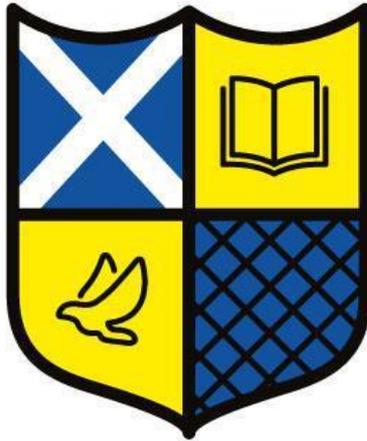


St. Andrew's CE Primary School

School Flexible Working Policy (BHCC Model Policy)



Approved by:	HR Committee
Last reviewed on:	June 2025
Next review due by:	Summer 2026

School Model Flexible Working Policy

March 2024

Introduction

We recognise that flexible working arrangements can be attractive to employees looking to achieve a better balance between their working lives and their social, family and caring commitments.

We are committed to agreeing any flexible working arrangements provided that the needs and objectives of both the school and the employee can be met.

Scope of the policy

This Policy applies to school employees where it has been adopted by the governing body.

Eligibility

- Employees who have 26 weeks' service with the school have a legal right to ask to work flexibly once in any 12-month period. However, the school allows all employees, regardless of their length of service, to make two flexible working requests in any 12-month period.
- This is separate to the requirement under the Equality Act 2010 to consider flexible working arrangements as part of a reasonable adjustment.

General principles

- Managers must give serious consideration to all flexible working requests and should respond to the request within set timescales.
- Managers should make every effort to accommodate an employee's preferred flexible working arrangement, subject to there being no detrimental impact on the school or on other individuals within their team.
- Managers may only refuse an employee's request to work flexibly where there are objective and justifiable business reasons for doing so (please refer to Reasons for rejecting a request section below). There is no automatic entitlement to work flexibly.
- Employees must recognise that any request to work flexibly must fit in with the needs of the school. However, subject to there being no detrimental effect on the school, managers are encouraged to introduce flexible working arrangements wherever possible, and they

should consult with employees to explore all available options before rejecting their request.

- Managers may find flexible working initiatives useful in enabling them to retain experienced staff, recruit from a broader pool of teachers, promote wellbeing and improve work life balance.
- Managers must ensure that the introduction of flexible working arrangements will not adversely affect the delivery of education to pupils and that suitable performance management systems are in place.
- All flexible working arrangements agreed will be kept under review to ensure that there are no detrimental effects on the school and may be revised, following discussion and in agreement with the employee to meet changing demands.
- Managers have the discretion to terminate any flexible working arrangement agreed under this policy where it is found to have a detrimental impact on the school and/or there are management concerns over the health and welfare, productivity levels, capability or conduct of the individual.

Types of Flexible Working

Flexible working is any type of working arrangement that gives some degree of flexibility on how long, where and when an employee works.

Not every job in school will be suited to all the types of flexible working covered in this policy and some jobs may be excluded on operational grounds. Employees making a request should consider which forms of flexible working are best suited to their role. It is possible to have more than one type of flexible working in place.

It is the responsibility of managers to identify which, if any, of the flexible working arrangements can be introduced without compromising the needs of the school.

Although the needs of staff to work flexibly are important they will not override the needs of the school.

There are a number of options available for flexible working these may include, but are not limited to:

Full-time working

The employee works full time on standard hours in accordance with parameters set by the school.

Part-time working

The employee works less than full time hours.

Compressed working hours

Under this arrangement, the employee works their normal contractual hours over 4 days instead of 5 per week or over 9 days instead of 10 days per fortnight.

This gives the employee one day off a week or one day off a fortnight, which can either be “fixed” or “floating”.

This type of working arrangement is not suited to jobs that are physically demanding, require a high level of constant alertness or where continuity of staff on a daily basis is important.

Term-time working

The term-time only employee works part-year, i.e. for less than 52 weeks (usually for 38 or 39 term time weeks) and takes and is paid for holiday entitlements during the non-term time/school closure periods.

Annual salary is made up of pay for ‘worked weeks’ (usually 38 or 39) plus pay for contractual annual leave entitlement and including bank holidays, to form the employee’s paid weeks or annual salary.

The total of paid weeks is agreed at the beginning of the working arrangement (using the agreed BHCC term-time only (TTO) / annual leave calculator). The employee’s TTO/part-year salary is paid in 12 equal monthly instalments throughout the year.

Staff working during term time are expected to work during the agreed term time period and all leave is accounted for in the non-term time school closure periods. There is no extra annual leave entitlement and there is no need to record annual leave.

Annualised hours working

Annualised hours working is where working hours are spread across the year, which could include some school closure days, or where hours vary across the year to suit the school and the employee. The number of hours to be worked by the employee during the year are agreed in advance. By drawing up a yearly plan, the employee knows when they are expected to work on a regular basis. This forms the bulk of their agreed hours.

