
REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF EDUCATION LEEDS

EXECUTIVE BOARD: 13 May 2009

SUBJECT: SCHOOL CALENDAR 2010-11

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Executive Board to approve the adjustments to the school calendar for a fixed break between terms two and three and a full two week holiday period at Christmas

Background Information

2. School Calendar dates in Leeds are set on an annual basis. In 2006 it was to consult on fixing the Easter break as the first two weeks of April. For the 2007-8 calendar there was concern that this would mean there would be four school days after Easter Monday, then the holiday break. This was felt to be unhelpful as this was the first year of the fixed break approach. From 2008-9 the plan was to have a fixed break at the beginning of April, regardless of the date of Easter, introducing as much stability and balance to the two halves of the spring term as possible. The main challenge with the 2010-11 academic year is that Easter falls very late.
3. The 22 LEAs across the region agreed to consult on two proposed patterns for the Easter break in 2011. Leeds has also consulted widely on a third option.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Board are asked to:

4.
 - note the extensive consultation undertaken to consider the implications for the 2010/11 school calendar in Leeds;
 - approve the school calendar dates detailed in option 3 in paragraph 3.1 above as recommended in 3.3.9, and detailed in Annex 3
 - approve a move in Leeds from 2011/12 onwards to adopt a fixed break between term 2 and 3, irrespective of when Easter falls with a corresponding adjustment to the summer vacation which ensures a two week Christmas break.

Agenda Item:

Originator: Vicki White

Telephone: 224 3362

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF EDUCATION LEEDS

EXECUTIVE BOARD: 13 May 2009

SUBJECT: School Calendar 2010-11

Electoral Wards Affected:

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality & Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Eligible for Call-in

Yes

Not Eligible for Call-in
(Details contained in the Report)

1.0 PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline the process for setting the school calendar in Leeds, provide an update on the consultation process for 2010-11, and recommend one option for approval.

2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 Dates in Leeds are set on an annual basis. A draft (or drafts) are set in January, and then shared across the region. The draft(s) go to Headteacher Forum, Governors Forum and the JCC group for comments. The Education Leeds executive team receive a summary of feedback and make their recommendation on which dates to adopt.

2.2 The drafts are also shared at a regional meeting consisting of 23 local authorities across Yorkshire and the north east. This group meets twice a year and has brought about a more joined-up approach.

2.3 In 2006 the Education Leeds Board agreed to consult on fixing the Easter break as the first two weeks of April. For the 2007-8 calendar they were concerned that this would mean there would be four school days after Easter Monday, then the holiday

break. This was felt to be unhelpful as this was the first year of the fixed break approach. Consequently a modified option with the spring term ending on the Thursday before Good Friday was implemented.

From 2008-9 the plan was to have a fixed break at the beginning of April, regardless of the date of Easter, introducing as much stability and balance to the two halves of the spring term as possible.

3.0 MAIN ISSUES

3.1 The main challenge with the 2010-11 academic year is that Easter falls very late. The 22 LEAs across the region agreed to consult on two proposed patterns for the Easter break in 2011. Leeds has also consulted on a third option.

Option 1: The Easter bank holiday weekend falls at the end of the two-week school break. This coincides with the LGA recommendations.(See annex 1)

Pros:

- The spring and summer terms are fairly equal at 64 and 58 days in length;
- The Easter bank holidays are incorporated within the school Easter break, but at the end;
- Follows the LGA model.

Cons:

- The first two weeks of the summer term are four-day weeks;
- The first half term after Easter is short (5 weeks, two of which are four days);
- Schools return the day immediately after the Easter Monday bank holiday. (see 3.3.7 adjustment, as superintendents are not contracted to work this day)

Option 2: The Easter bank holiday weekend falls in the middle of the two week school break. Schools would not return to school until the day after the May Day bank holiday, reducing the number of split weeks in school. However, the term would not be split equally resulting in a very short first half term after Easter. (see annex 2)

Pros:

- The Easter bank holidays fall in the middle weekend of the Easter break;
- Most popular across authorities in the regional group.

