

Term Dates – 2009/10, 2010/11 & 2011/12

Consultation with Schools

Number of responses = 19

1. Do you agree with the guiding principles?

Yes 17 No 12

Comments

- I think we should be moving to a 5 or 6 term year with a 4 week summer break. But it is vital we work together with other LAs.
- The 10 days at Christmas is especially important (there was one less that this a few years ago we think)
- I am aware that Wakefield has two weeks break at summer ½ term. This can help break up a long term, enable families to go on holiday at a 'cheaper time' and also makes the summer holiday less daunting for some families - just a thought
- Positives - 10 day Christmas break, advance notice of term dates, consistency across regions/authorities
- Where terms are an odd number of weeks it says that the 2nd half should be shorter, yet does not appear to follow this principle in the proposed drafts
- I feel that we should be much more radical and do everything possible to make the 6 half terms more uniform in length. Where Easter did not fall within a holiday it could be marked by Good Friday and Easter Monday. This would enhance rather than detract from the religious significance for church schools. (Lots of NE authorities seem to have done this in 2008.)
- It seems logical to align schools in neighbouring authorities, both for parents and staff. Unfortunately, the proposals retain the three-term/half term pattern which has few advantages and several drawbacks. It is increasingly difficult to deliver a curriculum which builds up over weeks, when there is such a variance in terms. It is frequently the end of the school year which as the longest half term, just when pupils are at their most challenging and due in part to the pagan determination of Easter dates. Also parents (and staff) have only one period in the summer in which to take a two-week holiday.

2. Do you agree that we should be setting term dates:

1 year at time	0
2 years at a time	7
3 years at a time	11

Comments

- Useful to give that amount of notice with so many parents booking holidays way in advance and sometimes 'guessing' the half term holidays wrong, so children end up out of school in term time
- I think this is an imaginative initiative
- Allows schools to plan ahead and prepared
- Prefer to avoid ridiculously short half terms eg 2010/11 option 2 summer 1 is 4 weeks, summer 2 is 7 weeks. Very unhelpful!
- If we had a more regular pattern (see above) ie either 5 or 6 term year, then there would be fewer surprises. A 2-week break about May/June could cut down on holiday absences.
- 3 years at a time will help with forward planning of trips and major events. Staff often want 2 years' planning time. A 3-year plan will give more certainty.
- 3 years at a time – more notice benefits all concerned

3. Do you agree with the draft term dates for:

	Yes	No
2009/10	16	0
2010/11 (option 1)	13	3
2010/11 (option 2)	4	8
2011/12	15	0

Comments

- It's time to be radical. Why have 6 half terms that go 8,7,7,6,5,7 when you could have 8,8,8,8,8 ?
- Prefer the option 2 so bank holidays in middle of school holiday. A lot of parents book holidays away to include the bank holidays so if option 1's return to school on the day after bank holiday Monday happened we'd have a lot of children missing from school!
- Prefer option 1. Option 2 - 2nd half spring term at 2 weeks is too short
- I have consulted with my staff and they are of the opinion that 2010/11 option 2 is the preferred timing
- Option 2 - the split is too uneven. 3 weeks is not preferred as a term length
- Keep terms more equal. Avoid major break before SAT week (Option 1 allows this, option 2 doesn't)
- 2010/11 – option 1 is a more even distribution of weeks and an improved “run up” to STAs
- We need to get as close as possible to 13 week blocks. 2010/11 option 1 would give us this possibility

- Isn't it time to move to a 5 or 6-term year, evening spread with a long weekend at Easter when it falls outside a term break? This seems a good opportunity to properly canvass parents and all staff working in school rather than seeking responses from governors, headteachers and politicians.