



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

OPEN CONSULTATION, DOCUMENT

# School term dates 2026 to 2027

We want your views on the proposed dates for 2026 to 2027 and the related draft direction.

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# Summary

In 2014, the Welsh Government made legislation with the aim of ensuring school term and holiday dates across Wales are the same or as similar as can be.

This consultation asks for your views on the term dates we are proposing for all maintained schools in Wales for the school year 2026 to 2027, and the related draft direction at Annex 1.

## The legislation

Local authorities and the governing bodies of maintained schools (“relevant governing bodies”) have the duty to set term dates for their schools. They are also under a duty to work together when setting term dates so that those dates are the same or as similar as possible. If, despite best efforts, term dates are not agreed then section 32B of the Education Act 2002 (“the 2002 Act”) gives Welsh Ministers the power to direct local authorities and relevant governing bodies on what their term dates must be, so that term date harmonisation across Wales is achieved. The power in that section is not limited to solely achieving dates that are the same or as similar as can be but is wide enough to permit that use of it.

The Education (Notification of School Term Dates) (Wales) Regulations 2014 provide that local authorities must inform Welsh Ministers of the term dates set for all maintained schools within their areas by the final working day in August two years prior to the school year to which they relate.

The Welsh Ministers consider the term dates submitted for 2026 to 2027 are not the same or as similar as can be. Therefore, the Welsh Ministers wish to consider using their powers of direction under the 2002 Act to ensure that term dates are as similar as can be across Wales.

However, before they may use their power of direction the 2002 Act places the Welsh Ministers under a duty to carry out an appropriate consultation. In addition, the Education (Consultation on School Term Dates) (Wales) Regulations 2014 set out further requirements on the form and length of such a consultation.

## Analysis of term dates notifications received

Broadly speaking, local authorities have worked together with their neighbouring authorities and schools to coordinate their proposed term dates for 2026 to 2027. However, there remains a variation to dates for spring and summer terms in 2027 which splits the authorities' dates into two groups.

Easter falls relatively early in 2027, and authorities have chosen to organise their spring term differently to accommodate the two bank holidays associated with Easter.

In the past schools with a religious character have chosen different dates to their local authority and other schools without a religious character because their preference is for learners to be in school to take part in Easter observances during the week leading up to Good Friday. In terms of Holy Week for 2027 those voluntary aided or foundation schools which have a religious character in Group B have not cited Holy Week as a reason for having the later spring (Easter) break. The same is true for those local authorities who are in Group B. It is simply the case that as noted above all voluntary aided and foundation schools have aligned with their respective local authorities.

The two groups are shown in the table below along with the variations to their proposed dates.

# Variations in term dates notified to the Welsh Ministers

## Local authority groups

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Group A	Group B
Anglesey	Blaenau Gwent
Bridgend	Caerphilly
Cardiff	Carmarthenshire
Ceredigion	Monmouthshire
Conwy	Neath Port Talbot
Denbighshire	Newport
Flintshire	Pembrokeshire
Gwynedd	Swansea
Merthyr Tydfil	Torfaen
Powys	-
Rhondda Cynon Taff	-
Vale of Glamorgan	-
Wrexham	-

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## School term and holiday dates

School Terms	Group A	Group B
<b>Start of autumn term and first day of school year</b>	Tuesday 1 September 2026	Tuesday 1 September 2026
<b>Autumn half term</b>	Monday 26 October 2026 to Friday 30 October 2026	Monday 26 October 2026 to Friday 30 October 2026
<b>End of autumn term</b>	Friday 18 December 2026  N.B. Powys alone chose to end the autumn term on Tuesday 22 December 2026.	Friday 18 December 2026
<b>Start of spring term</b>	Monday 4 January 2027	Monday 4 January 2027
<b>Spring half term</b>	Monday 8 February 2027 to Friday 12 February 2027	Monday 15 February 2027 to Friday 19 February 2027
<b>End of spring term</b>	Friday 19 March 2027	Thursday 25 March 2027
<b>Start of summer term</b>	Monday 5 April 2027	Monday 12 April 2027
<b>Summer half term</b>	Monday 31 May 2027 to Friday 4 June 2027	Monday 31 May 2027 to Friday 4 June 2027

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<b>School Terms</b>	<b>Group A</b>	<b>Group B</b>
<b>End of summer term and last day of the school year</b>	Tuesday 20 July 2027  N.B. Powys alone chose to end the summer term on Friday 16 July 2027	Wednesday 21 July 2027

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Having considered all the information, the Welsh Ministers are minded to issue the direction subject to the results of this consultation.

The policy behind sections 32A and 32B of the 2002 Act was to eliminate differences in dates which may cause hardship to parents and staff alike. We consider harmonised dates will also benefit the tourism sector. We consider that those policy imperatives outweigh the desire to have different spring breaks taking into account the reasons that were given by the local authorities.

Group A's dates are preferred as there are more local authorities within that Group. Choosing Group A's dates would mean that fewer local authorities would need to amend their proposals to comply with the draft direction.

Voluntary aided and foundation schools governing bodies are also required to set term dates and to advise Welsh Ministers of their proposed term dates. Notifications indicated these schools had aligned their proposed term dates with their respective local authorities.

