

**REPORT FOR: EDUCATION
CONSULTATIVE FORUM**

Date of Meeting:	25 January 2012
Subject:	School Term Dates 2013/2014
Key Decision:	No
Responsible Officer:	Adrian Parker, Head of Service, Education Strategy and School Organisation
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Brian Gate, Portfolio Holder for Schools and Colleges
Exempt:	No
Decision subject to Call-in:	No
Enclosures:	Annexe A – LGA Draft School Term Dates: 2013/2014

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report presents Members with a proposal for the school term dates for the academic year 2013/2014.

Recommendations:

The Education Consultative Forum is asked to:

1. consider the proposal at paragraph 9 in this report;
2. arrange to consult their constituent groups about the proposal, and about arrangements for considering proposals in future years;
3. agree to make a recommendation to the Portfolio Holder at the meeting of the Forum in the Summer Term in order to determine the School Term Dates for 2013/2014.

Reason: (For recommendation)

In order to fulfil the council's requirement to determine the community school term dates for 2013/2014.

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, which include 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, foundation or foundation special schools, academies and free schools, the responsibility for determination of school dates and times of school sessions all rest with the Governing Body.
4. The Education Consultative Forum annually recommends the term dates for each school year. Proposed models available are circulated to the Forum for consideration with their constituent groups. Following consultation about proposals for term dates, the recommendations of the Education Consultative Forum are reported to the responsible Portfolio Holder for decision.

Background

5. A model for term dates in Harrow is developed based on three elements:
 - Harrow's Agreed Principles,
 - The Local Government Association's (LGA) Standard School Year and,
 - Other local authority models available.

Harrow Agreed Principles:

6. The Education 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)

LGA Standard School Year

7. For a number of years the LGA has produced the Standard School Year model following consultation with their members in a cycle that is complementary to the local authority decision making process. The LGA have decided it will no longer continue to circulate a Standard School Year model. This is because only around 40% of areas are now following the Standard School Year, and academies and free schools will be able to set whatever dates they want, so the Standard School Year is becoming increasingly defunct in practice.

Occasional Days

8. 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.

Options considered

9. The draft LGA model is provided for consideration in Annexe A. Just the one model has been drafted for 2012/13. The draft LGA model conforms to the Harrow Agreed Principles with the following exceptions:
- The October break to be one full week, the last full week in October. In the draft LGA model the October break spans the last four days of October and the first day of November.
 - A 10 school day break at Christmas. In the draft LGA model there is an 8 school day break at Christmas.

Autumn Term 2013	Thursday 5 September 2013 to Friday 25 October 2013 (37 days)
	Half Term Monday 28 October 2013 to Friday 1 November 2013
	Monday 4 November 2013 to Friday 20 December 2013 (35 days)
Spring Term 2014	Thursday 2 January 2014 to Friday 14 February 2014 (32 days)
	Half Term Monday 17 February 2014 to Friday 21 February 2014
	Monday 24 February 2014 to Friday 4 April 2014 (30 days)
Summer Term 2014	Tuesday 22 April 2014 to Friday 23 May 2014 (23 days)
	Half Term Monday 26 May 2014 to Friday 30 May 2014
	Monday 2 June 2014 to Wednesday 23 July 2014 (38 days)
Total	195 School Days including INSET days

- Notes:
1. Good Friday is 18 April 2014.
 2. Easter Monday is 21 April 2014.
 3. Early May Bank Holiday is on Monday 5 May 2014.
 4. There are minor discrepancies in the model published by the LGA:
 - Monday 6 January 2014 is also marked as 'First day after break'.
 - The panel for '32 day term Jan to Feb' is missing.

Arrangements for deciding school term dates in future years

10. The LGA has decided to stop coordinating the development of draft models for standard school years. The draft LGA models were developed in consultation with representatives from local authorities. In recent years Harrow and neighbouring local authorities have broadly adopted the draft LGA model, which has ensured a level of consistency in holiday dates for schools and families in the local area.
11. 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. Views need to be sought as to whether schools within Harrow wish to coordinate arrangements for determining school term dates with the local authority and/or with themselves.
12. It is proposed that in future officers develop models that conform to the Harrow principles for consideration by the Education Consultative Forum. Officers could seek to coordinate the development of potential models with neighbouring local authorities, though in practice it has been found that neighbouring local authorities develop their proposals to a later timescale than Harrow.
13. It is proposed that forum members consult their constituent groups and that officers contact neighbouring local authorities about their proposals for future arrangements.

Financial Implications

14. None.

Risk Management Implications

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

Equalities Implications

16. The Harrow agreed principles were developed following consultation with schools, governors, parents and other partners and takes 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.
17. 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

18. Not applicable to this report.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name:	Emma Stabler	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date:	4 January 2012		
Name:	Sarah Wilson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date:	4 January 2012		

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Chris Melly, Senior Professional, School Organisation,
020 8420 9270 chris.melly@harrow.gov.uk

Background Papers: None.