



Purpose: For Decision

## Delegated Decision Report

### DECISION UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

**DECISION CANNOT BE TAKEN BEFORE 10 JUNE 2020**

Title: **DETERMINE ACADEMIC YEAR/TERM DATES FOR 2021/2022**

Report of **CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES, EDUCATION AND SKILLS**

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The purpose of this paper is to seek approval from the Cabinet Member on the determination of the pattern of school term and holiday dates for the school year 2021/2022 and to note the outcomes of the consultation process that has been followed.
2. For 2019/2020 the Isle of Wight Council introduced a 2-week October half term and used the same approach for 2020/2021. This will be the 3rd year in which this pattern of term dates operates.
3. The recommendation is to agree the proposed school term dates for 2021/2022, to provide a consistent and appropriate term date calendar for schools across the Isle of Wight, taking into consideration the usual pattern of local authority calendars across the UK and the ongoing partnership arrangements with Hampshire County Council.

### BACKGROUND

4. It is the responsibility of a local authority to schedule a school year which provides the statutory 190 pupil days and 195 teacher days in voluntary controlled and community schools. The structure for delivering this entitlement has been the subject of national and local debate in recent years. The Local Government Association (LGA) National Standing Committee on the School Year has, in the past, been active in seeking to establish a National School Year but this process has now ended.
5. Establishing more balanced term lengths with regular breaks supports an aim of the corporate strategy, to maximising wellbeing, by helping schools and families to plan learning more effectively.

6. Children benefit from good attendance in school; in particular it supports educational achievement and lays the foundation for a positive contribution to society and economic well-being. Properly structured periods of learning and rest help children to remain healthy, enjoy their school time and achieve more. The publication of dates well in advance enables families to plan holidays and arrange childcare so that school attendance need not be compromised.
7. The proposed pattern for term and holiday dates on the Isle of Wight takes account of the last day of term in July 2021 and then provides balanced half terms and holiday periods. There has been agreement with Island schools that one of the non-teaching days is taken on the first day of the autumn term, the remaining four are determined and allocated by the school as they wish.

### STRATEGIC CONTEXT

8. Raising educational achievement is a priority of the council as set out in the council's Corporate Plan. The standardisation of dates helps all schools to plan effectively.
9. Following a major consultation for the 2019/2020 School Year the Isle of Wight Council introduced a 2-week October half term break. Reports of the first experience of the 2-week October half term suggest it was positively received. A consequence of the additional week in the autumn is a shorter summer break; the first shorter summer break will be in 2020. However, the Covid-19 response means that the run up to summer is untypical with schools providing the limited provision requested by Central Government, including some additional provision during the holiday periods.

### CONSULTATION

10. A consultation with all schools and professional associations began in November 2019. An official request for comments were invited on the preferred pattern of dates, responses being required by 14 February 2020. 9 responses were received and have been provided in Appendix 1.

Appendix 2 provides the proposed pattern of term and holiday dates. Comments were received, from both primary and secondary phase schools, regarding the proposed last day of the Autumn term being on 23 December 2021. There is a proposed 11-day Christmas break.

Questions have been raised about the impact, if any, of the 2 week October half term on pupil attendance; at this time no official figures have been produced but at this early stage there is no basis for identifying an adverse effect.

The consultation responses included comments that were concerned that the autumn term finished only one day before Christmas Eve. Also, it was noted that the finish, close to Christmas, was at the end of a relatively long half term. Although there is limited flexibility an alternative pattern is possible. This is provided in Appendix 3.

It differs from the original proposal in that the first day of the school year it moved forward by one day to 31 August 2021. Schools are encouraged to nominate the first day of the school year as a Training Day, children would begin attending on 1 September.

Following consultation, the proposed pattern of holiday and term dates is shown in Appendix 3. Key features of the proposed pattern are:

- the two-week October half term break,
- a longest possible time after Easter but before summer half term which will be helpful for schools supporting children taking KS2 SATs and KS4 examinations.

### FINANCIAL / BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

11. There are no financial implications from this report. School dates are a statutory requirement.

### LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

12. Under s32 Education Act 2002, the local authority shall determine the dates when the school terms and holidays are to begin and end for community, voluntary controlled or community special schools.

### EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

13. The proposed calendar for 2021/2022 term dates applies to all community, voluntary-controlled schools, community special schools, and maintained schools on the Island. This excludes academies and Free Schools who are free to set their own term dates. The proposed calendar is applied across all of our schools in the same way and therefore does not have any impact of any of the protected characteristics.

### OPTIONS

14. There has been careful consideration to the proposed calendar 2020/21.
  - To approve the proposed calendar for the term dates 2021/22 as set out in Appendix 3
  - To approve the proposed calendar in Appendix 3 subject to amendments
  - To approve the proposed calendar for the term dates set out in Appendix 2 that formed the original proposal.

### RISK MANAGEMENT

15. It is a requirement for the local authority to set school term and holiday dates for all its maintained schools, other than voluntary aided and foundation schools, to whom the dates are recommended. If the Council fails to agree term dates it is failing in its statutory duty to comply with section 32 of the Education Act 2002.

### EVALUATION

16. The proposed calendar has been carefully considered in light of the change that applied for 2019/2020 and was continued in 2020/2021.

Having considered the above, it is felt that the option in Appendix 3 is the most suitable.

**RECOMMENDATION**

17. To approve the proposed calendar for term dates 2021/2022 as set out in Appendix 3.

**APPENDICES BELOW**

18. [Appendix 1](#): Consultation Responses  
[Appendix 2](#): Draft calendar of term dates for 2021/2022  
[Appendix 3](#): Alternative proposal for term dates for 2021/2022.

STEVE CROCKER  
*Director for Children's Services*

COUNCILLOR PAUL BRADING  
*Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education  
and Skills*

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## **Appendix 1: Consultation Responses.**

### St Helens

On behalf of all staff and pupils, I believe finishing on 23rd December seems very late after an eight week half term.

### Newport CE Primary

We would request that a full review of the current strategy was completed before this was agreed.

From Carisbrooke and Newport's perspective - the 2-week half term has not had the desired effect of reducing holidays taken in school time - this still remains at previous levels.

The knock on effect of a reduced Christmas break and the end of term being very close the Christmas is not beneficial for primary schools as they children are extraordinarily excited by the time of year and learning is not as good as it could be due to this !

We would ask that consideration is given to:

- returning to a one week half term in October.
- ensuring that the October / February/ May half terms and Easter breaks are not at all aligned with the rest of the neighbouring authorities / country ! i.e. one week either side - as then parents, children ( and staff ) will have breaks spread across the year / opportunities to access holidays outside of the high peak times , and also times we can book school residentials at off peak times.

### Oakfield Primary

The consensus at Oakfield Primary is that to break up on Thursday 23rd December is just too late in the term and adds significant pressure to staff.

Other than that it looks okay.

### Summerfields Primary

Before agreeing to another two week October half term I would want to know the impact of going to that format – has it cut down unauthorised attendance, has attendance in general improved, has the 5 week summer holiday had an effect on the summer dip?

Are you able to provide that information in order for everyone to make an informed choice?

If the two weeks does stay looking at the 2021 -22 proposed dates I would need to talk to my governors about the Island wide development day in September as I would rather use this in December. The children and staff will be on their knees with a 7 1/2 week half term and all the excitement and illness associated with the last few weeks of the autumn term.

### Lanesend

Christmas has to be two full weeks. I would rather you took from Easter or extended the summer.

### The Isle of Wight Education Federation (IWEF) response

Please find below our response for the Federation (Carisbrooke and Medina Colleges).

1 – two week Oct half term. Is there going to be a review of this at some time to confirm whether it is seen as a good thing generally?

2 – If we had to stick to these dates our non-teaching days would be:

1st September  
2nd September  
3rd September  
23rd December  
4th January

3 – Festival dates are not known yet and so we would not have a staff training day but close the school if we were forced to. I have spoken with the Festival organisers and asked for 2021 and 2022 Festival dates to be in July or August not May or June.

### Hunnyhill

I have consulted with my SLT, Teachers and School Governors.