Powys local authority has set dates which in the main align with Group A but there are 2 differences. One such difference is that Powys has opted to end the summer term on 16 July 2027, before the start of the Royal Welsh Show which runs from Monday 19 to Thursday 22 July 2027. To make up for finishing the summer term earlier, schools in Powys will finish the autumn term later than those in other areas. The rest of the local authorities in Group A end the summer term on 20 July whilst Group B local authorities end the summer term on 21

July.

In terms of the authorities that directly border with Powys it is a mixed picture with 6 aligning with Group A and 5 with Group B. The dates proposed for the direction would mean that Powys will be allowed to end the summer term on 16 July. That means that children and school staff will be free to attend the Royal Welsh Show for the full week from Monday 19 July 2027. This decision reflects the Welsh Ministers' very high regard for the significant cultural and economic value of the Royal Welsh Show.

The proposed dates will also avoid a split week at the end of the spring term.

## The term dates proposed for 2026 to 2027 and related draft direction

### School term dates set out for 2026 to 2027

Welsh Ministers therefore propose the school term dates set out for 2026 to 2027:

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<b>Start of autumn term and first day of the school year</b>	Tuesday 1 September 2026
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<b>Autumn half term</b>	Monday 26 October 2026 to Friday 30 October 2026
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<b>End of autumn term</b>	Friday 18 December 2026 for all schools except for those in Powys
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Powys County Council schools alone will end the autumn term on Tuesday 22 December 2026

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**Start of spring term** Monday 4 January 2027

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**Spring half term** Monday 8 February 2027 to Friday 12 February 2027

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**End of spring term** Friday 19 March 2027

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**Start of summer term** Monday 5 April 2027

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**Summer half term** Monday 31 May 2027 to Friday 4 June 2027

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**End of summer term and last day of the school year** Tuesday 20 July 2027 for all schools except for those in Powys

Powys County Council schools alone will end the summer term on Friday 16 July 2027.

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# Consultation questions

## Question 1

Do you agree that term dates which are as similar as possible across Wales will help parents, carers, families and businesses to plan?

## Question 2

Do you agree with our proposals for term dates for the school year 2026 to 2027 and the proposed draft direction?

## Question 3

Do you have any views on the potential impact of our proposals on human rights and the protected characteristics:

1. age?
2. gender reassignment?
3. being married or in a civil partnership?
4. being pregnant or on maternity leave?
5. disability?
6. race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin?
7. religion or belief?
8. sex?
9. sexual orientation?

## Question 4

Are there any other costs, benefits or risks associated with the proposal?

## Question 5

What, in your opinion, would be the likely effects of the proposal on the Welsh language? We are particularly interested in any likely effects on opportunities to use the Welsh language and on not treating the Welsh language less favourably than English.

- Do you think that there are opportunities to promote any positive effects?
- Do you think that there are opportunities to mitigate any adverse effects?

## Question 6

In your opinion, could the proposal be formulated or changed so as to:

- have positive effects or more positive effects on using the Welsh language and on not treating the Welsh language less favourably than English, or
- mitigate any negative effects on using the Welsh language and on not treating the Welsh language less favourably than English?

Please use the consultation response form to respond to the above questions.

## Your rights

Under the data protection legislation, you have the right:

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- to be informed of the personal data held about you and to access it
- to require us to rectify inaccuracies in that data
- to (in certain circumstances) object to or restrict processing
- for (in certain circumstances) your data to be 'erased'
- to (in certain circumstances) data portability
- to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) who is our independent regulator for data protection

For further details about the information the Welsh Government holds and its use, or if you want to exercise your rights under the UK GDPR, please see contact details below:

## Data Protection Officer

Welsh Government  
Cathays Park  
CARDIFF  
CF10 3NQ

Email: [dataprotectionofficer@gov.wales](mailto:dataprotectionofficer@gov.wales) (<mailto:dataprotectionofficer@gov.wales>)

## Contact details for the Information Commissioner's Office

Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire SK9 5AF

Telephone: 0303 123 1113

Website: [ico website](https://ico.org.uk/) (<https://ico.org.uk/>)

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## UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)

The Welsh Government will be data controller for Welsh Government consultations and for any personal data you provide as part of your response to the consultation.

Welsh Ministers have statutory powers they will rely on to process this personal data which will enable them to make informed decisions about how they exercise their public functions. The lawful basis for processing information in this data collection exercise is our public task, that is, exercising our official authority to undertake the core role and functions of the Welsh Government (Art 6(1)(e)).

Any response you send us will be seen in full by Welsh Government staff dealing with the issues which this consultation is about or planning future consultations. In the case of joint consultations this may also include other public authorities. Where the Welsh Government undertakes further analysis of consultation responses then this work may be commissioned to be carried out by an accredited third party (e.g. a research organisation or a consultancy company). Any such work will only be undertaken under contract. Welsh Government's standard terms and conditions for such contracts set out strict requirements for the processing and safekeeping of personal data.

In order to show that the consultation was carried out properly, the Welsh Government intends to publish a summary of the responses to this document. We may also publish responses in full. Normally, the name and address (or part of the address) of the person or organisation who sent the response are published with the response. If you do not want your name or address published, please tell us this in writing when you send your response. We will then redact them before publishing.

You should also be aware of our responsibilities under Freedom of Information legislation and that the Welsh Government may be under a legal obligation to

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disclose some information.

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