

Flexible Working Policy - Schools

Policy Purpose

The school is committed to helping colleagues achieve a work life balance as part of a wider commitment to the health and wellbeing of our colleagues. Our flexible working policy is designed to help Head Teachers and colleagues consider the different options available for flexible working. It also allows Head Teachers/Governors to consider requests objectively and fairly, making sure that requests are only refused where there is a valid business reason. This Policy is not to be used for disabled colleagues who want to work flexibly as this is covered under the Duty to make Reasonable Adjustments under the Equality Act.

Document Control

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Version Control	2
Review required	April 2027

1. Overview

- 1.1 The Council, in consultation with recognised trade unions, has agreed this policy for adoption by those employed under the delegated powers of Governing Bodies of schools. Governing Bodies of Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools are required to adopt this policy for all colleagues within their delegated powers.
- 1.2 Governing Bodies of non-Derby City Council schools, for example Academies, may wish to adopt this policy within their delegated powers.
- 1.3 This policy applies to all school colleagues.
- 1.4 Please refer to Appendix 1 for definitions of roles and Appendix 2 for a Glossary of terminology used in this Policy.

2. Roles and responsibilities

Colleagues

- 2.1 All colleagues will be responsible for engaging with and adhering to the policy.
- 2.2 Head Teachers/Governors are responsible for implementing the policy in a fair and consistent manner.
- 2.3 Please refer to appendix 3 for a table of roles and responsibilities.

3. Policy aspects

- 3.1 Colleagues can apply for a permanent change to their terms and conditions of employment that relate to:
 - the hours they are required to work
 - the times when they are required to work
- 3.2 All colleagues are eligible to apply for flexible working from day one of employment
- 3.3 Once a new working arrangement is agreed, colleagues cannot change back to their former arrangement.
- 3.4 There are many types of flexible working that can be applied for including
 - Part-time – reduced hours, term time only working,

- Job sharing
- Flexi-time
- Compressed hours
- Annualised hours

3.5 Two applications to work flexibly can be made in any 12 month period. Colleagues can only have one live application open at any one time.

3.6 A request can only be refused for one or more of these reasons:

- burdens of additional costs
- detrimental effect on ability to meet service users' demands
- inability to reorganise work among existing employees
- inability to recruit additional employees
- detrimental impact on quality
- detrimental impact on performance
- not enough work during the periods the employee proposes to work
- planned structural changes.

Head Teachers/Governors must have arranged and held a consultation meeting within 14 days of receiving the application before making a decision. Head Teachers/Governors refusing a request must state which of the eight reasons apply and include an explanation about why it applies in the circumstances. The explanation must include key facts that are accurate and clearly relevant to the colleague's application.

3.7 Colleagues can withdraw their application at any stage during the process by completing the withdrawal form and sending it to their Head Teacher. The Head Teacher will confirm receipt.

3.8 A colleague will be treated as withdrawing their application if they do not attend a flexible working meeting more than once without a reasonable explanation.

3.9 Colleagues who withdraw their application will only be able to make one other application in any 12 month period, starting from when their first application was made.

3.10 The law requires the consideration process for a flexible working request to be completed within two months of first receiving a request, including any appeal.

4. The application process

1. Colleague makes a right to request flexible working application in writing and sends to Head Teacher
 2. Head Teacher acknowledges application and arranges meeting with the colleague to be held within 14 days using the appropriate invitation letter giving at least 5 normal working days' notice
 3. Head Teacher and colleague meet to discuss and consider application. The colleague has the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or a trade union representative.
 4. Head Teacher informs colleague of the decision, in writing, within 14 days of the meeting.
- 4.1 Head Teachers should carefully consider whether the desired working pattern can be accommodated within the needs of the school. Wherever possible requests should be agreed or a suitable alternative offered.
 - 4.2 The timescales set out in 4 above can be varied so long as the total time taken for whole of the process, including any appeal does not exceed two months.
 - 4.3 If the Head Teacher is absent when the application is made, and needs to be considered, then alternative arrangements should be made to make sure that the two month time limit is not exceeded.
 - 4.4 Colleagues who do not attend a meeting must contact their Head Teacher as soon as possible to explain. The Head Teacher should then rearrange the meeting at a time and place convenient to both the colleague and the Head Teacher.
 - 4.5 If for some reason the request cannot be dealt with within two months the Head Teacher must discuss the proposed new timescale and if agreed complete the relevant section of the application form. The application form should give details of why additional time is requested. For example:
 - the Head Teacher may need to see another colleague, who is on annual leave, about whether they could work the hours not covered by the colleague who requested the new working pattern
 - to accommodate a trial period for a revised working pattern before a final decision is made
 - the colleague may be on annual leave

- the colleague may be away sick.

4.6 An extension beyond two months must be agreed by the colleague. If the colleague does not agree to an extension beyond two months any decision will need to be based on the information available at that time.

4.7 Head Teachers must make reasonable adjustments for disabled colleagues at meetings and discussions as they would at any other meeting. While this policy is not to be used for disabled colleagues requesting flexible working as a reasonable adjustment, there will be disabled colleagues wanting to use it for other reasons.

5. Support and guidance

5.1 A full description of the process including guidance, supportive information and documentation can be found at:

[Flexible working](#)

Other related guidance, policies and websites can be found at:

[Families, caring and flexible working](#)

Colleagues without access to this information can ask their Head Teacher for a printed copy.

6. Appeals

6.1 To appeal the outcome of a flexible working request. Use the appeal e-form available on SIP or the paper copy in your outcome letter. Further details on the appeals process can be found in the Appeals Policy.

This is the final stage of the flexible working process; you do not have any further internal right to appeal.

Role definitions

In this policy, unless the context otherwise requires, the following expressions will have the following meanings:

‘Companion’ means a work colleague, a trade union official, or an accredited representative of a trade union.

‘Governors’ means the governors appointed or elected to the Governing Body.

‘Headteacher’ means the most senior teacher in the school who is responsible for leadership and the day to day running of the school.

Glossary

In this policy, unless the context otherwise requires, the following terms will have the following meanings:

‘School’ means the school or academy named at the beginning of this Policy and includes all sites.

‘Working day’ / ‘school working day’ means any day on which a school based colleague is contracted to work.

‘Your working day’ means the day/s that you are contracted to work.

‘Detrimental’ – something that is harmful to or could hinder the service

‘Consultation meeting’ – a meeting for the manager to discuss your request with you.

‘Compressed hours’ – full time hours spread over 4 days for example

‘Annualised hours’ – A number of hours to be worked flexibly over the period of a year rather than set hours per week

Policy roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders – School based Council colleagues

Governing Body	Headteacher/ Chair/ Co-Chair/ Chairs' Representative	Managers/ Headteachers	Colleagues	External Human Resources Provider	Derby City Council Human Resources
Fairness and equality					
To ensure this policy is implemented in a fair, consistent and non-discriminatory manner.	To provide reasonable adjustments as required.	To provide reasonable adjustments as required.	To notify managers of reasonable adjustments required.	Provide advice and guidance to Governors, Headteachers, Managers and	Provide policy and procedure documentation and guidance via the Schools' Information portal.
General Operation of the Scheme					
Ensure managers carry out their responsibilities	Ensure managers carry out their responsibilities	Ensure colleagues are aware of where to access information on flexible working.	Comply with statutory requirements for notification of requests	Provide advice and guidance to Governors, Headteachers, Managers and colleagues.	Provide policy and procedure documentation and guidance via the Schools' Information portal.