

Report on the consultation for school term and holiday dates for the academic year 2023 – 2024

1. Introduction

Local Authorities have a duty to set the school term dates for local authority maintained schools, such as community and voluntary controlled schools. Foundation, Trust, Voluntary Aided Schools and Academies are responsible for setting their own term dates. In practice, most of the schools in Norfolk use the same term dates. Schools must be open to pupils for 190 days in an academic year and 195 days for teachers. Home to school transport will be provided on the days the school is open to pupils.

Norfolk County Council works with other local authorities nearby to set proposed dates for an academic year – this is known as the Eastern Region Model Calendar. We do this because we feel it is better to have a co-ordinated approach to setting school term dates to minimise the impact on families and school transport providers.

2. Consultation

Norfolk County Council undertook a consultation, using a survey on Citizenspace. It was published on the Council's website and sent to over 400 schools, via e-courier on 5th November 2021 and the consultation closed on 17th December 2021.

We consulted on the proposed term and holiday dates for 2023 -2024. There were **two options** to consider, (see Appendix A).

Model A was based on the Eastern Region Model and Model B was based on a Norfolk model, following discussions with school leaders. Model A dates were developed by the Eastern Region Term Dates Group, to ensure a co-ordinated approach to minimise the impact on families and school transport provision. However, there were some concerns raised about the dates proposed by the Eastern Region Group, in particular the early start and late finish of the autumn term in 2023 and the later start in January 2024.

A summary of the start and end of each term is outlined below. The half terms are the same in both options. Please note that these dates do not include the suggested staff training days.

	Model A*	Model B*
Autumn Term	5/09/2023 - 22/12/2023	06/09/2023 - 20/12/2023
Spring Term	09/01/2024 - 28/03/2024	04/01/2024 - 27/03/2024
Summer Term	16/04/2024 -19/07/2024	15/04/2024 - 19/07/2024

Each proposed model provides 190 teaching days, when schools must be open to pupils and which home to school transport will be provided. The pattern of dates included five suggested in-service training dates for the academic year.

The concern about consulting on 2 models was the risk of having significantly different term dates to neighbouring local authorities. However, Suffolk launched their consultation on 6 December (see Appendix B) and are also consulting on different dates to the Eastern Regional Model.

The Suffolk consultation model and the Norfolk Model B is outlined below;

	Suffolk model	Norfolk Model B
Autumn Term	5/09/2023 - 21/12/2023	06/09/2023 - 20/12/2023
Spring Term	08/01/2024 - 28/03/2024	04/01/2024 - 27/03/2024
Summer Term	15/04/2024 -19/07/2024	15/04/2024 - 19/07/2024

The school terms differ on the following dates;

Suffolk start a day earlier in the Autumn Term on 5 September 2023 (Norfolk has suggested this day for staff training)

Suffolk finish a day later in the Autumn Term on 21 December 2023

Suffolk start 2 days later in the Spring Term on 8 January 2024 (although staff training is suggested on 5th January 2024).

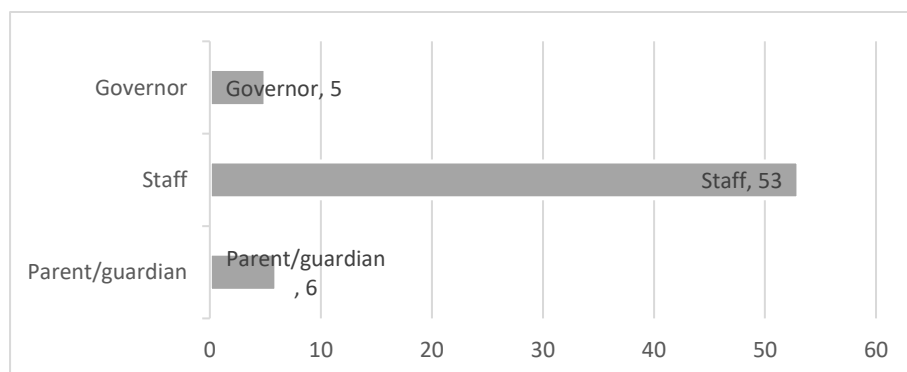
Cambridgeshire County Council have not consulted on their school term dates for 2023/24 but have also indicated a change from the Eastern Region Model.

3. Analysis of consultation responses

The detailed consultation analysis can be found in Appendix C.

3.1 Responses

55 responses were received (please note that respondents could tick all categories that applied to them). The majority of responses were from staff (96%), with a few from parents (11%) and governors (9%). The last time we consulted on term dates we received 19 responses.



3.2 Proposed school term dates for 2023/2024 Option A; Eastern Regional Model

17 respondents (22%) strongly agreed and 5 respondents (9%) agreed with the proposed Model A school term dates. The comments made in support of this proposal were;

- 2 full weeks at Christmas is better
- Good to have alignment with other local authorities.

4 respondents (5%) neither agreed or disagreed.

17 respondents (29%) disagreed and 21 respondents (35%) strongly disagreed with the proposed Model A school term dates. The comments made by those who did not support the proposal were;

- End of the Autumn Term is too late for staff and children and the start of the Spring Term is too late
- Autumn Term is too long

3.3 Proposed school term dates for 2023/2024 Option B; Norfolk model

24 respondents (44%) strongly agreed and 16 respondents (24%) agreed with the proposed Model B school term dates and gave the following reasons;

- Better for Christmas as break up earlier
- More balanced, evenly spread across the year

4 respondents (5%) neither agreed or disagreed.

