

Full Council – 20 March 2024

Written question from Mr S Richards to the Cabinet Member for children's Services, Education and Corporate Functions

In light of Cllr Bacon's published New Years Resolution a few week ago to "...enable Island schools to deliver the best possible quality of education", what evidence and research has the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Corporate Functions considered regarding the impact on pupil attainment and education standards of the recommendation to continue implementation of a two-week October half term across local authority schools on the Isle of Wight?

Response

The two-week October half term has been the subject of consultation on a number of occasions since 2019 and continues to be supported by a range of stakeholders, including education professionals. Views have included that having a more balanced school year with regular breaks in the middle and at the end of each term helps to maximise wellbeing and helps schools to plan learning more effectively. In addition, there is national and international research which highlights that long summer holidays can create unhelpful gaps in learning and if they were shorter, children and young people would retain information better. The two week half term allows us to shorten the summer holiday thereby providing children and young people with the opportunity to retain information taught in the summer term into the autumn term. We will again be seeking views on this as part of the new education strategy for the Island, a draft version of which we aim to publish in the summer.