



Endeavour
Multi-Academy Trust



Flexible Working Policy

Endeavour Multi Academy Trust

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Purpose

Endeavour Multi Academy Trust is committed to fostering a positive work-life balance and supporting employee health and wellbeing initiatives. This policy outlines the process for how employees can apply for flexible working and the expectations for how requests will be considered and responded to.

Scope of Policy

This policy has been developed in line with the appropriate national conditions of service for all employees of Endeavour Multi Academy Trust.

Requests for flexible working may be made to the employee's line manager or may be delegated to another member of the Senior Leadership Team. Where reference is made within this document to the application being made to the line manager, this refers to the Headteacher, CEO, Chair of Trustees or members of the Senior Leadership Team.

This policy applies to all staff employed by our Trust, including part-time employees. It does not apply to agency staff and self-employed contractors. The Trust will consider flexible working requests from all employees from day 1 of their employment.

Employees have the right to make a statutory request for a flexible working arrangement if they have not already made 2 statutory requests for flexible working arrangements in the last 12 months. All employees can make a non-statutory request, whether or not the statutory route is available to them.

Legislative Framework

This policy meets the requirements of:

- Employment Relations (Flexible Working) Act 2023
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Employment Rights Act 1996](#)

- It also reflects best practice guidance set out in:
 - [The DfE's guidance for flexible working in schools](#)
 - [ACAS code of practice on handling in a reasonable manner requests to work flexibly](#)

Policy Statement

Endeavour Multi Academy Trust is open to flexible working and the benefits it provides. We recognise that offering flexible working has the potential to:

- Improve staff's work-life balance and help them manage their work around other responsibilities.
- Reduce staff stress and have a positive impact on wellbeing.
- Raise morale and improve staff motivation, performance and productivity.
- Reduce staff absence and help improve retention by creating new opportunities and ways of working.
- Allow us to recruit from a wider pool of talent that includes people with different lifestyles, experiences and perspectives.

We are an equal opportunities employer, and we recognise the contribution that flexible working makes to this ongoing commitment.

When considering a request for flexible working the School/Trust will balance the needs of the individual with the need to maintain the correct level of staffing that meets the statutory and organisational requirements of the School/Trust.

Equity and Fairness

The equality implications of any flexible working arrangements will be considered when considering any application for flexible working.

The Trust will not victimise individuals who work under flexible working arrangements or who request to work more flexibly.

Any agreed flexible working arrangements will be carefully planned and reviewed to ensure that work-life balance is achieved.

Types of Flexible Working

The Department for Education describes flexible working as arrangements which allow employees to vary the amount, timing or location of their work.

Types of flexible working include the below arrangements:

- **Part-time working**
 - Part time: working less than full-time hours.
Job share: two or more people doing one job and splitting the hours.
 - Phased retirement: gradually reducing working hours and/or responsibilities to transition from full-time work to full-time retirement.

- **Varied hours**
 - Staggered hours: the employee has different start, finish and break times.
 - Compressed hours: working full-time hours but over fewer days.
 - Annualised hours: working hours spread across the year, which may include some school closure days, or where hours vary across the year to suit the School/Trust and employee.

Working off-site: Working in a different location to usual e.g. working from home

We will consider requests regardless of the type of flexible working requested, although some forms of flexible working may be more suitable for particular roles than others.

Employees making a request should consider which form/s of flexible working are best suited to their personal circumstances and their role, as individual circumstances vary.

Employees who wish to submit a request for flexible working should do so in writing using the information set out in this policy.

Accountabilities

Employees responsibilities:

- To make a fully completed application for flexible working to their line manager in accordance with the procedure set out in this policy.

- To be available to discuss their application in more detail if required.

