

Report on the consultation for school term and holiday dates for the academic year 2025 – 2026

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 30th October 2023 and the consultation closed on 11th December 2023.

We consulted on the proposed Eastern Region Model term and holiday dates for 2025 -2026, as set out in Appendix A.

The proposed model includes 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.

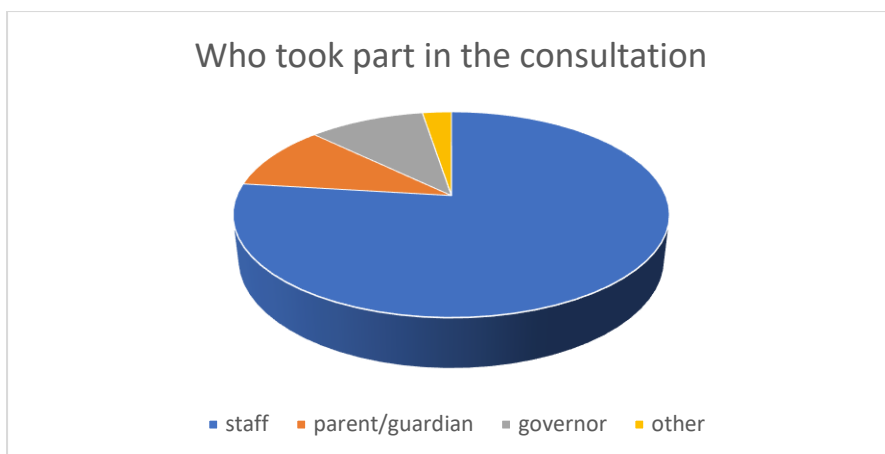
3. Analysis of consultation responses

The detailed consultation analysis can be found in Appendix B.

3.1 Reponses

33 responses were received. The majority of responses were from staff (91%), with a few from parents/guardians (12%), and governors (12%). One person ticked the 'other box' (3%).

The last time we consulted on term dates we received 26 responses. Please note that respondents could tick all categories that applied to them.



3.2 Proposed school term dates for 2025/2026

Of the 33 respondents who took part in the consultation, 12 respondents (36%) strongly agreed and 17 respondents (52%) agreed with the proposed school term dates.

The comments made in support of this proposal were;

- Ok, dates make sense, whole weeks at school, (10 responses)
- Staff training dates work well (5 responses).
- Balanced term dates (4 responses)

2 respondents (6%) neither agreed or disagreed.

1 respondent (3%) disagreed and 1 respondent (3%) strongly disagreed with the proposed school term dates. The comments made by those who did not support the proposal were;

- Make May or October half term week longer and summer holidays one week shorter
- Staff training day in July a complete waste of time, better before October half term.

3.4 Proposed staff training dates for 2025/2026

58% agreed or strongly agreed with the proposed staff training dates.

27% neither agreed or disagreed.

15% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the proposed staff training dates.

3.6 Schools linked to the respondents

29 respondents recorded the schools they were linked to. This included 20 primary phase schools, 6 secondary phase schools and 3 SEND schools.

3.7 Response to the views raised

As always there have been difficult decisions regarding some dates to ensure that 190 teaching days are available, around the public holidays. Nevertheless, the way the dates have fallen for 2025-26 has meant that we are able to propose full (rather than part) week breaks at both Christmas and Easter, which aligns closely with our neighbouring authorities.

The response rate is low at 8%. However 88% of those who took part in the consultation, were in favour of the proposed term dates for 2025 – 2026.

There were a few comments about the proposed staff training dates, including moving the 13 April proposed date to 24 October. However, in previous consultations on term dates, staff have made it clear that they would like a staff training day at the beginning of each term. The proposed dates are suggested and allow for some schools to choose to use twilight hours for staff training for some or all of the proposed dates.

One person says that the proposed date for staff training on 20th July is a waste of time. However, it has to be balanced with finding 190 days for pupils in the academic year, within complete weeks, where possible. The staff training dates are suggested, as highlighted above.

One person also suggested extending either May or October half terms and reducing the summer holidays by a week. This has not been an approach supported by the Eastern Region Model Calendar.

4. Recommendation

The proposed Eastern Regional Model calendar for 2025/2026 is recommended for approval as;

- The majority of respondents agreed with the proposed term dates and suggested staff training days
- There is alignment with neighbouring council areas.

Please note, the local authority has a responsibility to publish the school term dates 18 months before the start date of the 2025/2026 school calendar.

Caroline Money, School Organisation Manager

January 2024

Appendix A – Proposed school term dates for 2025 - 2026



Norfolk County Council

2025-2026

Norfolk Model Calendar
Consultation version

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 2025							October 2025							November 2025							December 2025						
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	5						1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	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	10	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	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30						27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31				

January 2026							February 2026							March 2026							April 2026						
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							1							1			1	2	3	4	5
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30			
														30	31												

May 2026							June 2026							July 2026							August 2026						
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	2	3	4	5	6	7			1	2	3	4	5						1	2
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30						27	28	29	30	31			24	25	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 & 2nd September, 5th January, 13th April and 20th July. Some may choose to use twilight hours for staff training instead of some or all of these.