Cons:

- The spring and summer terms are very different in length (69 and 53 days);
- The first half of the summer term is extremely short (3 weeks and four days);
- The two halves of the summer term have the greatest variation in length (19 and 34 days);
- The second half of the spring term is long (7 weeks).

Option 3: Schools have a separate Easter bank holiday weekend. They would experience three four-day weeks due to the occurrence of the May Day bank holiday the week after Easter Monday. (see annex3)

Pros:

- The spring and summer terms

Cons:

- There are three four-day weeks at

- have the least variation in length (59 and 62 days);
- The first half of the summer term is a manageable length (6 weeks);
- This follows the LGA recommended model for a fixed Easter break (although the LGA have modified their recommendation for 2011).
- the start of the summer term;
- The two halves of the summer term are similar in length (27 and 35 days);
- The Easter bank holidays fall entirely outside of the school Easter break.

3.2 Consultation

Given the challenges presented in 2010-11, Education Leeds decided to consult more widely on three options. A consultation ran on the EL website from November 2008 to February 2009, and was promoted on InfoBase, through the Headteachers update, and in the local press. Posters were issued to all schools, to encourage parents, pupils and school based staff to respond. A consultation was made available on the council's 'Talking Point'. The issue was discussed at governing body meetings, and Education Leeds staff were invited to offer feedback.

3.3 Feedback from consultation

3.3.1 In November 2007 the Headteacher Forum (27 heads) and Governor Forums (18 governors) considered the three options. Option 3 was by far the most popular with both groups. Heads strongly supported the school Easter break starting w/c 4 April to remain in line with LGA recommendations. This avoids a very short term leading up to spring bank half term, and allows greater consistency around curriculum planning and SATs preparation.

The Headteacher Forum believe that the school break for Easter should *always* be fixed at the beginning of April, regardless of the position of the Easter weekend. The group did not see the three, four-day weeks following Easter as a problem. Neither did they feel there was any evidence to suggest attendance would suffer as a result.

3.3.2 JCC Union group

Options for 2010-11 were discussed at the JCC Union group in May 2008. Staffside commented that the West Yorkshire branches of the ATL support the model where the Easter holiday includes the Easter weekend. Staffside leant towards option 2, as this fits with other authorities and is easier for parents.

Staffside were surprised that heads and governors feel there would be no problem with 4 day weeks, particularly in secondary schools.

3.3.3 Neighbouring authorities

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Bradford | Likely to implement option 2. |
| Kirklees | Already agreed option 2. |
| North Yorkshire | Likely to implement option 1 |

3.3.4 Diocese

Bradford, Ripon and Leeds C of E Diocese is supportive of option 3, on the grounds that this offers the best educational opportunities to pupils. The traditional pattern (option) would leave extremely short half terms, which would not benefit best practice in teaching and learning and so they fully support the option which creates the most even term times.

The Catholic Diocese was consulted but did not respond.

3.3.5 The general public

The consultation was made available on Leeds City Council's consultation system 'Talking Point'. No responses were received.

The school community (parents, carers, children and young people, school based and Education Leeds staff). See also appendix 1.

In total there were 819 responses to the consultation.

3.3.6 Schools:

A total of 313 responses were received from school based staff. 11% of respondents were in favour of option 1, 13% in favour of option 2, and 76% in favour of option 3.

90% of respondents did not see four-day weeks as a problem.

3.3.7 Parents:

A total of 480 responses were received from parents. 23% of respondents were in favour of option 1, 29% in favour of option 2, and 48% in favour of option 3.

