



PLYMSTOCK SCHOOL

Flexible Working Policy

Lead Officer: Deputy Headteacher (Curriculum)

Date for Review: Summer 2019

Contacts

1 POLICY STATEMENT

From June 2014 every employee has the statutory right to request flexible working.

This means that changes to hours, times, patterns and place of work can be requested. These positive employment practices in turn promote equality of opportunity in employment, and may aid retention and reduce absenteeism.

Whilst Plymstock School is committed to providing a balance between employees' professional and personal lives, our wish to provide flexible working must be balanced with the duty to maintain service delivery.

2 ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to request flexible working individuals must:

- Be an employee of Plymstock School and have 26 week's continuous service
- Not have made a previous application to work flexibly during the past 12 months

3 RIGHTS

Employees have the right to be accompanied by a trade union official, or work colleague at any stage in the procedure.

4 TYPES OF FLEXIBLE WORKING

Types of flexible working that can be requested and may be considered include:

- Flexi-time
- Part-time working
- Job share
- Temporary work
- Shift working
- Annualised hours
- Term-time working

This list is not exhaustive.

5 PROCEDURE FOR REQUESTING FLEXIBLE WORKING

5.1 In order to make a request for flexible working the employee will need to apply in writing to the Headteacher setting out:

- **The date of the application, the change to working conditions they are seeking and when they would like the changes to come into effect.**
- **What effect they think the requested change would have on the school/employer and how, in their opinion, any such effect might be dealt with.**
- **That this is a statutory request and if they have made a previous application for flexible working and the date of that application.**
- **The employee should also state if they are making their request in relation to the Equality Act 2010, for example, as a reasonable adjustment for a disability.**

5.2 The Headteacher will confirm receipt.

5.3 On receiving the request, we shall arrange to discuss it with the employee as soon as possible and may do so over the phone although a meeting in person is preferable. If there is likely to be a delay we shall advise the employee as soon as possible.

5.4 If the Headteacher wishes to meet the employee to discuss the request, they must do so within a maximum period of 3 months which also includes the appeals timeline.

5.5 There may be a number of reasons why the time limits specified are too short and an extension required. Time limits can be extended where the Headteacher and employee agree. A written record should be retained of any extensions that are agreed.

5.6 Time limits will be automatically extended where the person who would ordinarily consider the Flexible Working request is absent because of annual leave or sick leave when the application is received.

5.7 If the request is agreed, the Headteacher is to send a letter which sets out the agreement, confirm any compromise offered at the meeting, and the date from which changes are to take effect.

5.8 If there are any changes to hours/shift pattern, the Headteacher is to arrange for information to be passed to the HR professional.

5.9 If a change is approved, unless agreed otherwise, it will be classed as a permanent variation of contract and there will be no right for the employee to revert back to the former arrangement. A subsequent request for a variation in the contract cannot be made for 12 months.

6.0 A trial period may be undertaken with both parties agreement. The letter setting out the agreement should clearly state that the trial period is a temporary change to their Terms and Conditions.

6.1 If the request is refused, a letter from the Headteacher will set out the grounds for refusal, explaining why they apply in the circumstances and also set out the appeal procedure. A subsequent request for a variation in the contract cannot be made for 12 months.

6.2 The only valid reasons for a request being refused include:

- Additional cost to the school
- Detrimental effect on the schools' ability to meet students' needs
- Inability to re-organise work among existing staff
- Inability to recruit additional staff
- Detrimental impact on quality
- Detrimental impact on performance
- Insufficiency of work during the periods the employee proposes to work
- Planned structural changes
- Other grounds as the Secretary of State may specify by regulations

Requests will be considered in the order they are received and any decision reached will be made according to business needs at that time.

7 PROCEDURE FOR APPEAL

7.1 An employee wishing to appeal should do so in writing within 3 months of first receiving the original request for flexible working unless an extension has been agreed. The letter should set out the grounds for appeal and be sent to the Clerk to Governors.

7.2 A meeting must be arranged to hear the appeal. The appeal panel will comprise of a panel of Governors. The school HR professional will also attend this meeting.

7.3 The employee must be notified in writing of the decision.

7.4 If, following appeal, the request is accepted the employee will be advised in writing and informed of the contractual changes agreed to and the date on which they are to take effect.

7.5 If, following appeal, the request is refused a letter setting out the grounds for the refusal and explaining why they apply will be sent to the employee.

8 WITHDRAWAL OF REQUEST

Plymstock School will treat the request as withdrawn if the employee:

- Indicates verbally or in writing that the request is withdrawn.
- Fails to attend a meeting (without giving a reason). A meeting will only be re-arranged once.
- Unreasonably refuses to provide relevant information.

9 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Copies of all correspondence relating to the request will be retained on the employee's personal file.