



## Flexible Working Procedure Version 2

<p><b>Important:</b> This document can only be considered valid when viewed on the Trust website. If this document has been printed or saved to another location, you must check that the version number on your copy matches that of the document online.</p> <p><b>Name and Title of Author:</b></p>	<p>Lisa Longstaff, Director of HR and Governance</p>
<p><b>Name of Responsible Committee/Individual:</b></p>	<p>Trust Board</p>
<p><b>Implementation Date:</b></p>	<p>September 2022</p>
<p><b>Review Date:</b></p>	<p>September 2024</p>
<p><b>Target Audience:</b></p>	<p>All employees, with the exception of casual workers</p>
<p><b>Related Documents:</b> All Trust policies and procedures referred to are located on the trust website, <a href="http://www.theeducationalliance.org.uk">www.theeducationalliance.org.uk</a>.</p> <p>If English is not your first language, and you require assistance/translation, please contact the HR Department.</p> <p>This policy has been equality impact assessed.</p>	<p>Women at Work Policy Ethical leadership framework Special Leave Policy Health and Wellbeing Policy</p>

## Contents

	Page
Policy Statement	3
1. Scope	3
2. Roles and Responsibilities	3
3. Equality and Diversity	3
4. Principles	3
5. Requesting Flexible Working	4
6. Considering a Request	5
7. Withdrawing a Request	5
8. Appeals	5
9. Monitoring Compliance With and Effectiveness of this Policy	5
10. Review	5
<b>Appendices</b>	
1. Flexible Working Request Form	6

## POLICY STATEMENT

We are here to make great schools and happier, stronger communities so that people have better lives. We do this by:

- Always doing what is right
- Trusting in each other and standing shoulder to shoulder
- Doing what we know makes the difference

Doing what is right means always acting with integrity, in the interests of others and being honest, open and transparent.

We recognise that providing staff with opportunities to request a change to their working pattern, or terms and conditions (e.g. reducing hours) can help employees achieve good levels of health and wellbeing as they navigate through changes in their lives, whilst enabling the Trust to retain valuable, talented and highly committed employees. This procedure ensures employees can easily make flexible working requests, which are considered fairly, reasonably and transparently.

The culture of the Trust and our schools is critical in ensuring we have an enjoyable, rewarding working environment in which all colleagues believe the demands of their job are reasonable and manageable. We have a culture based on professional Trust and the belief that everyone seeks to do a good job.

### 1. SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff employed by the Trust, with the exception of casual workers.

### 2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The **Trust Board** is responsible for approving this procedure, ensuring there is a consistent approach to requesting and approving changes to terms and conditions and working patterns across the Trust.

**Headteachers** are responsible for ensuring that staff and managers are aware of this procedure, encouraging staff and managers to consider how flexible working might help the school recruit and retain staff, helping them to achieve a good work-life balance. Such an approach should enable the school to enable high levels of performance and engagement.

The **Human Resources Department** is responsible for ensuring that employees have access to this procedure and that managers and employees apply it fairly and consistently.

**Managers** and staff with supervisory or leadership responsibilities must ensure they implement this policy fairly and equitably, seeking guidance, clarification and support as and when required.

**Employees** are encouraged to read this procedure, adhere to the processes detailed and seek clarity from either their manager or the HR Department if they have any queries.

### 3. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

The Education Alliance is committed to:

- Promoting equality and diversity in its policies, procedures and guidelines
- Delivering high quality teaching and services that meet the diverse needs of its student population and its workforce, ensuring that no individual or group is disadvantaged

This procedure encourages employees and managers to consider how flexible arrangements might enable employees to continue to work, balancing their whole lives and ensuring work supports employee health and wellbeing. This policy aligns well with the principles of the Trust's 'Women at Work Policy'.

#### 4. PRINCIPLES

The Trust is committed to ensuring that staff are supported in working flexibly, and this may differ across different roles and functions of the Trust. For example, teachers are able to undertake their PPA at home, and as long as they are onsite where their timetable and duties require them to be, they are not required to remain onsite for the duration of the working day. Some associate staff may be able to undertake aspects of their work remotely, or they may be able to have differing start and finish times, depending on the role. The Trust wishes to be an employer of choice, treating people as professionals at work. In providing staff with greater flexibility, the Trust anticipates higher levels of recruitment, retention, engagement and health and wellbeing. Employees have a legal right to request flexible working when they have worked for the Trust for at least 26 weeks and **the Trust extends this right to all employees**, regardless of their length of service. There is a range of possible flexible working options an employee may request, such as:

- Changes to their working pattern
- Reducing working hours
- Job-sharing
- Compressed hours
- Staggered hours
- Changing duties/responsibilities (e.g. where employees wish to relinquish a leadership or Expert Teacher role)
- Blended onsite, offsite working arrangements
- Phased retirement

It can be useful to agree a trial period, to enable all parties to assess whether or not the flexible working arrangement requested/agreed works and that it has the anticipated benefit for the employee.

