

**REPORT FOR: EDUCATION STRATEGY  
CONSULTATIVE FORUM**

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	21 March 2013
<b>Subject:</b>	School Term Dates 2014/2015
<b>Key Decision:</b>	No
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Adrian Parker, Head of Education Strategy and School Organisation
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor Mitzi Green, Portfolio Holder for Children, Schools and Families
<b>Exempt:</b>	No
<b>Decision subject to Call-in:</b>	No
<b>Enclosures:</b>	Annexe A – Draft School Term Dates: 2014/2015 Annexe B – Summary of models from other local authorities

## **Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations**

This report presents the Forum with a proposal for the school term dates for the academic year 2014/2015.

### **Recommendations:**

The Education Strategy Consultative Forum is asked to:

1. Consider the proposal recommended in paragraph 19;
2. Make a recommendation to the Portfolio Holder to determine the School Term Dates for 2014/2015.

### **Reason: (For recommendation)**

In order to fulfil the council's requirement to determine the school term dates for 2014/2015.

## **Section 2 – Report**

### **Introduction**

1. Schools are required by statute to provide schooling for 190 days. Teaching staff are required by their terms and conditions to complete 195 days including 5 development days.
2. Under section 32 of the Education Act 2002, in respect of community schools, the Local Authority shall determine the dates when school terms and holidays are to begin and end, and the Governing Body shall determine the times of the school sessions.
3. For voluntary aided schools, academies, free schools, foundation or foundation special schools the responsibility for determination of school dates and times of school sessions all rest with the Governing Body.
4. The Education Strategy Consultative Forum annually recommends the term dates for each school year. At a meeting earlier in the school year models available are circulated to the Forum for consultation with their constituent groups. Following consultation about proposals for term dates, the recommendations of the Education Strategy Consultative Forum are reported to the responsible Portfolio Holder for decision.
5. In previous years the LGA has coordinated the preparation of a Standard School Year draft for each year. However, the LGA has decided to stop coordinating the development of draft models for standard school years. This is because only around 40% of areas are now following the Standard School Year. The government's policies to promote academies and free schools will mean that increasingly school governing bodies will be determining the school term dates for their schools.

### **Harrow Agreed Principles**

6. The Education Strategy Consultative Forum agreed a set of principles to apply to School Term Dates for Harrow. These are as follows:
  - The school year to be set with 195 days, incorporating 5 development days
  - Schools to determine the development days
  - The school year to start on the first useful day in September
  - The October break to be one full week, the last full week in October
  - A 10 school day break at Christmas
  - A 10 school day break at Easter/Spring
  - A one week break in February and May/June
  - A summer break of 5-6 weeks (not more than 6 weeks)

### **Options considered**

7. At the Forum meeting held on 30 January 2013, a draft model was presented that draws on information from an internet search of proposed School Term Dates for 2014/15 and conforms to the Harrow Agreed Principles.

Representatives undertook to consult with constituent group members and feedback at this meeting.

### **Other local authority models available**

8. Hertfordshire is the only local authority neighbouring Harrow that has agreed School Term Dates for 2014/15. The Hertfordshire dates are the same as the recommended model below, with the following variations:
  - Spring Term 2015 ends on Thursday 2 April 2015 (Maundy)
  - Summer Term 2015 starts on Monday 20 April and ends on Wednesday 22 July 2015.
9. Hillingdon is consulting on two models. Both models start and end the school year on different dates from Harrow. The first model has a later Easter break than the Harrow model.
10. Ealing and Hounslow are consulting on the London Inter-Authority Admission group (LIAAG) model that proposes the following variation to the draft Harrow model:
  - Autumn Term 2014 half term to be week beginning 17 October (i.e. a week earlier)Ealing include 3 occasional days in their school year (totalling 198 days) so governing bodies can take account of the need to observe religious festivals other than Christmas and Easter. Their proposed date for the end of the summer term 2015 is Friday 24 July 2015.
11. The LIAAG reasoning is from a school admissions point of view, in that the earlier October half term means the closing date for secondary applications (31 October 2014) is in term time, allowing primary schools to play a role up to the closing date in ensuring the applications of Year 6 pupils are in. The national primary offer date (16 April 2015) does not fall within the Easter break in the recommended model.
12. It should be noted that secondary schools and the local authority recommend that parents submit applications for admissions by the last day of the first half of Autumn term so parents can ensure that applications reach the local authority (and any supplementary information form reaches school) by 31 October.
13. An additional perspective offered by LIAAG is that, now the Department for Education is reporting on absence to the end of the summer term rather than May, it is better to avoid extending the summer term beyond Monday 20 July 2015.
14. Brent and Barnet have not begun their consultation processes about School Term Dates 2014/15 and, when doing so, will expect to take account of the models proposed or adopted by neighbouring local authorities.
15. A summary of other local authority models is provided in Annexe B.

