


Portfolio Holder Decision School Term Dates 2023/24

Portfolio Holder	Portfolio Holder for Children, Families & Education
Date of decision	14 January 2022
	Signed 

1. Decision taken

That the Portfolio Holder for Children, Families & Education approves the school term and holiday dates for the 2022/23 academic year as set out in the published report.

2. Reasons for decisions

The Local Authority (LA) is currently responsible for setting school term and holiday dates for all Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools. Academies, Foundation and Aided Schools are responsible for setting their own term dates. There is collaboration between the LA and Academies, Foundation and Aided schools which have been invited to comment on the proposed term dates and have generally followed the Local Authority's pattern of terms and holiday dates.

The approval of school term and holiday dates is delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Families and Education under the WCC Constitution.

3. Background information

A number of guiding principles have traditionally been used to set the pattern of terms and holidays and effort is made to adhere to as many of the following as possible:

1. 195 days from which five teacher training days are taken
2. Two of the five teacher training days are defined by the local authority, one of these days is at the start of the autumn and spring terms, the other three to be set by schools
3. Complete weeks when setting holiday dates wherever possible
4. A three-weekend break at Christmas and Easter
5. A summer break as close to six weeks as possible
6. A pattern which is as consistent as possible with neighbouring authorities.

A non-statutory consultation exercise ran between the 15th November and 10th December 2021; this consultation was carried out with all state-funded schools and academies and governing bodies.

The term dates of neighbouring authorities affect the preferences of some schools, mainly those close to authority borders. Where neighbouring authorities had published their term dates for 2023/24, these were included in the consultation information.

The proposed dates for the 2023/24 academic year comprised the calendar as proposed by the West Midlands Regional School Term Date Group as an option for all regional local authorities:

Term 1 (Autumn)	Half term 1	04/09/23 – 27/10/23
	Holiday	30/10/23 – 03/11/23
	Half term 2	06/11/23 – 22/12/23
	Christmas Holiday	25/12/23 – 05/01/24
Term 2 (Spring)	Half term 1	08/01/24 – 09/02/24
	Holiday	12/02/24 – 16/02/24
	Half term 2	19/02/24 – 22/03/24
	Easter Holiday	25/03/24 – 05/04/24
Term 3 (Summer)	Half term 1	08/04/24 – 24/05/24
	Holiday	27/05/24 – 31/05/24
	Half term 2	03/06/24 – 22/07/24
	Summer Holiday	23/07/24 – tbd (early Sept 2024)

Consultees were made aware that these dates have already been adopted by Solihull, Staffordshire, Worcestershire and Birmingham authorities.

The two Teacher Training days set by the LA were proposed as the first days of each of the first two terms, 4th September 2023 and 8th January 2024. A universal Secondary School Induction Day was also proposed for 10th July 2024. A calendar of these dates is provided in the Background papers.

In total, 31 responses were received to this consultation. **21 (68%) agreed and 10 (32%) did not agree** with the proposed term dates.

All respondents who expressed a preference, except one, agreed with the proposed Secondary School Induction Day Date.

Specific comments received from respondents who did not agree with the proposed dates can be summarised as:

<i>Theme of comment</i>	<i>No. of comments</i>
The spring term is notably short, due to the early date of Easter.	5
Autumn term is very long, can Christmas holiday be earlier?	5
Breaking up for the summer holiday on a Monday almost forces schools to make this a training day, at an inappropriate time	7*

* An additional 3 respondents who agreed with the proposed dates also commented that the Monday last day was inconvenient.

All feedback has been carefully considered.

The length of the Autumn and Spring terms is largely dictated by when the Christmas and Easter school holidays are set, which is defined by when the bank holidays fall each year. To meet guiding principle 4, of a three-weekend break at Christmas and Easter, as well as providing no fewer than 195 school days in a year, these holidays have to include the

bank holidays. Therefore in certain years, terms of unequal lengths will be, unfortunately, unavoidable.

In response to feedback regarding the last day of the year being a Monday, the proposed 2023/24 school term dates have been changed to start one school day earlier and end one school day earlier as shown below:

Term 1 (Autumn)	Half term 1	01/09/23 – 27/10/23
	Holiday	30/10/23 – 03/11/23
	Half term 2	06/11/23 – 22/12/23
	Christmas Holiday	25/12/23 – 05/01/24
Term 2 (Spring)	Half term 1	08/01/24 – 09/02/24
	Holiday	12/02/24 – 16/02/24
	Half term 2	19/02/24 – 22/03/24
	Easter Holiday	25/03/24 – 05/04/24
Term 3 (Summer)	Half term 1	08/04/24 – 24/05/24
	Holiday	27/05/24 – 31/05/24
	Half term 2	03/06/24 – 19/07/24
	Summer Holiday	22/07/24 – tbd (early Sept 2024)

It is recommended to adopt the school term dates as shown above and in the calendar provided as Background Paper 2.

The Secondary Induction Day will be set as Wednesday 10th July 2024.

4. Financial implications

None

5. Environmental implications

None

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Strategic Director	Strategic Director for Communities
Portfolio Holder	Portfolio Holder for Children, Families & Education

Urgent matter?	No
Confidential or exempt?	No
Is the decision contrary to the budget and policy framework?	No

List of background papers

1. 2023/24 term dates – as consultation
2. Final Calendar recommended for approval.

Members and officers consulted and informed

Portfolio Holder – Jeff Morgan

Corporate Board – Mark Ryder

Legal – Nichola Vine

Finance – Andrew Felton

Equality – n/a

Democratic Services – Isabelle Moorhouse

Councillors – CYP OSC Chair and Spokes

Local Member(s): n/a