 | 14 | 21 | 28 | |
| Th | | 6 | 13 | 20 | 27 | | Th | | 3 | 10 | 17 | 24 | | Th | | 1 | 8 | 15 | 22 | 29 |
| F | | 7 | 14 | 21 | 28 | | F | | 4 | 11 | 18 | 25 | | F | | 2 | 9 | 16 | 23 | 30 |
| Sa | 1 | 8 | 15 | 22 | 29 | | Sa | | 5 | 12 | 19 | 26 | | Sa | | 3 | 10 | 17 | 24 | 31 |
| Su | 2 | 9 | 16 | 23 | 30 | | Su | | 6 | 13 | 20 | 27 | | Su | | 4 | 11 | 18 | 25 | |
| Jun-2025 | | | | | Jul-2025 | | | | | Aug-2025 | | | | | | | | | | |
| M | | 2 | 9 | 16 | 23 | 30 | M | | 7 | 14 | 21 | 28 | | M | | 4 | 11 | 18 | 25 | |
| Tu | | 3 | 10 | 17 | 24 | | Tu | | 1 | 8 | 15 | 22 | 29 | Tu | | 5 | 12 | 19 | 26 | |
| W | | 4 | 11 | 18 | 25 | | W | | 2 | 9 | 16 | 23 | 30 | W | | 6 | 13 | 20 | 27 | |
| Th | | 5 | 12 | 19 | 26 | | Th | | 3 | 10 | 17 | 24 | 31 | Th | | 7 | 14 | 21 | 28 | |
| F | | 6 | 13 | 20 | 27 | | F | | 4 | 11 | 18 | 25 | | F | 1 | 8 | 15 | 22 | 29 | |
| Sa | | 7 | 14 | 21 | 28 | | Sa | | 5 | 12 | 19 | 26 | | Sa | 2 | 9 | 16 | 23 | 30 | |
| Su | 1 | 8 | 15 | 22 | 29 | | Su | | 6 | 13 | 20 | 27 | | Su | 3 | 10 | 17 | 24 | 31 | |

| | | | | |
|---|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------|
| Key: | | Term dates Summary | | Days |
|  | | Term 1 | 02-Sep-2024 - 25-Oct-2024 | 40 |
|  | | Term 2 | 04-Nov-2024 - 20-Dec-2024 | 35 |
|  | | Term 3 | 06-Jan-2025 - 14-Feb-2025 | 30 |
| | | Term 4 | 24-Feb-2025 - 04-Apr-2025 | 30 |
| | | Term 5 | 22-Apr-2025 - 12-May-2025 | 23 |
| | | Term 6 | 02-Jun-2025 - 22-Jul-2025 | 37 |
| | | | Total | 195 |

| | | | |
|---|-------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Bank and public holidays 2024/2025 | | | |
| Christmas Day | 25-Dec-2024 | Easter Monday | 21-Apr-2025 |
| Boxing Day | 26-Dec-2024 | May Day Holiday | 05-May-2025 |
| New Year's Day | 01-Jan-2025 | Spring Bank Holiday | 26-May-2025 |
| Good Friday | 18-Apr-2025 | Summer Bank Holiday | 25-Aug-2025 |

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 2024/2025? | Question:2. We would like to hear from you if you have any comments or suggestions that you would like to make regarding the proposed school term dates for 2024/2025. | 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 |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| No | The autumn half term break is too early. It would be better to have an 8 week term before autumn, with 7 weeks leading up to Christmas. | No | | |
| Yes | Regulate start times to avoid traffic congestion, especially where you have more the one school neighbouring the other. | No | | |
| Yes | Please make sure that all schools in NS share the same holiday time. For Christmas 2022 both Castle Batch and St Mark's had overlapping dates which must have caused some parents childcare issues if their | No View | | |
| Yes | | No | | |
| Yes | | No | | |
| Yes | | No | | |

| | | | | |
|-----|---|---------|--|--|
| No | Christmas holidays should start earlier and finish earlier - would suggest last day of term 2 should be 18 Dec, first day of term 3 should be 2 Jan. make terms more equal in length and places Christmas Day in the middle of the school holiday | No View | | |
| Yes | | No | | |
| Yes | | No | | |
| No | Autumn half term should be a week later w/c 28 October like most councils are setting for example Wiltshire, Oxfordshire etc | Yes | | |
| Yes | The winter term is really long at 40 days as it gets colder and darker leading to Christmas it would be better if there could be a break part way through | Yes | Age / Disability / Other specific impacts, for example: carers, parents, impact on health and wellbeing. | The longer term leading up to 20th December could impact you get children, those with SEN or disabilities more with it being super long at a time of year with reduced daylight. I'd like to see schools look into wellbeing effects more. |
| No | The October half term should be a week later, to make Terms 1&2 8 and 7 weeks, not 7 and 8. | Yes | Other specific impacts, for example: carers, parents, impact on health and wellbeing. | An 8 week Term 2 will have a detrimental impact on teacher and student wellbeing. |
| Yes | | No | | |
| Yes | Agreement is subject to alignment with neighbouring authority dates - having different dates can create issues for families/staff with children in different schools. | No | | |
| Yes | Remove 1 week from summer and add it to October half term | No | | |

| | | | | |
|-----|---|---------|--|--|
| No | Make Easter holidays a week later so the bank holidays are in the middle of the holidays. | No View | | |
| Yes | | No View | | |
| No | Not equally spaced | No View | | |
| No | Term 1 should be longer than term 2. This is when staff have most energy and have prepared the most. Term 2 is riddled with illness and attendance is poor. Make this shorter to mitigate this. | No View | | |
| No | The term between Easter and May half term is too short | No | | |
| No | Longer term 1 to offset absence by illness. Also mirrors the other local authority plans. | No View | | |