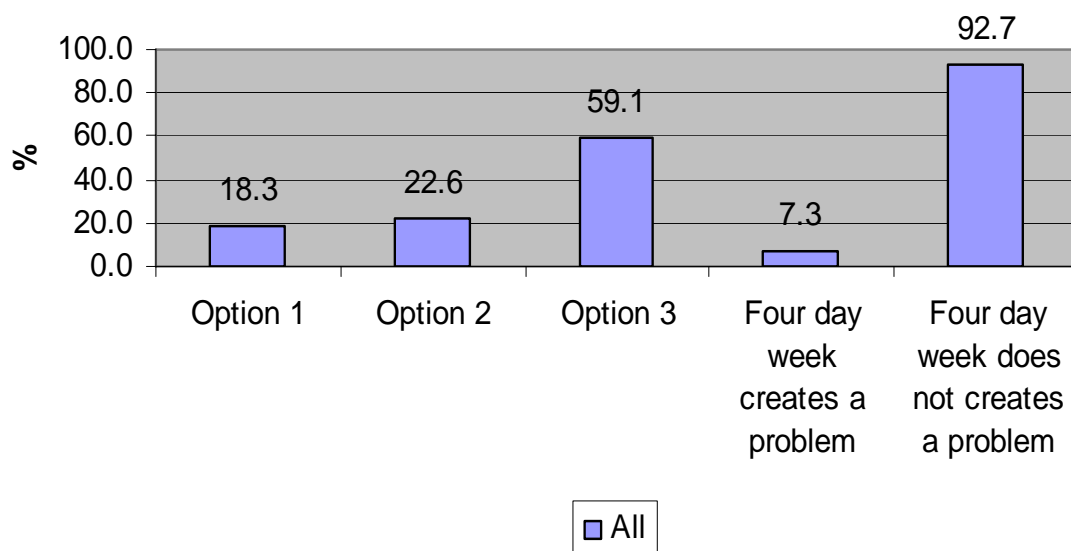
89% of respondents did not see four-day weeks as a problem.

3.3.8 Education Leeds staff:

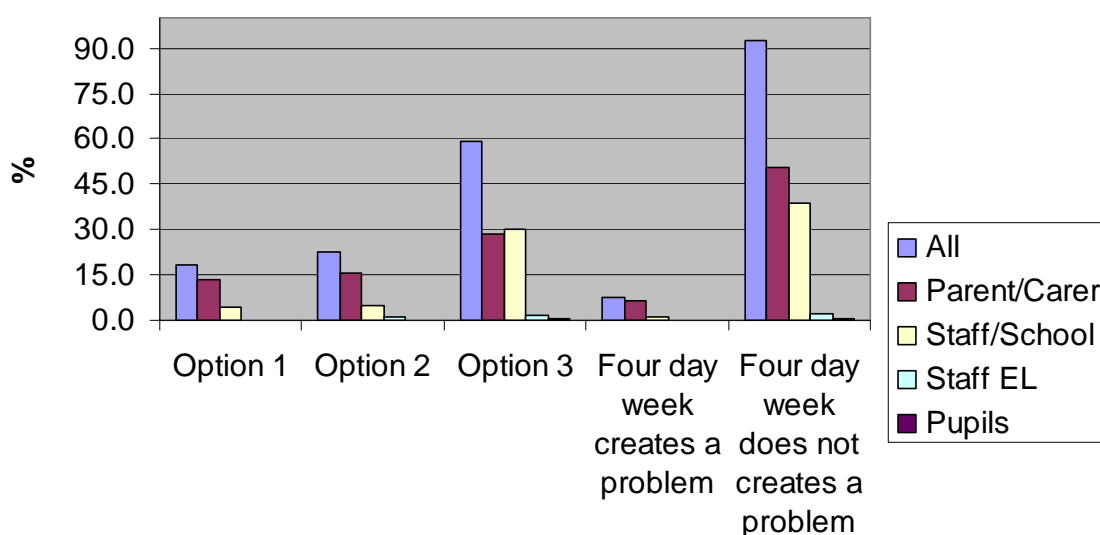
A total of 20 responses were received from Education Leeds staff. 10% were in favour of option 1, 35% in favour of option 2, and 55% in favour of option 3.

90% of respondents did not see four-day weeks as a problem.

Responses to school calendar consultation 2010-11



All responses to school calendar consultation 2010-11



In summary:

Of the 819 respondents, 18% are in favour of option 1, 23% in favour of option 2, and 59% in favour of option 3.

93% of respondents did not see four-day weeks as a problem.

3.3.9 Adjustment

Schools have highlighted an issue with option 3. If this option is implemented, an adjustment to the calendar would be needed. Schools could not open the Tuesday following Easter Monday, as superintendents are not contracted to work this Tuesday. Tuesday 26 April would therefore be holiday, and schools would open on Monday 20 December 2010 or Tuesday 26 July 2011, to make up this extra day.