- There is a general consensus that the Christmas holiday is far too short and gives little time for families to spend together.
- Teachers personally liked the 2-week holiday in October, but also felt that after returning in September then spending a few weeks recapping and consolidating, before then starting the year group objectives, it seems a 2-week holiday suddenly came upon them. For many pupils a 2-week break then meant time recapping and consolidating learning again.
- Attendance was improved this year with a 2 weeks holiday in October. However, our overall attendance has improved with other measures that were put in place.

Children absent due to holidays September & October 2018 = 22

Children absent due to holidays September & October 2019 = 11

% attendance to October half-term 2018 = 95.22%

% attendance to October half-term 2019 = 96.16%

Another issue for our school as I am sure many schools is the impact on parents and staff who have pupils in other schools who do not follow the LA school term dates. This led to raised childcare issues.

### St George's School

SLT and Governors are concerned about the length of the Christmas holiday. This is a long term where staff need recovery time. Christmas is a busy holiday due to family celebrations etc. so all would wish to see a full 2 weeks.

### Newchurch and Nettlestone

The proposed calendar for term dates for 2021/2022 was discussed as an agenda item at the Finance & Workforce Committee Meeting of the Federation of Nettlestone & Newchurch this morning the following points were raised as aspects of concern:

- The proposal to finish the Autumn term on the 23rd December is likely to have a negative impact on attendance in the Autumn Term.
- As many families opt to travel to the mainland to visit family and friends over the Christmas period does the infrastructure i.e. ferry companies etc have the capacity to manage a mass exodus from the IOW on Christmas Eve? Will ferry costs rise as a reaction to this surge in demand?
- By reducing the Christmas holidays there is reduced opportunity for parents to take their children away on holiday out of term time during the winter months. We could therefore see a rise in leave of absence requests both prior to and after Christmas.
- The health and wellbeing of the pupils has not been considered as the latter part of the Autumn term is traditionally very busy, not just with learning, but also celebratory aspects linked to the festive period both in school and out. Children become tired and therefore this will negatively impact teaching and learning.
- The health and wellbeing of staff has not been considered. A key thread of the new OfSTED framework is that workload and wellbeing should be made a priority. How can we support staff making their own preparations for their own families if school only breaks up the day before Christmas Eve?
- Some schools may opt to disaggregate 20th, 21st, 22nd & 23rd Dec this equates to 24hrs of twilights which again does not support a sensible approach to workload or wellbeing with staff having to stay behind for training and possibly staff meetings for many weeks.
- Governors would like a rationale for why the summer term has to finish on a Friday? They can see no real logic for this direction from the IOW Council?
- Governors fail to understand how the reduction of the summer holiday by one week has resulted in the loss of a two week Christmas break in favour of the two week half term. Surely the loss of one week in the summer should only be offset by the gain of an additional week in October?

**Appendix 2: Proposed term and holiday dates 2021/2022.**

SEPTEMBER 2021							OCTOBER 2021							NOVEMBER 2021						
M		6	13	20	27		M		4	11	18	25		M	1*	8	15	22	29	
T		7	14	21	28		T		5	12	19	26		T	2	9	16	23	30	
W	1*	8	15	22	29		W		6	13	20	27		W	3	10	17	24		
T	2	9	16	23	30		T		7	14	21	28		T	4	11	18	25		
F	3	10	17	24			F	1	8	15#	22	29		F	5	12	19	26		
S	4	11	18	25			S	2	9	16	23	30		S	6	13	20	27		
S	5	12	19	26			S	3	10	17	24	31		S	7	14	21	28		
DECEMBER 2021							JANUARY 2022							FEBRUARY 2022						
M		6	13	20	27		M		3	10	17	24	31	M		7	14	21	28*	
T		7	14	21	28		T		4*	11	18	25		T	1	8	15	22		
W	1	8	15	22	29		W		5	12	19	26		W	2	9	16	23		
T	2	9	16	23#	30		T		6	13	20	27		T	3	10	17	24		
F	3	10	17	24	31		F		7	14	21	28		F	4	11	18#	25		
S	4	11	18	25			S	1	8	15	22	29		S	5	12	19	26		
S	5	12	19	26			S	2	9	16	23	30		S	6	13	20	27		
MARCH 2022							APRIL 2022							MAY 2022						
M		7	14	21	28		M		4	11	18	25*		M	2	9	16	23	30	
T	1	8	15	22	29		T		5	12	19	26		T	3	10	17	24	31	
W	2	9	16	23	30		W		6	13	20	27		W	4	11	18	25		
T	3	10	17	24	31		T		7	14	21	28		T	5	12	19	26		
F	4	11	18	25			F	1	8#	15	22	29		F	6	13	20	27#		
S	5	12	19	26			S	2	9	16	23	30		S	7	14	21	28		
S	6	13	20	27			S	3	10	17	24			S	1	8	15	22	29	
JUNE 2022							JULY 2022							AUGUST 2022						
M		6*	13	20	27		M		4	11	18	25		M	1	8	15	22	29	
T		7	14	21	28		T		5	12	19	26		T	2	9	16	23	30	
W	1	8	15	22	29		W		6	13	20	27		W	3	10	17	24	31	
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### Bank and Public Holidays 2021/2022

