

School Term Dates: supplementary note to Schools Forum

Change in legislation

On 15 July 2015 information was provided to Schools Forum about the Government's Deregulation Bill which was given Royal Assent on 25 March 2015. The Bill stated that all schools will be able to set their own term dates when schedule 16 of the Act comes into force, but that the Government would still expect schools to work with each and the local authority to ensure co-ordination is in place for 2016/17. It was recommended to Schools Forum to note the content of the report and to feedback to their representative groups encouraging them to continue with the current process for setting school term times.

Since then the Government has confirmed that schedule 16 of the Deregulation Act 2015 which gives the governing bodies of community, voluntary controlled, community special schools, and maintained nursery schools in England the responsibility for setting their own school term and holiday dates **will not be commenced**. These schools will not therefore be given the power to set their own term dates.

The Government informally consulted with a wide range of stakeholders both before and during the passage of the Deregulation Bill. The responses were mixed with some supporting the move and others expressing reservations. The Government has reflected on the concerns raised and also noted that there does not appear to be a significant clamour from maintained schools which do not have this power to have this freedom. In the light of this the Government has concluded that it would not be appropriate to commence with widening this to those maintained schools but to encourage local authorities to listen sympathetically to arguments for change from these schools.

Voluntary Aided Schools, Foundation Schools and Academies may continue to vary their term dates slightly if they wish to do so.

Arrangements for 2016/17

As reported to Schools Forum the Council has already consulted with all schools and academies in Portsmouth on the 2016/17 term dates. The dates align with those proposed for both Hampshire and Southampton and are as follows:

Autumn Term 2016

5 September - 21 October

31 October - 16 December

Spring Term 2017

3 January - 17 February

27 February - 7 April

Summer Term 2017

24 April - 26 May

5 June - 25 July