3.4 Additional LGA consultation on length of summer / Christmas holidays

In November 2008 the LGA modified its recommendation for 2010-11. Following concerns raised, the LGA decided to probe more deeply the views around the timing of the summer and Christmas breaks.

Autumn term would begin on Wednesday 1 September and end on Friday 17 December (shorter 5.5 week summer holiday and longer 2 week Christmas break)

Or

Autumn term would begin on Monday 6 September and end on Wednesday 22 December (longer 6 week summer holiday and shorter 1.5 week Christmas break)

The Headteacher and Governor Forums and the JCC were asked to comment. Views were inconclusive although moderately in favour of the shorter summer break, to reduce the 'learning gap', and the longer Christmas break, as many industries take a two week break, families plan holidays accordingly, and to aid teacher recovery time.

- 3.5 A clear majority of respondents (60%) favour option 3, and it is therefore recommended that Leeds adopts this pattern of term dates for 2010-11, and a fixed Easter school break in subsequent years.

Although Leeds will be out of synchronisation with neighbouring authorities, some of these authorities are considering consulting on a fixed Easter and there is the potential for them to join up with Leeds from 2011.

3.6 Equality Impact Assessment

An equality impact assessment has been completed. This highlights that there could be a problem with working parents and four-day weeks. However, such problems will be avoided or minimised if the school calendar is published and promoted well in advance.

There could also be an impact on the 4190 (3.86%) of children in Leeds schools, that live in neighbouring local authorities which have not yet made decision to fix Easter. Some of these authorities have outlined their intentions to consult on fixing Easter. Negotiation will continue at the regional group.

As consultation has taken place and is overwhelmingly in favour of option 3, the depth of support across schools, parents and communities for this proposal is evident.

4.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNCIL POLICY AND GOVERNANCE**

Not applicable.

5.0 **LEGAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

Not applicable.

6.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Executive Board are asked to:

- note the extensive consultation undertaken to consider the implications for the 2010/11 school calendar in Leeds;
- approve the school calendar dates detailed in option 3 in paragraph 3.1 above as recommended in 3.3.9 , and detailed in Annex 3
- approve a move in Leeds from 2011/121 onwards to adopt a fixed break between term 2 and 3, irrespective of when Easter falls with a corresponding adjustment to the summer vacation which ensures a two week Christmas break.

Background Papers

There are no background papers

Appendix 1

Analysis of comments from consultation responses

The most popular choice amongst school staff who responded was option 3, receiving more than 75% of the vote. Option 3 also received 48% of the parents vote. Popular reasons for this choice were that this option would benefit the level of pupil's concentration. Other reasons cited by both staff and parents alike, were that family holidays were cheaper.

Where childcare was cited as a factor that motivated selection, Option 2 received significantly more votes than options 1 or 3.

Even though 93% of respondents said that 4 day weeks would not pose a problem, where it did, it was cited that the 4 day weeks would be difficult for working parents unless the days off school were bank holidays.

Some parents and school staff said that having consistent holidays across phases, and also with neighbouring authorities is important.

Annexe 1

NORTH EAST AND YORKSHIRE PROPOSED REGIONAL CALENDAR

2010/2011

OPTION 1 DRAFT

| 2010 | July | August | September | October | November | December |
|-----------|------|--------|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| Monday | | 23 30 | 6 13 20 27 | 4 11 18 25 | 1 8 15 22 29 | 6 13 20 27 |
| Tuesday | | 24 31 | 7 14 21 28 | 5 12 19 26 | 2 9 16 23 30 | 7 14 21 28 |
| Wednesday | | 25 | 1 8 15 22 29 | 6 13 20 27 | 3 10 17 24 | 1 8 15 22 29 |
| Thursday | | 26 | 2 9 16 23 30 | 7 14 21 28 | 4 11 18 25 | 2 9 16 23 30 |
| Friday | | 27 | 3 10 17 24 | 1 8 15 22 29 | 5 12 19 26 | 3 10 17 24 31 |
| Saturday | | 28 | 4 11 18 25 | 2 9 16 26 30 | 6 13 20 27 | 4 11 18 25 |
| Sunday | | 29 | 5 12 19 26 | 3 10 17 24 31 | 7 14 21 28 | 5 12 19 26 |

