

Education, Children and Families Committee

10am, Tuesday, 19 May 2015

School Session Dates 2016/2017, 2017/2018 and consultation on future dates

Item number	8.5
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	All

Executive summary

A consultation on the criteria for setting school session dates took place in February 2015. The results of this survey appear in (appendix one). The results have been used to inform the setting process in bringing forward proposed session dates for 2016/2017 and 2017/2018 and there are proposals on further consultation on session dates for 2018/2019 and beyond.

The consultation on the criteria took the form of a survey monkey shared with:

- Parent Council Chairs (asking them to consult with Parents);
- All teaching staff (asking them to consult with school staff);
- Professional Associations.

The proposed dates for 2016/2017 and 2017/2018 have been shared with the Local Negotiating Committee Teachers (LNCT) and with the Parent Representative on the Education, Children and Families Committee.

Links

Coalition pledges	P1-P6
Council outcomes	CO1-O6
Single Outcome Agreement	SO3

School session dates 2016/2017, 2017/2018 and consultation on future dates

Recommendations

- 1.1 The Education, Children and Families Committee is asked to approve the Session Dates for 2016/2017, 2017/2018 (appendices two and three) and to approve a wider consultation on dates for 2018/2019 and beyond.

Background

- 2.1 The Education, Children and Families Committee on 20 May 2014 asked for there to be a consultation on the criteria for setting school holiday dates 2016/2017 and beyond. The questions asked reflected the issues raised in the report and were agreed between management and trade unions before being circulated.
- 2.2 The survey monkey link was sent to all teaching staff, all Chairs of Parent Councils and the Professional Associations. In addition schools were asked directly to assist Parent Councils in disseminating the link as widely as possible.
- 2.3 The survey yielded a very large response. There were a total on 9,438 responses. There were 6,564 (69.5%) responses from parents and 2,874 (30.4%) responses from staff.
- 2.4 The results of the survey appear in appendix one, but can be summarised as follows:
 - 2.4.1 Around 66% of both staff and parents did not think finishing term before the start of the Edinburgh trades holidays was still an imperative.
 - 2.4.2 80% of staff and 43% on parents had a preference for two days in-service at the start of the term.
 - 2.4.3 Just over 50% of respondents had no preference for the third week of October being the week of the October holiday, thus there was a majority support for flexibility.
 - 2.4.4 Around 80% of staff supported two full weeks at Christmas regardless of whether it included three weekends. Among parents there was a bigger support for the two weeks including the two weekends. Both these results suggest support for an element of flexibility as long as there are 10 consecutive working days.
 - 2.4.5 A clear majority of staff and a significant majority of parents prefer the two day gap as a minimum before Christmas.

- 2.4.6 A substantial majority of staff and a significant majority of parents wanted to retain a full week's holiday in February.
- 2.4.7 A majority of staff but a minority of parents supported a fixed two weeks for Easter regardless of when Easter falls. Of those who wanted a fixed two weeks a clear majority of both parents and staff supported the first two weeks in April.
- 2.4.8 A large majority of staff supported the view that local holidays were still important but only just over a third of parents felt the same.

Other consultations

- 2.5 Discussions with other Lothian authorities and Fife are on-going as there is a consensus, certainly among the four Lothian authorities, that harmonization of holiday dates would be advantageous.
- 2.6 Based on the results of the survey, session dates for 2016/2017 and 2017/2018 have been prepared and have been shared with the LNCT and the parent representatives on the Education, Children and Families Committee.

Main report

- 3.1 The session 2016/17 begins with two in-service days on 15 and 16 August followed by pupils resuming on Wednesday 17 August. This is after a six week summer break. There is a September Monday holiday and an October break in the third week in October followed by a Monday in-service day. The Christmas break starts on Friday 23 December (two days before Christmas) and pupils resume on 10 January after a staff in-service on Monday 9 January. The February break continues as a whole week and the Easter break is the first two weeks in April followed by a Monday to cover Easter Monday. The Mayday holiday is retained as is Victoria day although the additional spring holiday is deleted. The May in-service day will be 4 May the date of the next Local Government elections. Schools break up on Friday the last day of June.

