

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2024

Dear families,

## Re. October Half Term Break

We are seeking your views about deciding on whether to continue with a two-week Half Term break in the Autumn term in future years.

### Why did we trial a two-week Half Term in October 2023?

The schools across Unity Schools Partnership recognise that their greatest asset is the staff that teach students day in, day out. As with many of the public services, schools nationally are facing recruitment challenges for both teaching and classroom support staff. The trust is looking to do better, both to retain staff and recruit the best when vacancies arise and wanted to trial the two week half term to see if that could improve the situation.

Each trust school made up the lost learning time in diverse ways.

### What did we learn?

Across the Trust we saw a notable difference in staff absence due to illness during November and December - significantly less than the previous year – which works towards our aim of reducing the need for supply cover and reducing disruption to children's learning.

We also know that many families were able to take holidays or extended breaks during the two-week Half Term.

At Thomas Gainsborough School, we have made up the five days learning time to ensure that all students receive the same number of lessons during the year as was previously the case. We did this by:

- Reducing our Academic Review Days from three to one during this academic year, providing us with two additional teaching days.
- By altering our originally published term dates for the academic year 2023/4 to provide us with an additional three teaching days.

### Your views

We would welcome your thoughts. Please respond by Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> January:

- Do you agree with the October half-term break being two weeks?
- Are there any comments you would like considered?

Please use the form linked below to share your views regarding the two-week October half-term.

Parents'/Carers' Survey

<https://forms.office.com/e/dLWG02h2kj>

Thomas Gainsborough Autumn  
Term Break Parent And Carer  
Follow-up Consultation (Jan24)



We expect to confirm the dates for the next school year by Friday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

Thank for taking the time to consider this important matter.

Kind Regards,



Helen Yapp  
Headteacher