

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services Committee
DATE	21 November 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	School Holidays – Amendment to 2023/2024 pattern
REPORT NUMBER	CFS/23/367
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Shona Milne
REPORT AUTHOR	Eleanor Sheppard
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 For the Chief Education Officer to seek authority to make an amendment to the 23/24 holiday pattern to ensure all staff receive the Good Friday public holiday and children receive their statutory entitlement of education.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:

- 2.1 approve an amendment to the 23/24 holiday pattern (set out at Option 1 in the report); and
- 2.2 instruct the Chief Officer Education to inform staff, parents and young people of the change to the holiday pattern

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 The existing holiday pattern was approved by the former Education Operational Delivery Committee on 12 November 2019. An error was made in the holiday calculation for session 23/24 resulting in staff not being allocated Good Friday (29th March 2024) which is a mandatory public holiday for Council staff. In order to ensure all staff receive Good Friday as a public holiday, there is a need to remove one of the days currently allocated as a school closure day so that the day can be reallocated to Good Friday. Taking this approach will ensure that all children continue to receive the requisite number of days of education.
- 3.2 A survey was issued to staff, young people and parents and carers to seek their views on how best to reconfigure the current holiday pattern. Respondents were asked to consider three potential solutions:

Option 1: Schools close one day later for Christmas break on 22nd December 2023, but return on 8th January 2024 as previously intimated.

Option 2: Schools close as previously intimated on 21st December 2023 for Christmas break, but return one day earlier on Friday 5th January 2024.

Option 3: Schools are closed to pupils on Monday 12th and Tuesday 13th February, with pupils returning to school one day earlier on Wednesday 14th February.

3.3 8906 responses were received. 5612 (63%) selected Option 1: (Schools close one day later for Christmas break on 22nd December 2023, but return on 8th January 2024 as previously intimated) as their preferred option. As a result, it is recommended that an amendment is made to the school holiday pattern and schools close for the holiday period one day later on 22nd December 2023 and that this additional working day be allocated as a school closure day on Good Friday.

3.4 We are aware that some staff will have booked holidays based on the previous holiday pattern and will honour these provided there is proof of booking prior to the questionnaire being shared.

3.5 Families may also have made arrangements for the 22nd December and such arrangements will also be respected. Families who notify schools of their arrangements prior to the 22nd December will have absences marked as 'authorised' within the information management system.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Currently, the statutory number of school openings is 190 days for pupils.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 No negative environmental impacts have been identified.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk			L	Yes
Compliance				
Operational				

Financial	No significant risks identified			
Reputational	No risks identified			
Environment / Climate	No risks identified			

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement Delivery of progressive educational policies	The proposals in this report ensure we meet our responsibilities in providing staff with the correct public holiday entitlement.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Stage 1 Impact Assessment completed
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required.
Other	No

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None

11. APPENDICES

11.1 None

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Shona Milne
Title	Interim Chief Education Officer
Email Address	shmilne@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel	075810992279