

Leeds 2022-2023 School Calendar

Date: 27 May 2021

Report of: Senior Governance & Partnership Officer

Report to: The Director of Children & Families

Will the decision be open for call in?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?

☐ Yes ☒ No

What is this report about?

Including how it contributes to the city's and council's ambitions

- The local authority is required to publish the school academic year calendar on an annual basis.
- Whilst maintained schools are required to follow the calendar set by the local authority and are not permitted to change this, academies, free schools, foundation schools and voluntary-aided schools all have the freedom to set their own term dates.
- This report outlines consultation on the Leeds school calendar, and recommends the dates to be adopted for the 2022-2023 academic year.

Recommendations

- a) The Director of Children & Families is recommended to approve the 2022-2023 calendar as detailed in appendix 1.

Why is the proposal being put forward?

- 1 Every local authority is required to set the school calendar on an annual basis. Each year dates are drafted in conjunction with neighbouring authorities and based on guiding principles for the Yorkshire region. These are shared with a range of groups and feedback and comments sought.

What impact will this proposal have?

Wards Affected: ALL

Have ward members been consulted? ☐ Yes ☒ No

- 2 All maintained schools within the Leeds authority area are required to follow the calendar set by the local authority and are not permitted to change this. Academies, free schools, foundation schools and voluntary-aided schools all have the freedom to set their own term dates.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

- 3 In Spring 2021 draft dates for the 2022-2023 academic year were shared with the following groups. Dates align across the West Yorkshire region and have therefore been well received:

Primary Headteachers: Primary Heads welcomed the draft calendar as all holidays including the school Easter break are in line across neighbouring LAs. The early break up for Christmas was noted by some schools who would prefer the autumn term to end two or three days later and delay the start of the spring term. However, doing so would result in a split week which would not follow guiding principles for the region and would also mean Leeds is out of line with its neighbours.

Leeds Secondary Heads and Principals: Secondary Heads welcomed the draft calendar as dates are in line across the region, reducing the difficulties faced by families with children at school across different authorities. A point to note is that many Leeds secondary schools are academies and therefore have the freedom to set their own dates and are not required to follow those set by the authority.

School Governors (National Leaders of Governance, and Local Leaders of Governance): School Governors welcomed the draft dates being in line with other authorities.

Schools Joint Consultative Committee: The Schools Joint Consultative Committee (SJCC) - NAHT, NASUWT, GMB, NEU, and Unison welcomed the draft calendar as the Christmas and Easter holidays and all half terms are in line across the region.

Executive Member for Learning, Skills and Employment: The Executive Member welcomed the draft calendar and noted the comments received from all groups.

What are the resource implications?

- 4 There are no immediate implications.

What are the legal implications?

- 5 There are no immediate implications.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 6 Since 2010 Leeds has had a fixed school Easter break. In some years this is out of line with neighbouring authorities which can cause difficulties for families who live and work across local authority boundaries. In 2023 the Easter break is aligned across the region.
- 7 The Easter bank holidays usually fall within the two-week school break, either at the beginning, middle or end. However, once every few years they fall entirely outside of the school break. In 2023 they fall in the middle of the Easter break.
- 8 Academies have the freedom to set their own dates and are not required to follow the school calendar set by the local authority. Dates set by the Local Authority are nevertheless shared with all schools for their awareness, and schools are encouraged to adopt these where possible in order to support families with children across different schools.

Does this proposal support the council's 3 Key Pillars?

☐ Inclusive Growth ☒ Health and Wellbeing ☐ Climate Emergency

- 9 Child Friendly city – consistent term dates across the region supports families and minimises costs around childcare. The fixed Easter break ensures no spring or summer term is too long, minimising pupil fatigue.
- 10 Health & Wellbeing – the Leeds 2022-2023 dates (including the Easter break) match those of other authorities, enabling families across the region or nationally to spend time together.

Options, timescales and measuring success

a) What other options were considered?

- 11 No other options needed to be explored, as the dates for Leeds fully match other LA dates across the region.

b) How will success be measured?

- 12 Not applicable

c) What is the timetable for implementation?

- 13 It is a statutory requirement that the local authority produces and publishes the annual school calendar at least four school terms in advance of the commencement of the

calendar. Dates for the 2022-2023 academic year must be published in the summer term 2021.

Appendices

14 Draft school calendar, regional calendar comparison

Background papers

15 None