| 2011 | January | February | March | April | May | June |
|-----------|---------------|------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| Monday | 3 10 17 24 31 | 7 14 21 28 | 7 14 21 28 | 4 11 18 25 | 2 9 16 23 30 | 6 13 20 27 |
| Tuesday | 4 11 18 25 | 1 8 15 22 | 1 8 15 22 29 | 5 12 19 26 | 3 10 17 24 31 | 7 14 21 28 |
| Wednesday | 5 12 19 26 | 2 9 16 23 | 2 9 16 23 30 | 6 13 20 27 | 4 11 18 25 | 1 8 15 22 29 |
| Thursday | 6 13 20 27 | 3 10 17 24 | 3 10 17 24 31 | 7 14 21 28 | 5 12 19 26 | 2 9 16 23 30 |
| Friday | 7 14 21 28 | 4 11 18 25 | 4 11 18 25 | 1 8 15 22 29 | 6 13 20 27 | 3 10 17 24 |
| Saturday | 1 8 15 22 29 | 5 12 19 26 | 5 12 19 26 | 2 9 16 23 30 | 7 14 21 28 | 4 11 18 25 |
| Sunday | 2 9 16 23 30 | 6 13 20 27 | 6 13 20 27 | 3 10 17 24 | 1 8 15 22 29 | 5 12 19 26 |

| 2011 | July |
|-----------|---------------|
| Monday | 4 11 18 25 |
| Tuesday | 5 12 19 26 |
| Wednesday | 6 13 20 27 |
| Thursday | 7 14 21 28 |
| Friday | 1 8 15 22 29 |
| Saturday | 2 9 16 23 30 |
| Sunday | 3 10 17 24 31 |

195 DAY ENVELOPE

Bank Holiday
 Holiday

The number of term days shown is 195. Up to five of these days will be used as professional development days for teaching staff; pupils will not attend on these days. Each school determines when these will take place and will

Annexe 2

NORTH EAST AND YORKSHIRE PROPOSED REGIONAL CALENDAR

2010/2011

OPTION 2 DRAFT

| 2010 | July | August | September | October | November | December |
|-----------|------|--------|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| Monday | | 23 30 | 6 13 20 27 | 4 11 18 25 | 1 8 15 22 29 | 6 13 20 27 |
| Tuesday | | 24 31 | 7 14 21 28 | 5 12 19 26 | 2 9 16 23 30 | 7 14 21 28 |
| Wednesday | | 25 | 1 8 15 22 29 | 6 13 20 27 | 3 # 17 24 | 1 8 15 22 29 |
| Thursday | | 26 | 2 9 16 23 30 | 7 14 21 28 | 4 # 18 25 | 2 9 16 23 30 |
| Friday | | 27 | 3 10 17 24 | 1 8 15 22 29 | 5 # 19 26 | 3 10 17 24 31 |
| Saturday | | 28 | 4 11 18 25 | 2 9 16 26 30 | 6 # 20 27 | 4 11 18 25 |
| Sunday | | 29 | 5 12 19 26 | 3 10 17 24 31 | 7 # 21 28 | 5 12 19 26 |

| 2011 | January | February | March | April | May | June |
|-----------|---------------|------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Monday | 3 10 17 24 31 | 7 14 21 28 | 7 14 21 28 | 4 11 18 25 | 2 9 16 23 30 | 6 13 20 27 |
| Tuesday | 4 11 18 25 | 1 8 15 22 | 1 8 15 22 29 | 5 12 19 26 | 3 # 17 24 31 | 7 14 21 28 |
| Wednesday | 5 12 19 26 | 2 9 16 23 | 2 9 16 23 30 | 6 13 20 27 | 4 # 18 25 | 1 8 15 22 29 |
| Thursday | 6 13 20 27 | 3 10 17 24 | 3 10 17 24 31 | 7 14 21 28 | 5 # 19 26 | 2 9 16 23 30 |
| Friday | 7 14 21 28 | 4 11 18 25 | 4 11 18 25 | 1 8 15 22 29 | 6 # 20 27 | 3 10 17 24 |
| Saturday | 1 8 15 22 29 | 5 12 19 26 | 5 12 19 26 | 2 9 16 23 30 | 7 # 21 28 | 4 11 18 25 |
| Sunday | 2 9 16 23 30 | 6 13 20 27 | 6 13 20 27 | 3 10 17 24 | 1 8 # 22 29 | 5 12 19 26 |

