



9th January 2025

Dear parent/carer,

We have decided to open a parent consultation on new term dates for future academic years. This consultation has arisen due to various feedback we have received over the last two years about successful ways to reduce absence rates for pupils and staff during the autumn term; and to improve teacher recruitment and retention. Having looked at the way some local schools organised the school year differently, we are provisionally considering whether to make a similar adjustment to our dates in the autumn term to support improvements for both issues.

Adjusting dates in the autumn term

Good health and wellbeing of staff and pupils is essential to the education of our pupils. The long autumn term, and emerging viruses at that time of year, seem to combine to create higher than usual absence rates, particularly in October/November. We would like to canvas your views about whether adding five days holiday to the October half term will impact positively on the physical, emotional and mental health of our staff and pupils, and decrease absence during this term.

As an Academy, we can set our own term dates and school day. Extending the October half term by five days, of course, means we will need to ensure that those five days are made up at another time to ensure that there is no learning time lost for any pupil. There are a variety of strategies that can be used, and we must do what's best for our school and pupils. **This will mean increasing the school day by 1 hour on one day a week (finishing school at 16:10 instead of 15:10 once a week) to offset the 5 days additional holiday.**

We are looking to set the dates for two academic years 2025 – 2027 and then review again based on the impact these alternate dates might have.

The views of parents and carers are incredibly important, and we welcome your thoughts. Please complete the following Microsoft form <https://forms.office.com/e/cuTpuUtSUu> by Friday 17th January 2025 to register your feedback.

I recognise that there will be many differing viewpoints on this issue, and we may reach a conclusion that does not have the agreement of all. We will listen to all feedback and reach a decision that will best serve the needs of all those involved. I will write to you again once we have had time to evaluate the responses.

Yours faithfully,

Mr P McCahill
Headteacher