Breakdown by days 2016/2017

- 3.2 The school session 2016/2017 can be broken down by days of the week as follows:
- Pupils (190 days) compromising: Monday 33, Tuesday 39, Wednesday 40, Thursday 39, Friday 39.
 - Staff (195 days) compromising Monday 36, Tuesday 40, Wednesday 40, Thursday 40, Friday 39.
 - Three in-service days on Monday, one on Tuesday and one on Thursday.

School session dates for 2017/2018

- 3.3 Session dates for 2017/2018 (see appendix three) follow a very similar pattern to 2016/2017. The session begins with two in-service days on 14 and 15 August followed by pupils resuming on Wednesday 16 August. This is after a six week summer break. There is a September Monday holiday and an October break in the third week in October followed by a Monday in-service day. The Christmas break start on Saturday 23 December (two days before Christmas) and pupils resume on 9 January after a staff in-service day on Monday 9 January. The February break continues as a whole week and the Easter break is the first two weeks in April preceded by a Friday to cover Good Friday. This year the additional spring holiday is added to the Easter break on 16 April, the May day holiday is retained as is Victoria day. The May in-service day will be 8 May, the day after the May day holiday. Although there are European elections this year the date has not yet been set. Schools break up the 29 June.

Breakdown by days 2017/2018

- 3.4 The school session 2017/2018 can be broken down by the days of the week as follows:
- Pupils (190 days) comprising: Monday 34, Tuesday 38, Wednesday 40, Thursday 40, Friday, 38.
 - Staff (195 days) comprising: Monday 37, Tuesday 40, Wednesday 40, Thursday 40, Friday 38.
 - Three in-service days on Mondays, two on Tuesdays.

Next steps

- 3.5 It is proposed that the school session dates for 2018/2019 and beyond should be the subject of a wide consultation after discussion with the Consultative Committee with Parents and the Local Negotiating Committee (Teachers) and that these consultations should include more radical changes including discussions of a four term pattern of roughly equal lengths and a later summer holiday to coincide with the Edinburgh Festival. It is acknowledged that additional research into the educational rationale for alternative models should be undertaken and that other alternative models should be considered

Measures of success

- 4.1 Feedback from staff and parents is positive regarding school session dates. Consultation on future years is thorough and achieves excellent response from stakeholders

Financial impact

5.1 There are no financial requirements.

Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

6.1 There is no risk, policy, compliance, and governance impact.

Equalities impact

7.1 None.

Sustainability impact

8.1 There is no sustainability impact.

Consultation and engagement

9.1 Consultation took place with school staff, parents and teaching unions. On-going consultation is taking place with neighbouring Local Authorities.

Background reading/external references

Gillian Tee

Director, Children and Families

Contact: Andy Gray, Head of Schools and Community Services

E-mail: andy.gray@edinburgh.gov.uk | Tel: 0131 529 2217

Coalition pledges	<p>P1 - Increase support for vulnerable children, including help for families so that fewer go into care.</p> <p>P2 - Hold the maximum P1 class size at 25 and seek to reduce class sizes in line with Scottish Government recommendations.</p> <p>P3 - Rebuild Portobello High School and continue progress on all other planned school developments, while providing adequate investment in the fabric of all schools.</p> <p>P4 - Draw up a long-term strategic plan to tackle both over-crowding and under use in schools</p> <p>P5 - Seek to ensure the smooth introduction of the Curriculum for Excellence and that management structures within our schools support the new curriculum</p> <p>P6 - Establish city-wide co-operatives for affordable childcare for working parents.</p>
Council outcomes	<p>CO1 - Our children have the best start in life, are able to make and sustain relationships and are ready to succeed.</p> <p>CO2 - Our children and young people are successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens making a positive contribution to their communities.</p> <p>CO3 - Our children and young people at risk, or with a disability, have improved life chances.</p> <p>CO4 - Our children and young people are physically and emotionally healthy.</p> <p>CO5 - Our children and young people are safe from harm or fear of harm, and do not harm others within their communities.</p> <p>CO6 - Our children's and young people's outcomes are not undermined by poverty and inequality.</p>
Single Outcome Agreement	<p>SO3 - Edinburgh's children and young people enjoy their childhood and fulfil their potential</p>
Appendices	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Results of consultation criteria2. Session dates 2016/20173. Session dates 2017/2018

Background

This consultation was as a result of recommendations in the Education Children & Families Report of 20 May 2014.