| 2011 | July |
|-----------|---------------|
| Monday | 4 11 18 25 |
| Tuesday | 5 12 19 26 |
| Wednesday | 6 13 20 27 |
| Thursday | 7 14 21 28 |
| Friday | 1 8 15 22 29 |
| Saturday | 2 9 16 23 30 |
| Sunday | 3 10 17 24 31 |

195 DAY ENVELOPE

Bank Holiday
 Holiday

The number of term days shown is 195. Up to five of these days will be used as professional development days for teaching staff; pupils will not attend on these days. Each school determines when these will take

Annexe 3

NORTH EAST AND YORKSHIRE PROPOSED REGIONAL CALENDAR

OPTION 3 DRAFT

2010/2011

| 2010 | July | August | September | October | November | December |
|-----------|------|--------|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| Monday | | 23 30 | 6 13 20 27 | 4 11 18 25 | 1 8 15 22 29 | 6 13 20 27 |
| Tuesday | | 24 31 | 7 14 21 28 | 5 12 19 26 | 2 9 16 23 30 | 7 14 21 28 |
| Wednesday | | 25 | 1 8 15 22 29 | 6 13 20 27 | 3 10 17 24 | 1 8 15 22 29 |
| Thursday | | 26 | 2 9 16 23 30 | 7 14 21 28 | 4 11 18 25 | 2 9 16 23 30 |
| Friday | | 27 | 3 10 17 24 | 1 8 15 22 29 | 5 12 19 26 | 3 10 17 24 31 |
| Saturday | | 28 | 4 11 18 25 | 2 9 16 26 30 | 6 13 20 27 | 4 11 18 25 |
| Sunday | | 29 | 5 12 19 26 | 3 10 17 24 31 | 7 14 21 28 | 5 12 19 26 |

| 2011 | January | February | March | April | May | June |
|-----------|---------------|------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| Monday | 3 10 17 24 31 | 7 14 21 28 | 7 14 21 28 | 4 11 18 25 | 2 9 16 23 30 | 6 13 20 27 |
| Tuesday | 4 11 18 25 | 1 8 15 22 | 1 8 15 22 29 | 5 12 19 26 | 3 10 17 24 31 | 7 14 21 28 |
| Wednesday | 5 12 19 26 | 2 9 16 23 | 2 9 16 23 30 | 6 13 20 27 | 4 11 18 25 | 1 8 15 22 29 |
| Thursday | 6 13 20 27 | 3 10 17 24 | 3 10 17 24 31 | 7 14 21 28 | 5 12 19 26 | 2 9 16 23 30 |
| Friday | 7 14 21 28 | 4 11 18 25 | 4 11 18 25 | 1 8 15 22 29 | 6 13 20 27 | 3 10 17 24 |
| Saturday | 1 8 15 22 29 | 5 12 19 26 | 5 12 19 26 | 2 9 16 23 30 | 7 14 21 28 | 4 11 18 25 |
| Sunday | 2 9 16 23 30 | 6 13 20 27 | 6 13 20 27 | 3 10 17 24 | 1 8 15 22 29 | 5 12 19 26 |

| 2011 | July |
|-----------|---------------|
| Monday | 4 11 18 25 |
| Tuesday | 5 12 19 26 |
| Wednesday | 6 13 20 27 |
| Thursday | 7 14 21 28 |
| Friday | 1 8 15 22 29 |
| Saturday | 2 9 16 23 30 |
| Sunday | 3 10 17 24 31 |

195 DAY ENVELOPE

- Bank Holiday
- Holiday

The number of term days shown is 195. Up to five of these days will be used as professional development days for teaching staff; pupils will not attend on these days. Each school determines when these will take place and will inform parents.