A proportion of the annual hours need not be allocated in advance but kept in reserve to be called upon to be worked by the employee at short notice to cover for staff absences or periods of unexpectedly high workload.

Under this arrangement, the employee would receive the same salary each month irrespective of the number of hours being worked each month.

Self-rostering

Self-rostering gives employees greater control over their pattern of working. Parameters are set by agreeing in advance the levels of staff and the experience/skill mix (and in the case of some jobs gender mix) required throughout the working day. Staff put forward the times they would like to work and the times they would like to protect away from work. This information is then used to compile working patterns that match as far as practicable individuals' preferences but which also enable an efficient and effective service to be delivered.

Job-sharing

Job-sharing arrangements are a special form of part-time working where a full-time job is divided between usually two, but sometimes more, part-time employees. Each "sharer" undertakes the full range of duties and responsibilities associated with the job and is therefore employed on the same grade.

The two job-share partners are inextricably linked in terms of their working hours and pattern of working. This means that if one partner wishes to increase or decrease their hours or change their pattern of working, they can only do so if the other partner is willing to adjust their hours to compensate.

The salary and other terms and conditions of service for each job-share partner are pro rata according to the number of hours worked per week.

Hybrid working

Hybrid working is where an employee can work from different locations at different times, which could be a mix of working in school and at home. In most circumstances, it is an informal working arrangement and does not require a formal contractual change to be in place or a flexible working request to be made.

If an employee wants a **formal and fixed** hybrid working arrangement, then they will need to submit a flexible working request under this policy.

Homeworking

This is where staff are required in their contract of employment to have their office based in their home even though they may work other than at home for part of their working time. Such staff are classed as "homeworkers".

Temporary flexible working arrangements

Where an employee has a temporary need for shorter hours or a different working pattern, for example because of caring commitments, they can make a flexible working request through this policy, applying for a temporary change in their working arrangements to manage this.

Phased retirement

Phased retirement is where working hours and/or responsibilities are gradually reduced to transition from full-time work to full-time retirement.

Submitting a flexible working request

Employees must put a request to work flexibly in writing to their manager using the Flexible Working Request Form. Only two requests can be made in any twelve-month period.

Any request made must include:

- the date of the application
- the change being requested
- the date from when the employee would like the change to start
- the date of any previous flexible working requests if any have been made

Meetings regarding flexible working

A manager will usually seek to arrange a meeting with the employee to discuss the request. If a meeting is arranged, this will be held within 28 days of the school receiving the request. The employee may be accompanied at the meeting if they wish by a trade union representative, or by a work colleague.

Responding to a flexible working request

An employee will be informed in writing of the school's decision as soon as is reasonably practicable, but no later than 14 days after the meeting.

Timescales

All requests will be dealt with as soon as possible, and within two months from receipt of the request to the notification of any appeal decision.

The timescales within this policy may be extended where this is mutually agreed.

Right to appeal decision

An employee has the right to appeal the decision if their request is refused or is only agreed in part.

The appeal should be submitted to the Headteacher on the flexible working appeal form within 14 days of being notified of the decision. The grounds for the appeal must be provided on the appeal form. The appeal will be heard by the Headteacher or another manager more senior than the manager who made the original decision.

Trialling new working arrangements

It may be appropriate to agree a trial period to allow time to assess the impact of the new arrangements on the school, the team and the employee.

If this is successful, then the new working arrangements will be formally confirmed with the employee. In such cases, the length of the trial will be confirmed in writing and the flexible working arrangements being trialled will end automatically at the conclusion of the trial period unless there is agreement for it to continue.

Reasons for rejecting a request

A flexible working request should only be refused where the manager has genuine, objective, and justifiable business reasons for doing so. The valid grounds are:

- it will cost too much
- there will be a negative effect on the ability to meet customer demand
- inability to reorganise work among existing staff
- inability to recruit additional staff to do the work
- a negative effect on quality
- a negative effect on performance
- insufficiency of work during the periods the employee wishes to work.
- the school is planning changes to the workforce, for example an intention to reorganise or change the service and the request will not fit with these plans

A request will not be rejected for any other reason.

Consultation

When considering introducing new or revised flexible working arrangements, managers will need to ensure that they have discussed the arrangements with the employees directly affected. In limited cases this may require that a

formal consultation process is followed involving the impacted employees and trade unions.

Health and safety

Managers must ensure that all agreed working arrangements comply with the provisions of the Working Time Regulations with regard to rest breaks, maximum number of working hours etc.

Managers must, where appropriate, conduct a risk assessment of the proposed working arrangements. An assessment will need to be undertaken, for example, where an employee is intending to work a compressed working hours pattern, or on their own in school premises outside normal school hours, or from home etc.