#### 5. REQUESTING FLEXIBLE WORKING

Employees wishing to request a change in their working pattern, working arrangements or terms and conditions are encouraged to explore potential options with their trade union, their line manager and the HR Department, as they may be able to provide advice and guidance prior to the employee submitting a request. Any employee wishing to apply for a change in their working pattern, working arrangements or terms and conditions should complete the flexible working request form (appendix 1), which employees should discuss with their line manager in the first instance to enable them to consider the operational feasibility of the request. Employees must consider and detail on their request form what they are requesting, for how long (e.g. temporary or permanent change), the potential impact of the change to pupils and other members of staff and how those potential challenges could be overcome. Line managers may want to contact the HR Department before completing their section, for advice and guidance. Employees seeking flexible working are encouraged to consider any financial implications prior to submitting a request, alongside pension information. Employees can access financial information via the HR Department, the Payroll Department and the Employee Assistance Programme; however, the Trust cannot provide financial advice.

Employees should be mindful that where a request to change contracted hours (for example a reduction from 0.8 full-time equivalent to 0.4 full-time equivalent) is approved, whilst every effort will be made to also agree the working days preferred, it might not always be operationally feasible.

Employees should provide as much detail as they can on their flexible working request form (e.g. preferred hours and days) to allow for all requirements to be explored in full, thus reducing the risk of a request being misunderstood.

## **6. CONSIDERING A REQUEST**

Any request for flexible working will be thoroughly considered before a decision is reached, and where possible, requests will be approved. This may be on a temporary trial basis initially, to test the feasibility and the potential impact before agreeing a more permanent arrangement. The decision sits with a member of the senior leadership team, and they may wish to meet with the employee and/or the line manager to explore the request prior to making a decision, particularly where they require additional information.

## **7. WITHDRAWING A REQUEST**

If an employee wishes to withdraw their request, they should write to their line manager and the HR Department to withdraw their request.

## **8. APPEALS**

If an employee believes they have been unfairly treated, they may wish to appeal against the decision regarding their flexible working request. The employee must submit their appeal to the Human Resources Department within 10 working days of receipt of the decision, clearly stating the grounds for their appeal.

The Headteacher, or Executive Principal, will review the original documentation and decision alongside any additional information submitted. If the Headteacher or Executive Principal were involved in the original decision, another senior leader (e.g. a Headteacher from another school) will receive and consider the appeal. Depending on the circumstances, they may wish to meet with the employee, or they may feel they are able to make a decision based on the information they have. Either way, the employee will receive written confirmation of the decision. The outcome of the appeal is final.

## **9. MONITORING COMPLIANCE WITH AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE POLICY**

Effectiveness of and compliance with this procedure will be monitored on an annual basis by the HR Department.

## **REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed within two years of the date of implementation with trade unions via the JCNC.

**Appendix 1**

**FLEXIBLE WORKING REQUEST FORM**

**Section A (Employee to complete)**

**Surname:**.....

**First name:**.....

**Department:**.....

**Job Title:**.....

**Contracted Hours:**.....

**Working Pattern:**.....

**Permanent/Temporary Request (if temporary, detail the anticipated duration required):**

.....

I wish to submit a flexible working request as follows (*please provide full details of the change you would like to make and the rationale for this as this will assist with the decision*):

My current hours and working pattern are:

The working pattern/hours I would like to work in the future are:

The reason for this is:

I would like this working pattern to commence from:

I think this change will affect my employer, the pupils, service delivery, and/or colleagues as follows:

I think the effect on my employer, the pupils, service delivery and/or colleagues can be managed as follows:

**Part B – Manager’s Response**

(Please consider within your response whether or not the request is operationally feasible and also whether any difficulties/challenges/risks could be mitigated/managed effectively. The information you provide will assist with the decision.)

**Part C – Decision**

Approved	
Not approved	

Comments:

Employee Signature:..... Date:.....

Line Manager Signature:..... Date:.....

Decision-Maker Signature:..... Date:.....