Christmas Day	25 December 2021	Easter Monday	18 April 2022
Boxing Day	26 December 2021	May Day Holiday	2 May 2022
New Year's Day Holiday	1 January 2022	Spring Bank Holiday	30 May 2022
Good Friday	15 April 2022	Summer Bank Holiday	29 August 2022

\* First day after break  School Holidays  Bank Holidays and National Holidays

# Last day before break

**Autumn Term 2021** starts on Wednesday 1 September 2021 and ends on Thursday 23 December 2021

(Half term from Monday 18 October to Friday 29 October 2021)

**Spring Term 2022** starts on Monday 3 January 2022 and ends on Friday 8 April 2022

(Half term from Monday 21 February to Friday 25 February 2022)

**Summer Term 2022** starts on Monday 25 April 2022 and ends on Friday 22 July 2022

(Half term from Monday 30 May to Friday 3 June 2022)

Term	Start date	End Date
Autumn 2021	1 September 2021	23 December 2021
	Half term 18 October- 29 October 2021	
Spring 2022	3 January 2022	8 April 2022
	Half term 21 - 25 February 2022	
Summer 2022	25 April 2022	22 July 2022
	Half term 30 May – 3 June 2022	

**Please note that the dates as published are correct.**

**It has now been agreed and confirmed that 1 September 2021 is the start date for the Autumn Term 2021/22.**

**Please also note that the first day of the Autumn Term in September 2022 will not be determined until the 2022/23 timetable has been consulted upon and approved in January 2022.**



**Appendix 3: Alternative proposed term and holiday dates 2021/2022.**

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M		6	13	20	27		M		4	11	18	25		M	1*	8	15	22	29	
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T	2	9	16	23	30		T		6	13	20	27		T		3	10	17	24	
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S	5	12	19	26			S	2	9	16	23	30		S		7	14	21	28	
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T	2	9	16	23	30		T		7	14	21	28		T		4	11	18	25	
F	3	10	17	24			F	1	8	15	22#	29		F		5	12	19	26	
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Good Friday	15 April 2022	Summer Bank Holiday	29 August 2022

\* First day after break  School Holidays  Bank Holidays and National Holidays

# Last day before break

**Autumn Term 2021** starts on Tuesday 31 August 2021 and ends on Wednesday 22 December 2021  
(Half term from Monday 18 October to Friday 29 October 2021)

**Spring Term 2022** starts on Tuesday 4 January 2022 and ends on Friday 8 April 2022  
(Half term from Monday 21 February to Friday 25 February 2022)

**Summer Term 2022** starts on Monday 25 April 2022 and ends on Friday 22 July 2022  
(Half term from Monday 30 May to Friday 3 June 2022)

Term	Start date	End Date
Autumn 2021	31 August 2021	22 December 2021
	Half term 18 October- 29 October 2021	
Spring 2022	4 January 2022	8 April 2022
	Half term 21 - 25 February 2022	
Summer 2022	25 April 2022	22 July 2022
	Half term 30 May – 3 June 2022	

**Please note that the dates as published are correct.**

**It has now been agreed and confirmed that 31 August 2021 is the start date for the Autumn Term 2021/22.**

**Please also note that the first day of the Autumn Term in September 2022 will not be determined until the 2022/23 timetable has been consulted upon and approved in January 2022.**