9 respondents (13%) disagreed and 11 respondents (14%) strongly disagreed with the proposed Model B school term dates and gave the following reasons;

- Not aligning with other local authorities makes it difficult for staff and families who live and work across the authorities
- Only 2 weekends at Christmas rather than 3 in Model A

3.4 Proposed staff training dates for 2023/2024

Both models proposed suggested training dates. In both models, 55% of respondents neither agreed or disagreed with the proposed dates.

25% agreed or strongly agreed with Model B, compared to 18% for Model A.

3.6 Schools linked to the respondents

37 respondents recorded the schools they were linked to. This included 25 primary phase schools, 4 secondary phase schools and 6 SEND schools.

4. **Recommendation**

The proposed Norfolk Model B calendar for 2023/2024 is recommended for approval as;

- The majority of respondents agreed with the proposed term dates in this model
- There is better alignment with neighbouring local authorities, although we appreciate they are not exactly the same.

Please note, the local authority has a responsibility to publish the school term dates 18 months before the start date of the 2023/2024 school calendar.

Caroline Money, School Organisation Manager

Appendix A – Model A (based on Eastern Region Model) and Model B (Norfolk version)



Norfolk County Council

2023-2024

Norfolk Model Calendar Consultation version A

This calendar applies to community schools, community special schools, VC schools and nursery schools and sets the days on which school transport will be provided. While most Foundation, VA, foundation special, free schools and academy trusts who are able to set their own dates, adopt the Norfolk Model, we advise you to check with your child's school before making holiday or other commitments.

September 2023							October 2023							November 2023							December 2023						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
				1	2	3							1			1	2	3	4	5					1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30				25	26	27	28	29	30	31
							30	31																			

January 2024							February 2024							March 2024							April 2024						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4					1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31					26	27	28	29				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30					

May 2024							June 2024							July 2024							August 2024						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
		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	5	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	12	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	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30	31	

Key : White dates - schools open to pupils
Yellow dates - pupil holiday
Red dates - bank holiday

Five staff training days will be selected from yellow dates, we suggest 1st & 4th September, 8th January, 15th April and 22nd July. Some may choose to use twilight hours for staff training instead of some or all of these.



Norfolk County Council

2023-2024

Norfolk Model Calendar Consultation version B

This calendar applies to community schools, community special schools, VC schools and nursery schools and sets the days on which school transport will be provided. While most Foundation, VA, foundation special, free schools and academy trusts who are able to set their own dates, adopt the Norfolk Model, we advise you to check with your child's school before making holiday or other commitments.

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M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
				1	2	3							1			1	2	3	4	5					1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30				25	26	27	28	29	30	31
							30	31																			

January 2024							February 2024							March 2024							April 2024						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4					1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31					26	27	28	29				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30					

May 2024							June 2024							July 2024							August 2024						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
		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	5	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	12	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	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30	31	

Key : White dates - schools open to pupils
Yellow dates - pupil holiday
Red dates - bank holiday

Five staff training days will be selected from yellow dates, we suggest 4th & 5th September, 3 January, 28th March and 22 July. Some may choose to use twilight hours for staff training instead of some or all of these.



Consultation on School Term Dates for Schools in Suffolk for the 2023/2024 School Year

6 December 2021 to 28 January 2022

Between 6 December 2021 to 28 January 2022, we are consulting:
All Suffolk Headteachers and Chairs of Governors - Own Admission Authority (OAA) Schools for information only
All Teaching Trade Unions and Unison
Neighbouring Counties
Church of England and Catholic Diocesan Officers
Suffolk County Council's Passenger Transport Team
to seek your views about our proposed term dates for the 2023/2024 school year.

We have liaised with colleagues in neighbouring local authorities and whilst proposed dates broadly align, we cannot guarantee that our term dates will be identical. The aim of aligning term dates is to enable parents with different aged children to have breaks at the same time and to be able to book holidays more easily.

Own admission authorities (academies, free schools and voluntary aided schools) can set their own term dates and can set longer holidays if they have longer school days. We try to minimise discrepancies to ensure that the impact on families and other services, such as funded school travel and catering services, are kept to a minimum. We ask OAA schools to please align your term dates with ours if this is possible.

The dates we propose for the 2023/2024 school year for Suffolk's community and voluntary controlled, community, special and maintained nursery schools are as follows:

Autumn Term

1 September 2023 – 21 December 2023
Half term week w/c 23 October 2023

Spring Term

5 January 2024 – 28 March 2024
Half term week w/c 19 February 2024

Summer Term

12 April 2023 – 19 July 2024
Half term week w/c 27 May 2023

Recommended PD days:

1 and 4 September 2023
30 October 2023
5 January 2024
12 April 2024

Please note that schools can set their own PD Days to allow for specialist trainers to attend as many schools as possible to conduct training.

You can give your views by:

completing the online survey at www.suffolk.gov.uk/consultations
emailing termdates@suffolk.gov.uk; or
writing to Mags Lambert, Suffolk County Council, Gold Floor 3, Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich, IP1 2BX.

Responses must be received no later than 5pm on Friday 28 January 2022.