Line Manager/Trust responsibilities:

- To ensure that academy leaders, including governors, trustees, and staff discuss flexible working arrangements as part of the Trust's approach to work life balance.
- To communicate flexible working practices and other work-life balance solutions to staff including making employees aware of the policy.
- To consider flexible working in any new recruitments.
- To consider all requests objectively and with sensitivity, taking into account the needs of the school/ Trust and pupils.
- To consider valid requests equally, fairly and to be consistent.
- To manage valid requests in accordance with the procedure set out in this policy.
- To discuss the impact of any contractual changes on the employee's pay and conditions e.g. holiday allowance and pensions.
- If you turn down a request, explain why you are doing so in writing, giving clear business reasons.
- To consider the work life balance implications of any revision to other procedure, policies or practices in the Trust as part of the equality impact assessment.

Governor/Trustee responsibilities:

- To consider how the Trust can promote a culture of flexible working.
- To consider carefully any appeals made in relation to a request to work flexibly.

Trust/School Responsibility to consider a request for Flexible Working

The School/Trust has a legal and moral responsibility to consider all applications and determine if the flexible working arrangements can be accommodated within the needs of the School/Trust. Each application will be considered individually and objectively.

Although there is no legal duty to agree a request to flexible working, the School/Trust is particularly mindful of its duty to make reasonable adjustments to working patterns for disabled workers, or flexible working requests to care for a disabled dependant.

Applications for flexible working made by an employee will be dealt with in accordance with process detailed below.

The Application Process

Any employee regardless of continuous service may make an application for flexible working. This can be made from day 1 of your employment.

Employees should use a statutory request for flexible working if their proposal requires a permanent change to their contractual terms and conditions.

Employees should make a non-statutory request for any other flexible working request e.g. temporary flexible working arrangements or varying a working pattern.

All requests for flexible working arrangements must be made in writing using the application form attached in **Appendix A**. Ideally requests should be submitted at least two months before the proposed change.

Legally all requests must include:

- Date of the application.
- Statement to confirm that this is a statutory request, if applicable.
- Proposed changes to working hours or pattern and when you wish to start the new arrangement.
- Whether you have previously applied for flexible working arrangement and if so, when that was.
- Whether you are making your request in relation to the Equality Act 2010, for example as a reasonable adjustment as a result of a disability.

You should send your application to your Line Manager.

If the Headteacher is requesting flexible working, they should send their application to the Chair of Governors. If the CEO is requesting flexible working, the request should be sent to the Chair of the Trust Board.

Meeting to discuss an application

We will consider all valid applications for flexible working openly and fairly and, in line with legislation, will reach a decision within two months from receipt of request, including any appeal.

Your Line Manager will arrange a meeting with you to discuss your application and to:

- Clarify the proposed flexible working arrangements,
- Discuss any foreseen challenges regarding the proposed arrangements and how they can be overcome.,
- Consider alternative arrangements or compromises.

The meeting will take place no later than 20 working days after the School/Trust receives the application. You may be accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative if they wish. Likewise, a HR representative can be present to support the School/Trust.

Response

Your Line Manager will provide a response, in writing, as soon as possible after the application, and by no more than 10 working days following any meeting.

If the request is accepted, or an alternative arrangement is agreed, your Line Manager will write to you confirming:

- Details of the new working arrangements,
- Details of the trial period,
- Any changes to your employment contract,
- When the new working arrangements will start.

You will need to sign and return a copy of the document, which will be placed in your personal file to confirm the variation to your terms and conditions of employment.

If your Line Manager needs more time to make a decision, for example, time to investigate how to accommodate a request, undertake a recruitment process or to consult several members of staff, they will discuss this with you as soon as possible. An extension timeframe will be agreed with all parties.

If the request is rejected, your Line Manager will arrange a meeting with you to inform you of the reason for the rejection. The decision will also be confirmed in writing, and you will also be advised of your right of appeal.

