

# School term dates



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

[www.cymru.gov.uk](http://www.cymru.gov.uk)

A young people's consultation on the plans to change how school term dates are set for schools in Wales.



# Introduction

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Some families find it difficult when school term dates and holidays are at different times. The Welsh Government wants to find ways to help.

## Why?

Term dates can be different across local authorities. They can also be different for schools in the same area.

We want to know what you think of our plans so that we don't miss anything important.

## What happens now?

There are different types of schools across local authorities.

At the moment local authorities set term dates for:

- community schools
- community special schools
- voluntary controlled schools
- nursery schools.

Other schools have governing bodies that set their own term dates.

Sometimes these dates are the same, but local authorities and governing bodies do not legally have to work together to make sure that they are. Also, Welsh Ministers don't have the power to make them work together.

## Why do things need to change?

We've had lots of letters from families telling us about the problems they are facing because their children have different term dates.

One big problem is the different term dates for the Easter holidays.

### For example:

Some faith schools take different weeks off for Easter than local authority schools, so do some high schools and primary schools, which means that some families need extra childcare.



# What we want to change

At the moment the law does not:

- make everyone work together to make sure that all term dates are the same; or
- allow Welsh Ministers to step in or control the setting of term dates.

## 5 things we want to change:

### Our 1st proposal:

We want a legal responsibility placed on local authorities and governing bodies to work together.

### Our 2nd proposal:

We want Welsh Ministers to be given the ability to step in and set school term dates if they think that they need to. This would be known as the 'power to direct'.

### Our 3rd proposal:

We want local authorities and governing bodies to show that they have agreed term dates.

We think they could do this by sending a signed letter (3 years ahead of time) to the Welsh Government that shows what they have agreed.

This will give Welsh Ministers the time to think about using their 'power to direct' if the term dates are not the same or if there are other problems.

For example if Easter is early in the year then Welsh Ministers may want the Easter break to be the two weeks following Good Friday so they can stop a long summer term.

There may be good reasons why a local authority or area needs to have different term dates. We want Welsh Ministers to be able to use their 'power to direct' at those times.

For example events like The Ryder Cup.



## Our 4th proposal:

We want to make sure that the 'power to direct' on setting term dates is not only for times when dates can't be agreed, but that it also allows Welsh Ministers to make sure that different term dates are set for different types of school or different local areas if needed.

## Our 5th proposal:

We think that listening to families and schools before using our 'power to direct' is really important.

We want Welsh Ministers to have regulation-making power to decide how consultations about how they use their 'power to direct' happen. This will give everyone the chance to have their voice heard before term dates are set.

# Conclusion:

We think that these changes will help families and mean that school term dates and holidays will all happen at the same time.

## Thanks for reading this booklet

Please answer the questions on the following pages and send them to:

**SMED2@wales.gsi.gov.uk**

or

**School Governance and Organisation Branch**

**Department for Education and Skills**

**Welsh Government**

**Cathays Park**

**Cardiff**

**CF10 3NQ**

Tel: **029 2082 3978**

by 26 November 2012.



# Questions:

## 1. About our 1st proposal

Do you think that local authorities and governing bodies should have a responsibility to work together when setting term dates?

✓ Yes   ✗ No   ? Don't know

Is there anything else you want to say?

## 2. About our 2nd proposal

Do you think that Welsh Ministers should be able to step in and use a 'power to direct' local authorities and governing bodies about school term dates if they think they need to?

✓ Yes   ✗ No   ? Don't know

Is there anything else you want to say?



### 3. About our 3rd proposal

Do you think that local authorities and governing bodies should have to show that they have agreed term dates?

✓ Yes   ✗ No   ? Don't know

Is there anything else you want to say?

### 4. About our 3rd proposal

Do you think that local authorities and governing bodies showing us they have agreed term dates by signed letter will work?

✓ Yes   ✗ No   ? Don't know

Is there anything else you want to say?





### 5. About our 4th proposal

Do you think that we should have the 'power to direct' on setting term dates, not only at times when dates can't be agreed, but also at times when different term dates are needed?

✓ Yes   ✗ No   ? Don't know

Is there anything else you want to say?

### 6. About our 5th proposal

Do you think that Welsh Ministers should have the regulation-making power to say how consultations about how the set term dates happen?

✓ Yes   ✗ No   ? Don't know

Is there anything else you want to say?



**7. We want to make sure that we think about how our plans could impact:**

- disability
- race
- gender and gender reassignment
- age
- religion and belief
- sexual orientation
- human rights.

Is there anything else you want to say?

**8. Is there anything else that you would like to tell us about our plans?**

