

Vine South Essex Local Board
St Margaret's CE Academy, Orsett CE Primary School
& Bulphan CE Academy

6th March 2018

Dear Parent/Carer

Thank you for taking part in consultation on the potential to have a two-week October half-term holiday in future school years. We, who provide the governance for Orsett, Bulphan and St Margaret's schools, appreciate all your input and have given everyone's views full consideration.

Most of the parents at all three schools were extremely positive about the idea. In coming to a conclusion, we have taken full account of the reservations raised which understandably for a few included the challenge of child care. We concluded that a two-week holiday in October will have several benefits including:

1. enabling children and their families as well as staff to have a longer break during the longest term of the year.
2. potential health benefits to everyone concerned – we looked at the attendance data for the Autumn term in the past and the main reasons for absence. For both children and staff time off for sickness is higher than during the rest of the year.
3. the change can be achieved without losing any teaching time or impact on other school holidays by reducing lunchtimes (ten minutes), which we do not consider will disadvantage anyone unduly.

Increasingly other schools in our region and across country are moving to this arrangement because of these and other benefits. Please be assured that this is not in any way a cost saving exercise (it won't) but with every intention of ensuring the best possible education for your children.

We expect this to be implemented in the academic year 2018/19, therefore this coming October. You will be receiving a letter shortly from your particular school Head with further details. Any questions you may direct to the school.

We hope that by giving you this information well in advance will help you plan.

With our thanks for your continued support of your school.

Yours sincerely,



Mike Simmonds
Chair, Vine South Essex Local Board