School Term Dates 2025 – 2026 Consultation

Analysis of responses									
Total number of responses = 33									
Method of response									
Online			Letter				Email		
33			0				0		
Respondent									
*please note respondents could tick all boxes that apply - % of all respondents									
Pupil	Parent/ Guardian	Member PTA	Staff	Governor	Local resident	Local business	Local sports group	Local community group	Other
0	4 (12%)	0	30 (91%)	4 (12%)	0	0	0	0	1 (3%)
Response Analysis - How far do you agree or disagree with the school term dates for pupils, proposed for the academic year 2025/26 (please note respondents tick all categories that apply)									
			Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	
Total			12 (36%)	17 (52%)	2 (6%)	1 (3%)	1 (3%)	0	
Pupil			0	0	0	0	0	0	
Parent/Guardian			2	0	1	1	0	0	
Member of the PTA			0	0	0	0	0	0	
Member of Staff			11	16	2	0	1	0	
Governor			0	1	3	0	0	0	
Local resident			0	0	0	0	0	0	
Local business			0	0	0	0	0	0	
Local sports group			0	0	0	0	0	0	
Local community group			0	0	0	0	0	0	
Didn't answer			0	1	0	0	0	0	
Response Analysis - How far do you agree or disagree with the staff training dates, proposed for the academic year 2025/26 (please note respondents tick all categories that apply)									
			Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	
Total			6 (19%)	14 (39%)	9 (27%)	4 (12%)	1 (3%)	0	
Pupil			0	0	0	0	0	0	
Parent/Guardian			0	1	3	0	0	0	
Member of the PTA			0	0	0	0	0	0	
Member of Staff			6	12	7	4	1	0	
Governor			0	1	3	0	0	0	

Local resident	0	0	0	0	0	0
Local business	0	0	0	0	0	0
Local sports group	0	0	0	1	0	0
Local community group	0	0	0	0	0	0
other	0	1	0	0	0	0
Comments on 2025/2026 term dates proposal by key themes – 29 respondents who strongly agree or agree with the proposal (88%)						
They are OK						
Come back too soon. Autumn term too long, as usual.						
The proposed calendar makes sense by avoiding starting/ ending a half-term on a Thursday/ Friday which always impacts negatively on attendance.						
Looks sensible and PD Days work well						
Makes sense. Decent holiday length, will allow good fit for staff INSET.						
Dates sensible, with whole weeks at school. Only disagreement is with a training day where we would look to move 13th April 2026 to 24th October 2025. The rest of the proposed dates work for us.						
Term dates are good but I would move the April training day to October 24th.						
Training days link well to holiday periods and there is a clear date to be allocated to twilight training on 20th July 2026.						
Looks fair						
Mostly whole weeks of school. Sensible days to have inset days on (other than 20th July).						
It doesn't deviate far from dates expected from previous years so is unlikely to cause too many problems with working parents and childcare issues.						
Evenly spaced terms						
The term dates are evenly balanced given the timings of Easter. The flexibility of using INSET days or not helps to ensure that we can front load days to ensure as much learning and teaching goes on before end of year assessments.						
Good spacing terms (where possible)						
Giving Christmas two complete weeks buffered by weekends makes such a difference after what is a relentlessly huge term to work for the team in a complex needs setting be it children or staff members. This is much better for all round wellbeing and definitely leads to better health in Jan/Feb Spring 1 term						
My additional reflection would be that complex needs settings would benefit from increased CPD/Inset days. Specialist schools have to deliver statutory Steps training which is two days for new staff and half a day for refreshing current team members and then statutory safeguarding training as well as building in annual medical updates training - this leads to insufficient time to share information and build in additional important pedagogical/educational training and content for our teams. I have long felt that Specialist settings could do with an additional day on top of the Five taken over the year to help make everything more effective and paced so team members get sufficient time to prepare/train and be ready for complicated young people coming into the classroom particularly at the start of the academic year. We regularly take three days at the start of the year and could do with four and then have two days across the year for additional content.						
Move 13th April INSET to the 24th October INSET						
It would be really nice if we could get a balance of half term lengths rather than 7 weeks and others 5 weeks.						
They are sensible in that they do not leave small chunks of weeks out.						
Dates appear to be similar to current year, although some part weeks can be tricky in some instances. Appropriate timings before/after holidays & celebrations. Terms spread out as evenly as possible.						

Comments on 2025/2026 term dates proposal by key themes – 2 respondents who strongly disagree or disagree with the proposal (6%)

I would prefer to make the May or October half term one week longer, and the summer holder one week shorter like other areas have done and has worked well.

As a headteacher, having a PD day in July is a complete waste of time. It is much more effective to have a PD day before the October 1/2 term holiday. It is a perfect time after the September PD days to follow up. This also gives parents the ability to get away on much cheaper holidays.