

9 February 2015

Agenda Item: 08

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION STANDARDS  
AND INCLUSION****SCHOOL HOLIDAY AND TERM DATES FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY  
MAINTAINED SCHOOLS IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE FOR 2016/17, 2017/18 AND  
2018/19****Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek the approval to consult on proposed school holiday and term dates for Local Authority maintained schools for 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 as detailed in **Appendix 1**. A further report will be brought to Committee on 15 June 2015 to consider the outcomes of the consultation and approve dates for 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19.

**Information and Advice**

2. The 1996 Education Act gives local authorities a duty to determine school term dates. Schools must be open to pupils for 190 days in an academic year, and 195 days for teachers. The responsibility for setting school holiday and term time dates for all community and voluntary controlled schools within Nottinghamshire lies with the Local Authority (LA). It should be noted that Foundation, Trust, Voluntary Aided schools and Academies are responsible for setting their own holiday patterns.
3. Holiday dates for LA maintained schools in Nottinghamshire are already set up to 2015/16 from the previous consultation that took place in 2012. At the moment it is unclear whether the Deregulation Bill, which suggests that all schools can set their own term dates from September 2015, will become law. However, at present, the County Council retains a legal responsibility to set holiday dates and even if the Deregulation Bill becomes law in 2015, it is suggested that the LA continues to provide a framework set of dates that schools in Nottinghamshire could follow.
4. In 2012 there was a comprehensive review of school holiday patterns and the impact on learning outcomes of differing models. Following initial feedback, CFCSLT recommended consultation on:
  - the traditional standard year of 3 terms
  - fixed Spring break model.

5. The consultation was undertaken in line with NCC consultation policy on the two specific models. There were 3,913 responses, with approximately 60% of respondents favouring the fixed Spring break model, which was subsequently approved by the Children and Young People's Committee on 18 June 2012.
6. It is suggested that the consultation for 2016-19 school holiday and term time dates does not require an additional review of academic research related to holiday patterns, nor a pre-consultation exercise with partners. This is because recent academic studies do not present significant new or strong evidence that a different model (such as a short summer break) has any impact on academic achievement. The majority of secondary schools in Nottinghamshire run summer schools activity for targeted groups of pupils thus addressing some of the issues caused as a result of a long summer break on learning.
7. Whilst there is evidence to date suggesting the majority of Nottinghamshire Academies have followed the Nottinghamshire LA holiday pattern, it remains the case that Foundation, Trust, Voluntary Aided schools and Academies are responsible for setting their own holiday patterns.
8. When setting dates for future years, the following principles are used:
  - the pattern must comprise 190 pupil days and 195 teacher days
  - ensure that teaching and learning blocks are as equal in length as possible
  - avoid split weeks where possible
  - take account of patterns which our neighbouring Local Authorities are proposing or adopting
  - individual schools are responsible for setting their own teacher training days (The Council suggests one of these days be taken the first day back in September).

### Other Local Authorities

9. Consideration has been given to term dates of neighbouring authorities, particularly Derbyshire and Nottingham City.
  - **Nottingham City** has a different model to Nottinghamshire, adopted a 5 week Summer break, a 2 week October half-term break, with a fixed Spring break. They have currently only set dates up to 2015/16.
  - **Leicestershire and Leicester City** have traditionally adopted a model that is up to two weeks earlier than other authorities for the Summer break and subsequent half-term breaks. The Nottinghamshire pattern has always differed from these authorities.
  - **Derbyshire** follows the traditional 3 term pattern with the Spring break determined by the Easter Bank holiday dates. As a result of this, the February half term and Easter break have sometimes differed by 1 week. Christmas and Summer holiday dates have broadly been the same, differing by the odd day. Derbyshire has already consulted and set their holiday patterns up to 2018/19 and consideration has been given to their pattern where possible.
  - **Derby City** follows a traditional 3 term pattern, similar to that of Derbyshire.

## **Consultation on Nottinghamshire Proposed dates**

10. Nottinghamshire's suggested dates for 2016-19, following the fixed Spring term break model, are attached at **Appendix 1**.
11. A period of consultation between 10 February 2015 and 10 April 2015 will allow schools, parents and other organisations the opportunity to comment on the proposed dates and suggest any changes to specific days, within the Local Authority's preferred model of 3 terms, with a Spring break in the first two weeks of April.
12. Following a period of consultation, a further report will be taken to Committee on 15 June 2015 to consider the outcomes of the consultation and approve dates for 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19.

## **Other Options Considered**

13. The Committee could consider consulting on more than one set of dates. However, given the comprehensive consultation that took place in 2012, and the relatively narrow options available for any given model, it is not felt this would add any value to the process of setting term dates.

## **Reasons for Recommendation**

14. A comprehensive consultation took place in 2012. The process of setting dates for 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 should therefore reflect these outcomes by following the fixed Spring term model.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

15. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **Crime and Disorder Implications**

16. Due consideration has been given to crime and disorder issues. The Police services and other voluntary bodies who provide out of holiday care and educational opportunity have key roles to play in reducing crime and increasing self-confidence, emotional resilience for any child or young person engaging with holiday provision.

## **Finance Implications**

17. The Council intends to keep the cost of consulting and setting school holiday and term dates to a minimum by utilising online technology and the Council's consulting via the public website.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That:

- 1) the Local Authority consults on one proposed set of school holiday and term dates for 2016/17 2017/18 and 2018/19, following the current fixed Spring break model, as detailed in **Appendix 1**.
- 2) a further report be brought to Committee on 15 June 2015 to consider the outcomes of the consultation and approve dates for 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19.

**John Slater**  
**Service Director, Education Standards and Inclusion**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

Richard Browne  
Business Support Team Manager  
T: 0115 9773561  
E: richard.browne@nottsc.gov.uk

### **Constitutional Comments (LM 19/01/15)**

18. The Children and Young People's Committee has delegated authority within the Constitution to approve the recommendations in the report.

### **Financial Comments (SS 22/01/15)**

19. The financial implications of the report are set out in paragraph 17 above.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

School term and holiday patterns 2013-2016 - report to Children and Young People's Committee on 18 June 2012.

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

C0561