



DARLINGTON
Borough Council

PEOPLE GROUP
Town Hall, Darlington DL1 5QT

FAO The Chair of Governors and Headteachers

ALL Schools in Darlington

0794 724 7224

paul.richardson@darlington.gov.uk

28 April 2023

Our ref: Our ref
Your ref: Your ref
Please ask for: Paul Richardson
Document Name: School Term Dates
2025-26

Dear Chair and Headteacher,

Proposed School Term Dates for 2025-26

Please find enclosed the proposed school term dates for Darlington schools for the 2025-2026 Academic Year.

The paper contains the detailed proposals of the consultation, plus an option for those schools that currently have the powers (and wish to) set their own alternative dates. Appendix 1 of the paper contains the detailed calendar of dates proposed and Appendix 2 contains the proforma that Headteachers and/or Chairs should complete to record their preference and return to me by close of business by **Friday 7th July 2023**.

Governing bodies of Voluntary Aided, Free Schools and Academies have the power to set their own term dates, but are encouraged to follow, as far as possible those agreed by the maintained schools. This will provide continuity for parents and carers, other schools and Colleges, Local Authority staff and schools in other Local Authorities and the term dates in the consultation are therefore proposed for your consideration.

In the event that your school wishes to adopt different term dates in 2025-2026 from those detailed in the consultation, please append your preferred dates to the proforma in Appendix 2.

If the majority are in agreement with the proposed dates they will be submitted for approval by Cabinet and once approved the Darlington term dates for 2025-2026 will then be published on the Council's website for use by parents, the public and interested parties alike (<http://www.darlington.gov.uk/education-and-learning/school-years/school-holiday-dates/>).

I am aware that not all Governing Bodies will hold a meeting prior to the closure of the consultation period and would therefore request that this matter be considered separately by the Chair and Headteacher and a return then made from each School by the deadline date.

In the event of any queries around this consultation, please contact me by return e-mail at paul.richardson@darlington.gov.uk.

I look forward to hearing from you in due course and in any event by **Friday 7th July 2023**.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Richardson', written in a cursive style.

Paul Richardson
Head of Skills and Employability



SCHOOL TERM DATES PLANNING – CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2025-2026

1. REASON FOR THIS ITEM

To bring to Governors and Headteacher's attention the proposed term dates for the 2025-2026 Academic Year and the possible impact this may have on:

- a) the education of children,
- b) staffing in schools including the 195 day envelope for teachers,
- c) the organisation of school support arrangements,
- d) families with children at more than one school and
- e) the wider region.

2. ACTION REQUIRED

Governors and Headteachers of Academy, Voluntary Aided and Free Schools are reminded that they are responsible for setting the term dates for their school and must consult with stakeholders when so doing. Local Authorities are required to consult with maintained schools when setting school terms dates.

Governors and Headteachers are therefore asked to:

- a) Consider the proposed model term dates for 2025-2026 at Appendix 1 to this consultation.
- b) Decide whether they would wish to adopt the model of proposed dates for the 2025-26 academic year. Alternatively, Academies, Voluntary Aided and Free Schools are requested to send in their own arranged dates for 2025-2026 for inclusion in any future publication of term dates for schools in Darlington
- c) Return the attached proforma at Appendix 2 detailing your school's preferred term dates for 2025-2026 (either adopting the model or setting your own dates if an Academy, Voluntary Aided or Free School) to paul.richardson@darlington.gov.uk by **Friday 7th July 2023**.

3. KEY QUESTIONS

Governors and Headteachers may wish to discuss the following in relation to their own school:

- a) What is the likely impact of the school opting for term dates outside the proposed models?
- b) How would the Governing Body consult with stakeholders around any proposed changes to term dates?

Contact Officer:

Name: Paul Richardson

Position: Head of Skills and Employability

Tel no: 0794 724 7224

E-mail address: paul.richardson@darlington.gov.uk

SCHOOL TERM DATES PLANNING – CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2025-2026

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Officers from Darlington have drafted a preferred term date model for the 2025-2026 academic year and are now consulting with stakeholders, including Schools and Governing Bodies, to ascertain their preferences.

The tenet of the process in drawing up the proposed calendars has been to take into account:

- The 190 / 195 school day envelope
- The equalizing of term lengths as far as possible
- The fact that Easter dates vary year-on-year.
- Minimising the number of part-weeks by ensuring, as far as possible, that schools open for full weeks (Monday to Friday).

Academy and Free School funding agreements state that the duration of the school year, term and holiday dates are the responsibility of the Academy Trust. Governing Bodies are required to set term and holiday dates in Foundation and Voluntary Aided (VA) schools, in conjunction with the Local Authority. The majority of Darlington Academies and VA Schools have continued to follow published dates despite having the freedom to set their own dates.

