

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Member for Education and Skills held at 3.30 pm on Tuesday, 13 February 2024

Present:

Members: Councillor Dr K Sandhu (Cabinet Member)
 Councillor J Blundell (Shadow Cabinet Member)

Employees (by
Directorate):

Education and Skills S Heawood, S Parker

Law and Governance T Robinson

Public Business

6. Declarations of Interest

There were no disclosable interests.

7. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 3 August, 2023 were agreed and signed as a true record.

There were no matters arising.

8. Community and Voluntary Controlled School Admission Policies for 2025/26 and Co-ordinated School Admission Schemes for 2025/26

The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills considered a report of the Director of Education and Skills which indicated that the Local Authority are required to determine the co-ordination schemes for school admissions in their areas and the admissions policies for community and voluntary controlled schools.

In April 2006, Cabinet agreed that consideration of reports on school admission arrangements would be delegated to the appropriate Cabinet Member in years where there were no significant changes to admission arrangements. (Cabinet Minute number 253/06 refers). For 2025 there have been no substantive changes to the admission arrangements.

For context, The School Admissions Code 2021 requires admissions authorities to consult on admission arrangements every 7 years or more frequently where any significant changes are proposed. No significant changes were proposed to the co-ordinated admissions schemes or the admissions policies for community and voluntary controlled schools since the last consultation for September 2020 admission arrangements. Therefore, no consultation has been required for 2025.

Community and voluntary controlled schools were notified on 24 October 2023 that arrangements including published admission numbers (PAN) for community schools would remain the same apart from an increase for Howes primary school. All schools were given until 7 November 2023 to raise any requests for change. No requests for changing admission numbers were received.

Following an introduction to the report from officers, the Shadow Cabinet Member for Education and Skills explored the current admissions arrangements with academies in the City and questioned whether any schools carry out their admissions processes without help from the Council.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills:

- 1) Determines the Admissions Policy for Community and Voluntary Controlled Primary, Infant and Junior Schools for 2025/26.**
- 2) Determines the Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for Primary, Infant and Junior Schools in Coventry for 2025/26.**
- 3) Determines the Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for Secondary Schools in Coventry for 2025/26.**

9. Determination of School Terms and Holidays - 2025/26

The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills considered a report of the Director of Education and Skills which provided the outcome of consultation on and sought approval of the School Terms and Holidays calendars for 2025/26.

Currently the Local Authority (LA) is required to set term and holiday dates for community schools, community special schools, voluntary controlled schools, pupil referral units and maintained nursery schools. All schools in England are free to decide when their school day should start and end. Governing bodies are required to set term and holiday dates in foundation and voluntary aided schools. Academies and free schools are responsible for setting their own terms and holiday dates.

Under Section 32 of the Education Act 2002 in the case of a community, voluntary controlled, or community special school, or a maintained nursery school; the Local Authority is required to determine the dates when the school terms and holidays are set, and the governing body is required to determine the times of the school sessions. Governing bodies are required to set term and holiday dates in foundation and voluntary aided schools. The relevant academy trust is responsible for setting the duration of the school year and term and holiday dates for academies and free schools. Central Government is currently looking at the setting of term dates to help pupils catch up on missed work, this could be either in the form of longer school days, or shorter holiday periods. The LA will keep apprised of these developments and make any changes required.

The Local Authority believes that a standard set of holiday dates adopted by all Coventry schools will be better for school attendance, the organisation of admissions to Year Reception & Year 7, and for parents and carers arranging

childcare and transport. All Coventry schools will be requested to adopt the proposed term dates to ensure this continuity.

The Coventry City Council principles and protocols for term dates, following the national guidance, were taken into account when setting the option for consideration:

- A school year is 195 days, with 190 pupil days and 5 teacher days;
- 1 teacher day is determined by the Local Authority and 4 days by individual schools;
- Statutory holidays are observed;
- Schools prefer, especially secondary schools, full weeks of teaching where possible;
- Schools prefer a full week break at half-term and two full weeks at Easter and Christmas; and
- Half-term holidays are set at the same time as those of neighbouring local authorities where possible.

In addition to the report, the Shadow Cabinet Member asked about the alignment process for school terms and holidays with neighbouring Local Authorities and if any were not matching.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills:

- 1) Adopts the School Terms and Holiday calendar for 2025/26 set out in appendix 1.**
- 2) Invites the Catholic and Church of England Diocesan Authorities and the Governors of Trust Schools and Academies to recommend the same calendar for their schools.**

10. Outstanding Issues

There were no outstanding issues.

11. Any Other Items of Public Business

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 3.40 pm)