

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Rory Love, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

DECISION NO:

24/00023

For publication [Do not include information which is exempt from publication under schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972]

Key decision: YES

Key decision criteria. The decision will:

- a) *be significant in terms of its effects on a significant proportion of the community living or working within two or more electoral divisions – which will include those decisions that involve:*
- *the adoption or significant amendment of major strategies or frameworks;*
 - *significant service developments, significant service reductions, or significant changes in the way that services are delivered, whether County-wide or in a particular locality.*

Subject Matter / Title of Decision

School Term Dates for 2025/26, 2026/27 and 2027/28

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, I agree to:

- (1) Agree the school term dates for KCC community and voluntary controlled schools for the school years 2025/26, 2026/27 and 2027/28

Reason(s) for decision:

1. Background

KCC is responsible for setting term dates for community and voluntary controlled schools, while governing bodies of foundation and voluntary aided schools are responsible for setting their own term dates. Academies and free schools also have the freedom to decide their dates and length of terms.

Previously, the Local Government Association (LGA) has coordinated the preparation of a draft standard school year. However, the LGA has decided to stop coordinating the development of these draft models, because only around 40% of localities are now following the standard school year, as more academies and free schools determine the term dates for their schools.

Over a school year, pupils are required to attend for 190 days/380 sessions. In total, teachers may be required to be available for work on up to 195 days, with the additional days specified by individual schools as non-contact days. Schools may also require teachers to work additional hours before or after school sessions, as an alternative to full non-contact days, provided that any teacher is not required to work in aggregate more than 1,265 hours during a school year. Schools may therefore choose to require teachers to make up the full equivalent of the 5 non-contact days wholly through additional hours or use a mixture of additional hours and non-contact days.

In determining the proposed future school term dates, KCC carried out a full consultation on the proposed dates. The proposed dates are attached as appendix 1.

2. Securing Kent's Future

The 'Securing Kent's Future' strategy outlines the measures that KCC intend to take to ensure that Kent remains financially stable, now and long into the future. It describes the statutory priorities, one of which being the statutory duty to set term dates for community and voluntary controlled schools. This duty applies to Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision, as well as mainstream settings where appropriate.

This proposal is necessary for KCC to continue to deliver the statutory duty, in a cost-effective way, in line with the guidelines described in the Securing Kent's Future strategy. It will help to maintain KCC's strategic role in supporting schools in Kent to deliver accessible, high quality education provision for all families, through ensuring schools can effectively plan their operations with certainty for the next three years and support parents in maximising pupil attendance.

3. Consultation Process and Proposed Dates

KCC consulted on the proposed term dates for the academic years 2025/26, 2026/27 and 2027/28 from 6th March until 30th April 2024. The consultation was circulated to all schools via the e-bulletin and with other key stakeholders such as governors (including parent groups), the diocesan bodies, trade unions and neighbouring local authorities. The general public was also encouraged to participate by using KCC Facebook and Twitter channels. The social media posts were seen by 19,337 people at least once, with the posts being displayed on someone's screen 156,942 times. The posts generated 14,310 clicks through to the consultation webpage.

A link to the consultation was sent on 12 March to 6,846 Let's Talk Kent users. This went to those who wished to be kept informed about consultation or engagement activities on the following topics:

- Children and families
- Young people
- Education and schools

The consultation and Equalities Impact Assessment can be found by following this link:

[**School Term Dates for 2025-26, 2026-27 and 2027-28 | Let's talk Kent**](#)

The consultation webpage was visited 3563 times and 446 responses to the consultation were received. A breakdown of responses is attached as Appendix 2. Of the responses received for the proposed dates for 2025/26 134 respondents agreed, 280 disagreed for varying reasons as outlined in Appendix 1 and 32 left no comment. For 2026/27 146 agreed to the proposal, 252 disagreed for varying reasons and 48 left no comment. For 2027/28 145 respondents agreed with the proposal, 247 disagreed for varying reasons and 54 left no comment.

Responses to the consultation on the proposed term dates for 2025/26, 2026/27 and 2027/28, were received from a wide range of individuals or organisations including parents, carers, headteachers and teachers; school governors, early years settings, other local authority, grandparents, local businesses and employers.

Consequently, although the consultation received more comments disagreeing with the proposed dates, when the responses were analysed there were varying reasons for the disagreement. It is recommended that as 134 or more people supported the proposed dates for each of the three years, the term dates that were set out in the consultation are adopted.

3. Equalities Impact Assessment

The EqIA has been reviewed again following the consultation and no updates were required.

4. Financial Implications

There are no direct cost implications arising from the decision on the school calendar. However, if individual foundation, voluntary aided schools, academies or free schools determine a different pattern of term dates, they may incur additional costs in relation to home to school transport, as the authority passes any additional costs on to the schools concerned.

5. Legal implication

If we do not determine the term dates for KCC community and voluntary controlled schools, the LA will not be meeting its statutory obligation.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

The Children's and Young People and Education Cabinet Committee considered the decision on 16 May 2024.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

Details of consultation responses including the main objections and suggestions for possible changes were presented to the Children's Young People and Education Cabinet Committee on 16 May 2024.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer: None

.....
signed

.....
date