**Consultation – school term dates 2026/2027**

**Background**

Milton Keynes City Council is required by the Department for Education to set term dates for community and voluntary controlled schools in Milton Keynes. Other types of schools, such as Foundation, Voluntary Aided and Academies set their own term dates. There must be 190 education days. Schools are then free to identify five INSET days (training days) from the remaining 175 days in the year when the school is closed to pupils. The council can only set term dates for community and voluntary controlled schools (34% of the schools in Milton Keynes) as the law no longer allows us to ensure that term dates for all schools are aligned.

These diverse stakeholders - Foundation, Voluntary Aided and Academies schools and neighbouring local authorities do not have to align with the term dates set by Milton Keynes City Council. They will have their considerations regarding their preferred dates (e.g. the dates set across their Multi Academy Trust, neighbouring schools, local authorities. This means there will be varying opinions depending on their own perspectives and presents complexities. It is therefore difficult to achieve a consistent set of dates which work for all parents, schools and staff working in schools.

In recognition of the complexities, the local authority engages with schools across the city, and there is a strong desire to align the proposed dates. Following discussions with schools across Milton Keynes, this consultation sets out a possible option for the 2026/2027 term dates. We are keen to seek your views on this proposal.

\*Please note that whilst 190 days are required to be set the proposal below provide 195 days, therefore allowing schools to allocate five training days within these proposed dates.

**Proposed option**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Term | Open morning of | Close at the end of the afternoon session on | Total days per half term |
| Autumn Term 2026 | 1 September 2026 | 23 October 2026 | 39 |
|  | 2 November 2026 | 18 December 2026 | 35 |
| Spring Term 2027 | 4 January 2027 | 12 February 2027 | 30 |
|  | 22 February 2027 | 25 March 2027 | 24 |
| Summer Term 2027 | 12 April 2027 | 28 May 2027 | 34 |
|  | 7 June 2027 | 21 July 2027 | 33 |
|  |  |  | 195 |

**Considerations:**

* The proposed dates mirror the dates which are being considered and are expected to be proposed by many other schools within Milton Keynes, our neighbouring authorities, and a number of other authorities across our local regions. However, there is no guarantee that other stakeholders will determine these dates.
* Milton Keynes school colleagues indicated a preference for term dates to be evenly spread and aligning with key public holidays where possible. There is also a strong desire for the term dates to mirror neighbouring authorities where possible, and a willingness for schools that set their own dates to align with others across Milton Keynes.
* The Easter bank holiday weekend falls at the start of the Easter break.

**Who decides term dates?**

For community and voluntary controlled schools in Milton Keynes, it is a political decision made by the Cabinet member for Children and Families. We are therefore seeking your feedback on these proposed dates beforehand to ensure that they are suitable. A summary of the responses from this consultation will be included as part of the decision-making process.

**Your views**

To give us your comments on the proposed term dates for 2026/2027 please either:

* complete our online form by 2 March 2025
* email: sufficiencyandaccess@milton-keynes.gov.uk

A calendar of the proposed term dates is attached.