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## Meeting of Executive Member for Children's Services and Advisory Panel

16 May 2006

Report of the Director of Learning, Culture and Children's Services

### School Term Dates and Holidays 2007/2008

#### Summary

- 1 This report:
  - recommends term dates and holidays for the school year 2007/2008,
  - outlines the consultation responses from the Joint Consultative Group (JCG) and the Teachers' Panel.

#### Background

- 2 For community and voluntary controlled schools, responsibility for setting the school term and holiday dates rests with the local authority. Voluntary Aided schools have the discretion to set their own term dates, but do not usually depart significantly from the pattern established for other schools in the authority.
- 3 It is a statutory requirement that schools are open for 190 days in the year. Teachers are required to work for a further 5 professional development days. Under current arrangements, the term dates and holidays decided by the Local Authority allow for the full 195 days. Individual schools are free to decide on the timing of the 5 Professional Development Days which are usually added to the beginning and end of terms.
- 4 The LGA continues to campaign for the Standard School Year, and, last year, asked local authorities to consult again on a pattern of term and holiday dates that ignored Easter and would produce a more even pattern of terms and holidays. The subsequent consultation in York was inconclusive. Most of those responding felt that there was a strong case for change in order to standardise the length of school terms, but there was no obvious consensus around any of the proposed alternatives and there was a strong feeling that no single authority should set its term and holiday dates in isolation from its neighbours.
- 5 Because Easter falls in March, 2007/08 presents the same difficulties in setting the dates for school holidays as 2004/05. It was felt that little would be gained by embarking on another consultation about the Standard School Year proposed by the LGA, not least because both North Yorkshire and East Riding are proposing to take a more traditional approach. Copies of the consultation documents issued by both authorities are attached as Annex 1.

6. Nonetheless, the authority is required to consult with the professional associations and chooses to consult with JCG. At a meeting on the 6 April, the Teachers Panel reiterated its dislike of short terms and split weeks, but accepted that there was no reasonable alternative to the pattern proposed in this report. Similar observations were made at the JCG where the importance of aligning dates with neighbouring authorities was acknowledged. The term and holiday dates proposed for schools in York are attached as Annex 2. In previous years, the Easter holiday has included the week before Easter Sunday. For 2007/08, it is proposed that schools remain open for that week, closing only for Good Friday which is, of course, a bank holiday.

### **Financial Implications**

7. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

### **Legal Authority**

8. Under s.21 of the Education (No.2) Act 1986, as amended by s.115 of The Education Reform Act 1988, it is the duty (stated in the school's articles of government) of the LEA, in the case of a county or controlled school, or governing body of an aided or special agreement school, to determine the dates when schools terms and holidays are to begin and end.

### **Recommendation**

9. The Executive Member is recommended to approve the pattern of school terms and holidays for 2007/08 proposed in Annex 2, subject to agreement with the Teaching Associations.

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### **For further information please contact the author of the report**

Annex 1: School term and holiday dates for neighbouring authorities

Annex 2: CYC school term and holiday dates 2007/08: Proposed