
SCHOOL HOLIDAY AND TERM DATES 2009-2010 AND 2010-2011

**Responsible Cabinet Member - Councillor Chris McEwan,
Children and Young People Portfolio**

Responsible Director - Murray Rose, Director of Children's Services

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To consider and set school holiday dates and associated professional development arrangements for the academic years 2009/10 and 2010/11.
2. To adopt the "Guiding Principles for the School Calendar" in line with the 11 other local authorities in the North East Region as well as 12 authorities in the Yorkshire Region.

Summary

3. In line with previous practice, all North East authorities met to coordinate school term dates. This year it was agreed to coordinate term dates with authorities in the Yorkshire region and agree a set of guiding principles in order to set term dates in future years. It was also agreed to set term dates for the next two years, as opposed to just one year, as in the past. This will assist schools and the authority in planning processes.

Recommendations

4. It is recommended that Members:-
 - (a) agree the school holiday and term dates for 2009/10 and 2010/11; and
 - (b) adopt the "Guiding Principles for the School Calendar".

Reason

5. To assist schools, parents and the Council in planning process.

**Murray Rose
Director of Children's Services**

Background Papers

Consultation documents

David Chambers : Extension 2934

S17 Crime and Disorder	This decision does not affect Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.
Health and Well Being	This decision allows schools, children and families to plan further ahead.
Sustainability	The guiding principles allow forward planning.
Diversity	This decision affects all groups in Darlington.
Wards Affected	All wards.
Groups Affected	Schools, Children and Families
Budget and Policy Framework	The issues contained within this report do not represent significant change to Council policy or the Council's policy framework.
Key Decision	No.
Urgent Decision	For the purpose of the 'call-in' procedure this does not represent an urgent matter.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	Prosperous Darlington: Darlington has co-ordinated its School Term Dates with 22 other authorities, and in so doing maximises the potential for attracting employees in the education sector who may, as parents/carers, have children who are educated in other authorities.

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

6. In line with previous practice, all North East authorities met to coordinate school term dates. This year it was agreed to coordinate term dates with authorities in the Yorkshire region and agree a set of guiding principles in order to set term dates in future years. It was also agreed to set term dates for the next two years, as opposed to just one year, as in the past. This will assist schools and the authority in planning processes.
7. The attached calendars at **Appendix A (2009/10)** and **Appendix B (2010/11)** show 195 term days. This allows schools to set up to 5 professional development days for teaching staff when pupils will not attend. As in previous years in Darlington, schools will each determine when these will take place and inform the authority.
8. The Guiding Principles (**Appendix C**) seek to:
 - (a) have a school year consisting of 195 school days where pupils will attend for 190 of those days;
 - (b) have a school year normally starting on the first day of September each year; and
 - (c) have, wherever possible, in any academic year, terms of equal length and split weeks avoided or kept to a minimum. Where there is an odd number of weeks, the second half term should be the shorter of the two.

Outcome of Consultation

9. There were no comments on the draft school dates from consultees. Staff Associations did not comment and are content if Darlington can match holiday dates with our neighbouring authorities. The Guiding Principles should ensure that this is the case.
 10. Consultation has been undertaken with trade unions, schools and neighbouring authorities. 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 similar pattern of dates. Again, the Guiding Principles should ensure that this is the case.
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