### **Feedback from constituent groups**

16. The colleges have no strong opinions and will take account of the recommendation made by the Forum. The most important thing from the perspective of the colleges is that the dates for Harrow and Hertfordshire and

Brent are the same. Different dates are definitely going to cause problems because many staff and students live in Hertfordshire (particularly Watford and Bushey) and Brent so would potentially have childcare problems. There is a preference for a later Easter break because it means the maximum amount of work can be done before the break by A level students who are in examination mode when they return.

17. Diwali in 2014 will start on Thursday 23 October and will continue for 5 days until Monday 27 October.
18. Feedback has not been received from other constituent groups by the time of writing this report and will need to be considered at the meeting.

### Recommendation

19. It is recommended that the draft model in Annex A is adopted for Harrow. The table below summarises the proposed term dates.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>School Days</b>
<b>Autumn Term 2014</b> 15 weeks	Monday 1 September 2014 to Friday 24 October 2014	<b>40</b>
	<i>Half Term Monday 27 October 2014 to Friday 31 October 2014</i>	
	Monday 3 November 2014 to Friday 19 December 2014	<b>35</b>
<b>Spring Term 2015</b> 11 weeks	Monday 5 January 2015 to Friday 13 February 2015	<b>30</b>
	<i>Half Term Monday 16 February 2015 to Friday 20 February 2015</i>	
	Monday 23 February 2015 to Friday 27 March 2015	<b>25</b>
<b>Summer Term 2015</b> 13 weeks	Monday 13 April 2015 to Friday 22 May 2015	<b>29</b>
	<i>Half Term Monday 25 May 2015 to Friday 29 May 2015</i>	
	Monday 1 June 2015 to Monday 20 July 2015	<b>36</b>
<b>Total</b>	School Days including INSET days	<b>195</b>

- Notes:
1. Good Friday is 3 April 2015.
  2. Easter Monday is 6 April 2015.
  3. Early May Bank Holiday is on Monday 4 May 2015.

### Occasional Days

20. At their meeting in June 2009, the Education Consultative Forum agreed to introduce Occasional Days. These allow governing bodies to agree to up to 3 additional closure days to take account of the need to observe Non-Christian religious festivals. If 3 occasional days are adopted then the school year will be 198 days and the additional days must be added to the end of the summer term.

## Financial Implications

21. None.

## Risk Management Implications

22. The consultation process through the Education Strategy Consultative Forum ensures that stakeholder views are taken into account to minimise risk management issues.

## Equalities Implications

23. The Harrow agreed principles were developed following consultation with schools, governors, parents and other partners and take account of the needs of Harrow's diverse community. Schools are able to adopt up to three occasional closure days to meet specific community needs.

24. Harrow sets term dates of 195 school days each year and schools/governing bodies have the flexibility to set the 190 pupil contact days within this framework to meet the needs of each school's community.

## Corporate Priorities

25. These considerations will support the Council's Corporate Priorities:

- United and involved communities: A Council that listens and leads.
- Supporting and protecting people who are most in need.

## Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name:	Emma Stabler	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date:	5 March 2013		
Name:	Sarah Wilson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date:	5 March 2013		

## Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

**Contact:** Chris Melly, Senior Professional, School Organisation,  
020 8420 9270 [chris.melly@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:chris.melly@harrow.gov.uk)

**Background Papers:** None