Our School/Trust will only reject an application for flexible working on the following grounds:

- The burden of additional cost to our School/Trust.
- A detrimental effect on the quality of work (for example, if, as a result, pupils risk not receiving high-quality teaching).
- A detrimental effect on performance (for example, if the staff member risks failing to meet important deadlines).
- A detrimental effect on the ability to meet demand (for example, where an administrative assistant would not be present at busy periods with high workloads).
- Inability to reorganise work among existing staff.
- Inability to recruit new staff.
- Insufficient work during the proposed working period.
- Planned changes to staffing structure.

Contractual Changes

Once a flexible working arrangement has been agreed, we will make appropriate changes to your contract of employment.

Unless otherwise agreed, these changes are permanent and cannot be changed unilaterally. There is no right for you to revert to your original working arrangements, or for the School/Trust to force you to revert to your original working arrangements, without agreement from both parties.

Employees may only make two statutory requests in any 12-month period.

Contractual changes may also include changes to pay and holiday entitlements, such as a pro-rata arrangement. Your Line Manager will make sure that any employee seeking a flexible working arrangement is aware of these changes before they agree to changes to their contract.

Trialling a new arrangement

A new working pattern may be agreed subject to a trial period which is agreeable to both parties, for example for one academic year. This approach goes beyond what is set out in the legislation and can help reach a positive outcome. At the end of this period your Line Manager or appropriate senior staff member will meet with you to discuss the experience of the trial period and whether the arrangement can be made permanent, or whether any adjustments need to be made. Employees may wish to be accompanied by a trade union representative at this meeting. All trial period arrangements and their agreed outcomes will be confirmed in writing.

The Appeal

Employees have 10 working days of being informed of the outcome of their application to appeal against the decision.

Your Line Manager will arrange an appeal meeting, normally, with an appeal panel of governors, within 10 working days of receiving an appeal.

The Chair of the Appeals Committee will communicate the outcome of this appeal meeting to the employee within five working days of the meeting.

N.B. references to working days are Monday- Friday not the employee working days and exclude school closure periods

Right to be accompanied

Employees have the right to be accompanied by a companion at any meeting that forms part of this procedure.

A companion may be a fellow worker from the Trust, a trade union representative or an official employed by the trade union. The companion should be allowed to address the meeting to put and sum up the employee's case, respond on behalf of the employee to any views expressed at the meeting, ask questions of anyone present and privately confer with the employee before, during and following the meeting. The companion however does not have the right to answer questions on behalf of the employee.

If the employee's chosen companion is not available on the proposed date of the meeting, the Line Manager should, within reason, reschedule the meeting to allow the employee to bring along the chosen companion. The alternative dates should normally follow within five working days of the original scheduled date.

Withdrawing a request

Employees can withdraw a request for flexible working at any time after it has been made. However, if the withdrawn request was the second statutory request in a 12-month period, they will not be able to make another request for 12 months after their first request.

The School/Trust will treat an application as having been withdrawn by the staff member if the staff member fails to, without good reason:

- Attend the first meeting and rearranged meeting to discuss their flexible working request, or
- Attend the first meeting and rearranged meeting to discuss their appeal

Where the School/Trust treats a staff member's conduct as a withdrawal of their request, we will notify the staff member of this in writing.

Right not to suffer any detriment

The employee is protected against detriment because of making a request for a flexible working arrangement.

Appendix A: Flexible working application form

Employee Name:

Job Title:

Date Employment Commenced:

Line Manager:

CURRENT WORKING PATTERN	
Days/hours	
Location	

PROPOSED NEW WORKING PATTERN	
Please indicate the contact term: <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent	
Days/hours	
Location	
Any additional technology or resources required	
Proposed start date	
Proposed end date (if applicable)	

IS THIS REQUEST IN RELATION TO THE EQUALITY ACT 2010?
YES/NO
If yes, please provide details and other supporting evidence

IS THIS A STATUTORY REQUEST?
YES/NO

DECLARATION OF ANY PREVIOUS REQUESTS FOR FLEXIBLE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

I confirm that:

➤ I have not made more than two statutory flexible working requests in the last 12 months.

Signed:

Date: