

**REPORT TO:** Education & Children's Services Committee

**MEETING DATE:** 18 June 2024

**BY:** Executive Director, Education & Children's Services

**SUBJECT:** School Session Dates (2025/26 and 2026/27)

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## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to obtain the Committees approval for School Session dates for the two school years, 2025/26 and 2026/27.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to:
- (i) Approve the school session dates for the two years 2025/26 and 2026/27 as outlined in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.
  - (ii) Authorise the Head of Education to notify Head Teachers, Teachers' Associations, Heads of Establishments and Parent Councils.
  - (iii) Authorise the Head of Education to notify the Scottish Government.

## **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 This year, following discussion with neighbouring Authorities (City of Edinburgh Council, Midlothian Council, Scottish Borders Council and Fife Council), East Lothian has prepared school session dates for the following two school years - 2025/26 and 2026/27. City of Edinburgh Council had already set dates without consultation with neighbouring Authorities for the next two academic sessions and had them approved and published; Scottish Borders Council have set dates for the next two school years, namely 2025/26 and 2026/27 and Fife Council have also now set theirs for the next three years to 2027/28. Midlothian Council did reach out to consult on their dates and indicated they would be closely aligning with City of Edinburgh, their dates are now approved and published. It was therefore decided that East Lothian should align our dates with City of Edinburgh and Midlothian Council dates for the next two years which historically most respondents to our consultations favour.

- 3.2 A decision was taken to produce a proposal that aligns primarily to the City of Edinburgh Council dates but also considers the needs and preferences of our own schools, particularly around In-service dates. The draft dates produced for East Lothian very much align with the City of Edinburgh Council dates with the exception of the In-service day after the Christmas break, which the other two authorities have appended to the Christmas break. However, discussion with our Head Teachers on the In-service day preferences was strongly in favour of not placing In-service 4 in January but to append to the February holiday as it is felt this lends itself to a more focused and productive In-service day and aligns better for high schools around prelim diets and maximizing learning days for the senior phase. This is the pattern of In-service days familiar to families in East Lothian for many academic years.
- 3.3 In preparing the draft school session dates for 2025/26 and 2026/27 the following points were taken into consideration:-
- 190 pupil and 195 staff days which is in accordance with the Schools General (Scotland) Regulations 1975 (as amended);
  - A fixed one-week break in the third week of October;
  - The school session ending before the first full week of July ;
  - 5 fixed in-service days; and
  - Flexibility with the Easter break to allow for a natural end to Term 2 in the first week in April.
- 3.4 In preparing the draft school session dates for 2025/26 and 2026/27 the five points in 3.3 were taken into account as outlined in the attached draft proposed dates (Appendix 1 and 2). Cognisance of the City of Edinburgh Council's session dates were taken into account in an attempt to align the dates, as far as possible. This has been achieved in relation to the main holiday periods.
- 3.4.1 The Education Service consultation on the proposed East Lothian session dates for 2025/26 to 2026/27 took place with Head Teachers, Teachers' Professional Associations, UNISON, Educational Establishments, Parent Councils and the wider community through the Council's Consultation Hub. The period of the consultation ran from 16 April 2024 until 30 April 2024.
- 3.5 The Education Service consultation asked for comments only in relation to the proposed East Lothian dates. A total of 63 responses to the consultation were received, all of which were from individuals. Of the 63 responses received 29 commented they were supportive of the proposed dates as they stood in the consultation; 33 were not supportive of the proposed dates as they stood in the consultation and 1 respondent did not express a view either way; 5 responses related to requesting that the dates be aligned to neighbouring Authorities; 19 related to the timing and duration of the Easter break, some of the respondents were dissatisfied with the split in 2026/27 of the Easter bank holiday and Easter

break; other comments related to the timing and duration of the Christmas, February, Summer and October breaks and Public Holidays.

Much consideration was given to the splitting of the Easter bank holiday and Easter school break in 2026/27, given this is not ideal and very unusual. However, on balance the impact of bringing the Easter break forward to a continuous holiday period creates an imbalance in the term session dates elsewhere in the calendar. On balance it was decided we should continue to align with City of Edinburgh published dates.

Whilst the overall majority of the responses received 52.38% were not supportive of the proposed dates and aligning with neighbouring Authorities the response rate was low and close with 47.62% of respondent in favour. To arrive at a recommendation we have taken into consideration the historical view of the Education Committee to align with our closest neighbours City of Edinburgh and Midlothian.

#### **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None.

#### **5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

5.1 The subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on equality, the environment or economy.

#### **6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Financial - None

6.2 Personnel - None

6.3 Other - None

#### **7 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

7.1 Appendix 1 and 2 - draft school session dates 2025/26 and 2026/27.

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<b>DATE</b>	June 2024

## East Lothian Council School Session Dates DRAFT - 2025/2026 - calendar format

Teaching Day
In Service Day - Closed for pupils
School Holiday

August 2025						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

September 2025						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

October 2025						
Sxx	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

November 2025						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

December 2025						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

January 2026						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

February 2026						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

March 2026						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

April 2026						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

May 2026						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

June 2026						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

July 2026						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

## East Lothian Council School Session Dates DRAFT - 2026/2027 - calendar format

Teaching Day
In Service Day - Closed for pupils
School Holiday

August 2026						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

September 2026						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

October 2026						
Sx	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

November 2026						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

December 2026						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

January 2027						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

February 2027						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

March 2027						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

April 2027						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

May 2027						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

June 2027						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

July 2027						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31