9 January 2017

To All Headteachers & Governors of
Infant, Junior, Primary and Secondary Schools
Principals of All Academies
Primary Special and Secondary Special Schools

Dear Colleague

CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED SCHOOL TERMS AND HOLIDAYS 2018/19 AND YEAR 7 TRANSITION DAYS

FOR INFORMATION & ACTION

Section 32 of the Education Act 2002 requires the Local Authority to determine the dates when the school terms and holidays are to begin and end for schools under its control (i.e. Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools) for the 2018/19 academic year.

Schools that are their own Admission Authorities may set their own term dates. It is however desirable if there is a common set of dates across the City, at least for the main holidays.

Headteachers and Governors are invited to respond to the proposed term dates for the 2018/19 academic year. The school calendar must consist of 195 days, 5 of which are designated teacher training days.

Following a strong response last year the Authority is consulting on a single model which fixes the Easter break in the first two weeks of April 2019.

The Easter Bank holidays in 2019 are Friday 19th and Monday 22nd April. This means that the bank holidays would fall outside the 2 week Easter break in the proposed model.

A final decision on the term dates will be taken by the Executive Director and Lead Cabinet Member, your responses are important so please take the opportunity to contribute to the final calendar. The deadline for responses is 17th February 2017

The Authority also proposes to set transition dates for pupils prior to secondary transfer. In agreement with the Primary Headteachers Group it is proposed to designate the first Wednesday and Thursday of July 2018 for this purpose to promote greater consistency across the City. Further details are provided below.
Fixing the Easter Break

You may recall that an extensive consultation process was held on the 2017/18 school calendar. This included a seminar with Headteachers and Governors.

The number of respondents in each category were as follows:

- Parent / Carer (887)
- Headteacher / Principal (42)
- Member of school staff – teaching (145)
- Member of school staff - non-teaching (75)
- School Governor (26)
- School Service Provider (2)
- Partner or Voluntary Organisation (5)
- Elected Member (0)
- Union Representative (1 plus two additional email responses)
- Other (17)

There were 1200 responses received. 71% of those respondents preferred the proposed model that fixed Easter at the first two weeks in April. Some of the key reasons for supporting were:

1. It helps to facilitate more even half terms,
2. It ensures that there is sufficient time for KS2 Sats preparation when schools return.

Current Principles Behind Setting Term Dates

The key principles to setting the calendar are:

- The Christmas break will be at least 10 weekdays, and will normally start at the end of the school day on the Friday which is on, or otherwise immediately prior to, 22 December.

- The February half term holiday will be five days Monday to Friday, which divides the term as far as possible into two equal parts. Where there are an odd number of weeks the second half term will be the shorter of the two.

- The Easter break will be fixed at the first two full weeks in April to support the creation of more even half terms.

- The Spring Bank half term will be five days Monday to Friday from the statutory holiday which falls as the last Monday in May.

- Where a term is of uneven length, the second half term will be the shorter of the two.

Neighbouring Authorities

Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham are consulting on the fixed Easter model and the more traditional model set out below.
The Authority does try and agree a common calendar with all neighbouring Authorities because we know that many teachers working in Sheffield live in other Authorities and their children attend school there. No dates have been finalized yet for these Authorities.

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<tr>
<th>October Half Term</th>
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Derbyshire County Council has set its term dates as follows:

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**Transition Days**

The Authority proposes to recommend specific dates for transition visits prior to the transfer to secondary schools. This is fully supported by the Primary Headteachers Group. For the 2017/18 September intake the proposed transition days are **Wednesday 4th and Thursday 5th July 2018**.

This should give sufficient time for all schools to set these days in their planning arrangements for 2017/18. **Please note that these dates are not compulsory, they are recommended in order to assist with the transition process.**

**Religious Observance**

All schools must provide 190 teaching days and 5 development days. Within the school calendar however there may be flexibility to enable schools to observe religious observance both for pupils and staff.

The Executive Director and Lead Cabinet Member are keen to ensure that there is sufficient flexibility within the school calendar to accommodate religious observance and are keen to receive your comments on how such arrangements may be accommodated. I attach a briefing note in which there are some suggestions to facilitate religious observance based on practices in other Authorities and current practice in some of our own schools.

Any days proposed for closure due to religious observance should be discussed first with the Governing Body taking into account the cohesion of the local community.

**What Happens Next?**

Following consultation, the final recommended model calendar will be posted on School Point before the end of the current academic year. It will then be a matter for each individual Governing Body of schools and academies that are their own admission authorities to determine whether it will adopt the recommended model, or set its own calendar. If your Governing Body is considering a significant departure from the recommended model, you are advised that you should undertake a full consultation should with parents, the Local Authority and other interested stakeholders prior to it being determined. You are advised to complete any consultation and set the term dates before the end of the summer term 2017.
If you have any comments on the proposed school calendar or transition dates I should be pleased to receive them by 17th February 2017.

You are invited to respond in a number of ways:

- Email your comments to: jayne.johnson@sheffield.gov.uk
- By fax to – Jayne Johnson on 0114 273 4155
- By post on the attached response sheet to -

Jayne Johnson, Senior Admissions Officer, Inclusion & Learning Service, Floor 5, North Wing, Moorfoot, Sheffield, S1 2BE.

Yours sincerely

John Bigley
Manager, Admissions and Access
Inclusion & Learning Service
Children, Young People and Families Service
## School Terms dates and Holidays 2018/19 Consultation Response

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The Governing Body agree with the recommended school calendar and will be adopting it.  

**Signature**

The Governing Body does not agree with the recommended school calendar and will be setting its own term dates (please give reasons below).

**Signature**

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**Signature**

If there is insufficient space for you to record your response, please continue on an additional sheet.

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**Please respond 17th February 2017**

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jayne.johnson@sheffield.gov.uk

Or Fax to Jayne Johnson on 0114 273 4155

Or by post to Jayne Johnson, Senior Admissions Officer, Inclusion & Learning Service, Floor 5, North Wing, Moorfoot, Sheffield, S1 2BE.