

# Portfolio Holder Decision

## School Term and Holiday Dates 2025/26

<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	Portfolio Holder for Education
<b>Date of decision</b>	16 February 2024
	Signed

### 1. Decision taken

That the Portfolio Holder for Education:

- 1.1 approves the school term and holiday dates for the 2025/26 academic year as set out in the published report; and
- 1.2 endorses future engagement with Warwickshire schools and other stakeholders regarding the 'guiding principles' used to set term dates.

### 2. Reasons for decisions

- 2.1 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.
- 2.2 The approval of school term and holiday dates is delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Education under the WCC Constitution.
- 2.3 The West Midlands Term Dates Regional Group (WMTTRG) of LAs (of which Warwickshire is a member) is considering collectively revising the format of term dates in the future, to include a two-week half term break in the Autumn term and a shortened Summer holiday. These changes would not be proposed for any earlier than the 2027/28 academic year and would require prior engagement with all stakeholders.

### 3. Background information

3.1 A number of 'guiding principles' has 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:

- 195 days from which five teacher training days are taken
- 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
- Complete weeks when setting holiday dates wherever possible
- A three-weekend break at Christmas and Easter
- A summer break as close to six weeks as possible
- A pattern which is as consistent as possible with neighbouring authorities.

3.2 A non-statutory engagement exercise ran between the 2nd October and 27th October 2023; this engagement was carried out with all state-funded schools and academies as well as academy trusts.

3.3 The term dates of neighbouring authorities can influence the preferences of some schools, mainly those close to local authority borders. Where neighbouring authorities had published their term dates for 2025/26, these were included in the engagement information.

3.4 The proposed dates for the 2025/26 academic year comprised the calendar as proposed by the WMTTRG as an option for all regional local authorities:

Term 1 (Autumn)	Half Term 1	01/09/25-24/10/25
	Holiday	27/10/25-31/10/25
	Half Term 2	03/11/25-19/12/25
	Christmas Holiday	22/12/25-02/01/26
Term 2 (Spring)	Half Term 1	05/01/26-13/02/26
	Holiday	16/02/26-20/02/26
	Half Term 2	23/02/26-27/03/26
	Easter Holiday	30/03/26-10/04/26
Term 3 (Summer)	Half Term 1	13/04/26-22/05/26
	Holiday	25/05/26-29/05/26
	Half Term 2	01/06/26-20/07/26
	Summer Holiday	21/07/26-tbd (early Sept 2026)

3.5 Schools were made aware that these dates have already been adopted by Staffordshire, Worcestershire and Birmingham authorities and that Coventry and Solihull were likely to have the same dates (as members of the WMTTRG). The two Teacher Training days set by the Authority were proposed as the first days of each of the first two terms, 1st September 2025 and 5th January 2026. A universal Secondary School Induction Day was also proposed for 8th July 2026.

- 3.6 In total, 81 responses were received to this informal engagement. 68 (84%) agreed and 13 (16%) did not agree with the proposed term dates. All feedback has been carefully considered.
- 3.7 Of the 13 respondents that did not agree with the proposed term dates, 11 made a comment that having the last day of term as a Monday will lead to pupil absence. A number suggested moving that school day to the start of the year on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> August 2025, such that schools could use it as one of their set teacher training days. Unfortunately, this is not possible, as it would result in only 189 teaching days being provided to pupils.
- 3.8 To avoid low attendance on the last day of the academic year, in response to the feedback it has been allocated as one of the two LA-defined teacher training days, instead of 5th January 2026.
- 3.9 98% of respondents agreed with the proposed Secondary School Induction Day Date.
- 3.10 A calendar of these dates is provided in the Background papers.
- 3.11 It is recommended to adopt the school term dates as shown above and in the calendar provided as a Background Paper.
- 3.12 Stakeholders were asked an additional question as part of the engagement exercise:
- *In principle, would you support a reduction in the Summer holiday (to 5 weeks) to allow a 2 week half-term break in the Autumn term (if this were considered for future years, following further consultation)?*
- 3.13 75% of respondents replied 'yes' (54%) or 'maybe' (21%) .
- 3.14 As this initial feedback is broadly supportive of the WMTTRG proposal to consider these changes in the setting of term dates, the LA will consider amending its 'guiding principles' in the future to (amendments underlined):
- 195 days from which five teacher training days are taken
  - 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
  - Complete weeks when setting holiday dates wherever possible
  - A three-weekend break in December (Christmas), April (Easter) and October (Autumn Half-Term)
  - A summer break of five full weeks
  - A pattern which is as consistent as possible with neighbouring authorities.
- 3.15 Engagement with schools, academy trusts, governing bodies and unions will be undertaken prior to the 'guiding principles' amendments being proposed to the Portfolio Holder for Education.
- 3.16 The Authority will continue to work closely with neighbouring LAs, including but not

limited to the WMTTRG, to ensure term dates are aligned where possible.

#### 4. Financial implications

4.1 None

#### 5. Environmental implications

5.1 None

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

#### List of background papers

Calendar recommended for approval.

#### Members and officers consulted and informed

Portfolio Holder – Councillor Kam Kaur

Corporate Board – Monica Fogarty, Mark Ryder, Nigel Minns, Becky Hale, Rob Powell, Sarah Duxbury, Virginia Rennie

Legal –

Finance –

Equality –

Democratic Services – Amy Bridgewater-Carnall

Councillors –

Local Member(s): None – this is a County wide report