The questions asked reflect the issues raised in the report and were agreed between management and trade unions before being circulated.

The survey monkey link was sent to all teaching staff, all chairs of Parent Councils and the Professional Associations. In addition schools were asked directly to assist Parent Councils in disseminating the link as widely as possible.

The survey yielded a very large response. There were 9,438 responses (for reference there were 3,500 to the Council Wide Budget consultation). There were 6,564 (69.5%) responses from parents and 2,874 (30.4%) responses from staff.

The results of the consultation were used to inform the term date setting process for 2016/17 and 2017/18.

Results of consultation on criteria

2,874 staff members responded (approximately 71% of the teaching workforce)

6,564 parents responded (not possible to quote this as a percentage of total parent body)

Question two: Is finishing the summer term before the Edinburgh 'trades holidays' still an imperative

62.91% of teaching staff and 67.52% of parents believe that finishing the summer break before the Edinburgh 'trades holidays' is not an imperative, therefore there is a two thirds majority in favour of flexibility here. There is a close correlation between the views of teachers and staff.

Question three: Is it still preferable to have two in-service days at the start of term after the summer holidays

80.04% of staff and 42.57% of parents believe it is preferable to have two in-service days after the summer holidays. Staff and Parents have significantly different views on this question. There is a strong negative correlation between the views of teachers and staff.

Question four: Is the second last week in October still the preferred option for the 'October break'

42.93% of staff and 62.13% of parents answered no to this question meaning that over 50% of all respondents supported variations to this rule. There is a negative correlation between the views of staff and parents.

Question five: Is it still a priority to have two full weeks at Christmas (including 3 weekends)

80.46% of staff and 60.08% of parents supported two full weeks including three weekends

Question six: Is it still a priority to have two full weeks at Christmas (including 2 weekends)

78.92% of staff and 72.44% of parents supported two full weeks including two weekends

There is a strong correlation between the views of staff and parents. This suggests that the need to include three weekends is not a priority for either staff or parents as long as the full two weeks are given.

Question seven: How close to Christmas day can the Christmas holidays start

39.48% of staff and 57.37 % of parents would support Christmas holidays starting one day before Christmas.

91.74% of staff and 86.36% of parents would support Christmas holidays starting two days before Christmas.

There is clear preference for the two day gap (particularly amongst staff) and there is a negative correlation between staff and parents over the one day gap and a strong positive correlation between staff and parents over the two day gap.

Question eight: Is a week for the February break still preferable to a long weekend and longer Easter, Summer or Autumn breaks

84.6% of staff and 59.46% of parents supported the retention of a week's break in February. There was no appetite for change particularly amongst staff, although parents views were less strongly for the week's break. There was a positive correlation between the views of staff and parents.

Question nine: Should the Easter holidays be a fixed two weeks regardless of when Easter falls

62.81% of staff and 44.89% of parents supported a fixed two weeks. There is therefore a negative correlation between staff and parents and no consensus view.

Question 10: Should this be the first two weeks in April

Of those that answered yes to question 9 78.68% of staff and 72.83% of parents supported the first two weeks in April. There is a strong positive correlation between the views of staff and parents.

Question 11: Are local holidays still important to have as school holidays

75.48% of staff and 35.55% of parents supported the view that it was important. There was therefore no consensus and a strong negative correlation between staff and parents.