In the event that a Governing Body of an Academy or Free School wishes to set its own term dates for 2025-2026, it would be free to do so but would have to carry out consultation with likely affected parties beforehand, including the Local Authority. Governors should be aware that Local Authority services provided on a term-time basis (such as school crossing patrols, transport for swimming etc.) may not be available if their school is open during a week when the majority of Darlington schools are closed. Governors should also consider the impact on families with children at more than one school (one or more of which may also be outside Darlington) in terms of coordinating family holidays or transport to school if they choose to set different term dates to the majority of Darlington schools.

If schools, governors or other interested parties wish to make enquiries or representation about this matter, please contact Paul Richardson, Head of Skills and Employability at Darlington Borough Council by e-mail at paul.richardson@darlington.gov.uk in the first instance.

2. NEXT STEPS

Headteachers and Governing Bodies are requested to consider the contents of this paper and the model academic year calendar attached to decide their preferred option. Complete the enclosed form and return it to paul.richardson@darlington.gov.uk by **Friday 7th July 2023**. Alternatively, for those schools that already have the power conferred on them to do so and who do not wish to adopt the model, they should draw up their own calendar of term dates and consult with their stakeholders (including Darlington Borough Council) accordingly.

DARLINGTON LA School Holiday and Term Dates 2025 - 2026

	AUGUST 2025	SEPTEMBER 2025	OCTOBER 2025	NOVEMBER 2025	DECEMBER 2025	JANUARY 2026
Monday	4 11 18 25	1 8 15 22 29	6 13 20 27	3 10 17 24	1 8 15 22 29	5 12 19 26
Tuesday	5 12 19 26	2 9 16 23 30	7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25	2 9 16 23 30	6 13 20 27
Wednesday	6 13 20 27	3 10 17 24	1 8 15 22 29	5 12 19 26	3 10 17 24 31	7 14 21 28
Thursday	7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25	2 9 16 23 30	6 13 20 27	4 11 18 25	1 8 15 22 29
Friday	1 8 15 22 29	5 12 19 26	3 10 17 24 31	7 14 21 28	5 12 19 26	2 9 16 23 30
Saturday	2 9 16 23 30	6 13 20 27	4 11 18 25	1 8 15 22 29	6 13 20 27	3 10 17 24 31
Sunday	3 10 17 24 31	7 14 21 28	5 12 19 26	2 9 16 23 30	7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25
			40		35	

	FEBRUARY 2026	MARCH 2026	APRIL 2026	MAY 2026	JUNE 2026	JULY 2026
Monday	2 9 16 23	2 9 16 23 30	6 13 20 27	4 11 18 25	1 8 15 22 29	6 13 20 27
Tuesday	3 10 17 24	3 10 17 24 31	7 14 21 28	5 12 19 26	2 9 16 23 30	7 14 21 28
Wednesday	4 11 18 25	4 11 18 25	1 8 15 22 29	6 13 20 27	3 10 17 24	1 8 15 22 29
Thursday	5 12 19 26	5 12 19 26	2 9 16 23 30	7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25	2 9 16 23 30
Friday	6 13 20 27	6 13 20 27	3 10 17 24	1 8 15 22 29	5 12 19 26	3 10 17 24 31
Saturday	7 14 21 28	7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25	2 9 16 23 30	6 13 20 27	4 11 18 25
Sunday	1 8 15 22	1 8 15 22 29	5 12 19 26	3 10 17 24 31	7 14 21 28	5 12 19 26
	35		24	24		37

Bank Holiday	
School Holiday	
PD Days	

40
35
35
24
24
37
195

The number of term days shown is 195. Up to five of these will be used as professional development days for teaching staff, pupils will not attend these days. Two days are set as 20th and 21st July, the remaining three will be determined by the individual schools and schools should inform parents accordingly.

SCHOOL TERM DATES – CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2025-2026

The Governing Body of School/Academy will adopt the following term date models

2025-2026 Model (local authority proposed option)

**School's own dates (please attach dates to your reply)
(Applicable to Academies, Voluntary Aided and Free Schools only)**

Signed (Headteacher / Chair of Governors): _____

Date: _____

Please complete this form and return it to paul.richardson@darlington.gov.uk by **Friday 7th July 2023.**

If the majority are in agreement with the proposed dates they will be submitted for approval to Council's Cabinet as Darlington's preferred term dates for 2025-2026. Once ratified by Cabinet, these dates will be published on the LA website for parental guidance.