
SCHOOL HOLIDAY AND TERM DATES 2005/2006

**Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor S Harker – Education Portfolio
Responsible Director – Geoffrey Pennington, Director of Education**

Purpose of Report

1. To alter the agreed school term dates for the academic year 2005/2006, commencing in September 2005, following a departure from the agreed schedule by neighbouring authorities.

Background

2. The appropriate consultation process regarding school term dates with Teaching Associations, neighbouring authorities and schools, has been completed. A previous decision was made at NCEA Chief Officers' meeting that it would not be feasible to introduce regionally agreed proposals for a six-term year in 2005/06 and authorities therefore consulted on a traditional basis for 2005/06 with an agreement to standardise as far as possible, term and holiday dates.

Information and Analysis

3. Cabinet received and approved a proposal for school term dates for academic year 2005/06 at their June 2004 meeting. Immediately afterwards, the Director of Education received information from the secretary of the NCEA Chief Officers' group that a number of our neighbouring authorities had departed from the agreed schedule, which would leave Darlington schools out of alignment with neighbouring authorities. The substantive difference is Spring half term would now commence on 20 Feb 2006, (as opposed to the previously agreed 13 Feb 2006), although there is local discretion with regard to professional development days. This alteration would balance the two Spring half terms to an equal length, which had become unequal following a previous alteration to the Easter break. The proposed dates are attached in Appendix 1.
4. The dates fulfil statutory requirements both for the number of teaching days schools will be open for pupils (190) and the number of days (195) teachers will be available for duty.

Outcome of Consultation

5. Consultation has been undertaken with trade unions and schools. Schools have expressed their support and gratitude for facilitating the arrangements to coincide with our neighbours,

and in particular Durham and North Yorkshire who have both confirmed this new pattern of dates.

Legal Implications

6. This report has been considered by the Borough Solicitor for legal implications in accordance with the Council's approved procedures. There are no issues which the Borough Solicitor considers needs to be brought to the specific attention of Members, other than those highlighted in the report.

Council Policy Framework

7. The issues contained within this report do not represent significant change to Council policy or the Council's policy framework.

Decision Deadline

8. For the purpose of the 'call-in' procedure this does not represent an urgent matter.

Key Decisions

9. This report represents a key decision as it impacts on one or more wards of the Borough.

Recommendation

10. It is recommended that the proposed holiday and term dates and associated professional development arrangements as set out in **Appendix 1** be agreed and replace those agreed in June 2004.

Reasons

11. To agree the school holiday and term dates for 2005/06 to assist schools in planning processes.

Geoffrey Pennington
Director of Education

Background Papers

Cabinet report 8 June 2004

Paul Campbell

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