School Session Dates 2016/17

Staff resume		Monday	15 August *	2016
Staff only		Tuesday	16 August *	2016
Pupils return		Wednesday	17 August	2016
Autumn Holiday	Schools closed	Monday	19 September	2016
All resume		Tuesday	20 September	2016
Mid-term	All break	Friday	14 October	2016
	Staff resume	Monday	24 October*	2016
	Pupils resume	Tuesday	25 October	2016
Term ends		Thursday	22 December	2016

Staff resume		Monday	9 January*	2017
Pupils resume		Tuesday	10 January	2017
Mid-term	All break	Friday	10 February	2017
	All resume	Monday	20 February	2017
Term ends		Friday	31 March	2017
<i>The Easter break incorporates the following two holidays</i>				
Good Friday	Schools closed	Friday	14 April	2017
Easter Monday	Schools closed	Monday	17 April	2017

All Resume		Tuesday	18 April	2017
May Day	Schools closed	Monday	1 May	2017
	All resume	Tuesday	2 May	2017
Staff only		Thursday	4 May*#	2017
Pupils resume		Friday	5 May	2017
Victoria Day	Schools closed	Monday	22 May	2017
Term ends		Friday	30 June	2017

* Five In-Service days for all schools.

5th In Service Day coincides with date of Scottish Local Government Elections. The above timetable allows for staff and pupil attendance as follows:

	Pupils	Staff
Term 1	85	88
Term 2	54	55
Term 3	51	52
Total	190	195

P7/S1 Transition Days – Tuesday 20 June, Wednesday 21 June and Thursday 22 June 2017.

School Session Dates 2017/18

Staff resume		Monday	14 August *	2017
Staff only		Tuesday	15 August *	2017
Pupils return		Wednesday	16 August	2017
Autumn Holiday	Schools closed	Monday	18 September	2017
All resume		Tuesday	19 September	2017
Mid-term	All break	Friday	13 October	2017
	Staff resume	Monday	23 October*	2017
	Pupils resume	Tuesday	24 October	2017
Term ends		Friday	22 December	2017

Staff resume		Monday	8 January*	2018
Pupils resume		Tuesday	9 January	2018
Mid-term	All break	Friday	9 February	2018
	All resume	Monday	19 February	2018
Term ends		Thursday	29 March	2018

<i>The Easter break incorporates the following two holidays</i>				
Good Friday	Schools closed	Friday	30 March	2018
Easter Monday	Schools closed	Monday	2 April	2018
All Resume		Tuesday	17 April	2018
May Day	Schools closed	Monday	7 May	2018
Staff only		Tuesday	8 May*	2018
Pupils resume		Wednesday	9 May	2018
Victoria Day	Schools closed	Monday	21 May	2018
Term ends		Friday	29 June	2018

* Five In-Service days for all schools.

N.B. The European Elections are scheduled for 2018 on an as yet unset date.

The above timetable allows for staff and pupil attendance as follows:

	Pupils	Staff
Term 1	86	89
Term 2	53	54
Term 3	51	52
Total	190	195

P7/S1 Transition Days – Tuesday 19 June, Wednesday 20 June and Thursday 21 June 2018

School session dates 2017 / 2018

Teaching Day																																		
In Service Day																																		
School Holiday																																		
P7/S1 Transition days																																		
August 2017							September 2017							October 2017							November 2017													
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa	Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa	Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa	Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa							
		1	2	3	4	5						1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4							
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	6	7	8	9	10	11							
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	13	14	15	16	17	18							
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	20	21	22	23	24	25							
27	28	29	30	31			12	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	20	29	30	31				16	27	27	28	29	30							
December 2017							January 2018							February 2018							March 2018													
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa	Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa	Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa	Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa							
					1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3					1	2	3							
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	6	5	6	7	8	9	10	4	5	6	7	8	9	10							
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	11	12	13	14	15	16	17							
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	18	19	20	21	22	23	24							
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	16	28	29	30	31			17	25	26	27	28			15	25	26	27	28	29	30	31						
April 2018							May 2018							June 2018							July/August 2018													
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa	Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa	Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa	Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7			1	2	3	4	5						1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7							
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14							
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21							
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28							
29	30						27	28	29	30	31			25	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31	1	2	3	4							
							10							20							21	5	6	7	8	9	10	11						
							38							57							52							43						
190 Pupil days							195 Staff days																											