



Support
Tenacity
Responsibility
Innovation
Voice
Equity

Flexible Working Policy

Date of Review	September 2023
Next Review Date	September 2024
CEO	Sam Coy
Chair of the Trust	Sarah Richards
Signed	
Date	

Flexible Working Policy

This policy applies to support staff, Teachers and Headteachers based in Scholars Academy Trust. The procedure detailed below applies to all employees who qualify under the statutory right to request flexible working. Information regarding considerations of applications not covered by the statutory right to request is also included within this policy.

Definition of 'Flexible Working'

The term 'flexible working' describes a range of working patterns (e.g. job sharing, part-time working, home working, etc.). Under the Flexible Working Regulations, an employee can request to change:

- The number of hours they work;
- The times that they work; and/ or
- Their place of work (i.e. to work from home, where the duties of the job will permit this type of working).

Eligibility Criteria

The statutory right to request flexible working applies to all employees who, at the time of application:

- Have been continuously employed for at least 26 weeks;
- Not have submitted an application to work flexibly under the statutory scheme within the previous 12 months;

Application Process

An employee wishing to formally request a change to their working arrangements should provide the following information in writing, using the Flexible Working Application Form:

- The date of the application being submitted and that it is an application under the statutory right to request flexible working;
- The change in working arrangements that they are requesting (including whether the change is requested on a permanent or temporary basis);
- The date on which the employee would like the proposed change to become effective;
- details of how the new working pattern may impact on the school and how, in their opinion, this can be managed, or any negative impacts can be mitigated,
- Whether the request is in relation to the Equality Act 2010 (e.g. as a reasonable adjustment for a disability);
- Whether a previous flexible working application has been made by the employee and, if so, when.

Timings and Process

The employee should submit their completed application form to the Headteacher for consideration. On receipt of the request, the Headteacher should send a letter of acknowledgement to the employee, inviting them to discuss the request **as soon as possible, but usually within 28 days**. This discussion does not need to be face-to-face and can take place by telephone if the employee is in agreement. The Headteacher may discuss with the CEO. In the case of a Headteacher or a member of the central team, the request should go to the CEO. In the case of the CEO, the request should be sent to the chair of the trust.

The consideration process, including the outcome of any appeal, **must be completed within 3 months of the request being received** by the manager. This time limit can be extended, if needed providing the employee is in agreement. Where a meeting is arranged to discuss the flexible working request, the employee may be accompanied by a work colleague or Trade Union representative.

Contractual Change

Any change to the employee's terms and conditions will be on a permanent basis unless agreed otherwise.

A variation to contract letter will be issued to the employee. This variation to contract letter must be signed by the employee and a copy returned to the school for their records.

Grounds for Declining a Request

Applications can only be declined for one or more of the following business reasons:

- Burden of additional cost (e.g. substantial training costs, additional staff costs);
- Detrimental effect on the Academy's ability to meet 'customer' demands (e.g. inability to reorganise timetable/work schedule without having an adverse impact on colleagues/pupils);
- Inability to reorganise work amongst existing staff;
- Inability to recruit additional staff;
- Detrimental impact on quality (e.g. on teaching and learning);
- Detrimental impact on performance;
- Insufficiency of work during the periods the employee proposes to work;
- Planned structural changes.

Delegation of Authority

The person responsible for determining whether a flexible working request can be accommodated will depend on who has been given the delegated authority. This could be the Head Teacher, CEO or in the case of the CEO, The chair of the Trust Board.

Right of Appeal

An employee has the right to appeal against the decision of their request for flexible working request being declined and should be made aware of this at the time of providing them with the outcome of their application.

All appeals will be dealt with in line with the School's Appeal Policy.

The appeal will be heard and completed within 3 months of the date on which the employee submitted their flexible working application, unless an extension has been agreed with the employee and confirmed in writing, outlining the reasons for the delay.

Employees have the right to be accompanied at the appeal by a work colleague or Trade Union representative.

Flexible Working Application Form

Name:	
Job Title:	

Are you making this request under the statutory right to request flexible working? YES/NO

Have you made a flexible working request in the past 12 months? YES/NO

Date of last flexible working request submitted:

Describe your current working pattern (days/hours/times worked):

(Please continue a separate sheet of paper if necessary)

Describe the working pattern you would like to work in future (days/hours/times worked):

(Please continue a separate sheet of paper if necessary)

When would you like the new working pattern to commence?

Impact of the new working pattern.

The proposed working pattern will affect the school and my colleagues as follows:

(Please continue a separate sheet of paper if necessary)

Accommodating the new working pattern.

The effect on the school and my colleagues can be dealt with as follows:

(Please continue separate sheet of paper if necessary)

I understand that, if agreed, this request will result in a permanent change to my terms and conditions of employment unless agreed otherwise.

Signed:	
Date:	