



Wincle CE Primary School

Wincle School provides an enriching and outstanding rural education. We nurture the whole individual: body, mind and soul, inspiring rounded, happy, courageous children who shine in all that they say and do. Our children exhibit a passion for learning, a confident faith, a loving concern for community and an inclusive respect for all.

Shine Like Stars' Philippians 2:15

Flexible Working Policy

Date updated:	Brief summary of changes:
September 2025	Policy written to inform staff of how and when to request flexible working.

Scope

This policy and procedure applies to all employees of Wincle CE Primary School. It does not apply to agency workers, self-employed contractors or volunteers. It does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and the school may amend it at any time following consultation with the recognised trade unions.

Policy statement

Wincle CE Primary School recognises the commitment and hard work of its employees, understanding that they may at times in their working life find it difficult to maintain a balance between professional and personal commitments. The school also understands that flexible working can improve employee motivation, promote work-life balance, enrich employee wellbeing, improve performance and productivity, and reduce stress.

The purpose of this policy is to set out the flexible working options, including the procedure for requesting flexible working. The procedure gives an employee the opportunity to formally request a change to their working pattern in accordance with the statutory procedure for requesting flexible working.

The school is committed to agreeing any flexible working arrangements, provided that the needs and objectives of the school can also be met. However, it should be noted that the requirements of some job roles may not lend themselves to some of the contractual options outlined in this policy.

What flexible working is

Flexible working is any type of working arrangement that gives some degree of flexibility on how long, where and when an employee works. The headteacher will consider requests for any type of flexible working with an open mind.

Examples of flexible working include

- part-time working;
- term-time working;
- job sharing; and
- compressed hours (only applicable to support staff).

These examples are considered to be the typical arrangements that an employee may request. More detail about these options is outlined in [Appendix 1](#). The headteacher will also be able to give an employee further advice about flexible working options they may wish to consider.

Eligibility

An employee has the statutory right to request flexible working from the first day of employment. Under the statutory procedure, an employee can make two requests in every 12-month period. If an employee has submitted a flexible working request, they must wait until that one has been considered and any appeal has been dealt with, before submitting another.

Submitting a request for flexible working

If an employee is interested in flexible working, it is advisable for them to speak informally with their headteacher to discuss eligibility and the different options for flexible working before submitting a formal request.

The employee will need to submit a written application if they would like their flexible working request to be considered under the formal procedure (see [Appendix 2](#) for a flexible working application form). The employee should return their application to their headteacher. Any request made under this procedure must include:

- the date of the request;
- the changes that the employee is seeking to terms and conditions of employment;
- the date on which the employee would like the proposed change to start;
- a statement that is a statutory request;
- whether any previous flexible working requests have been made; and
- the dates of any previous requests.

If a request for flexible working relates to a reasonable adjustment for a disability under the Equality Act 2010, this should be made this clear in the request.

If a request does not contain all the required information, the employee will be asked to resubmit their application with the necessary additional information. Requests that are incomplete or contain errors will not be automatically rejected. As much detail as possible should be provided about the change to support a request to enable full and proper consideration.

Schools often plan and schedule timetables well in advance of the end of term and therefore a request for flexible working for the next term should be completed as soon as possible.

Responding to a flexible working request

The headteacher will consider proposed flexible working arrangements. Where a request needs further discussion, the headteacher will invite the employee to a consultation meeting.

Where a request can be approved in full without a consultation meeting, the headteacher will confirm this in writing usually within 10 working days of receiving the request. This will include details of the new arrangements and an invitation to discuss the new arrangements. This time limit may be extended.

A decision will be made on all requests, including any appeal within a maximum of two months. This time limit may be extended with the agreement of both the employee and the headteacher. The date for extension/s must be documented and agreed in writing.

Consultation meeting about flexible working

Where a request needs further discussion, the headteacher will arrange a consultation meeting with the employee to discuss the flexible working application. The consultation meeting will be held within 10 working days of receiving the request. However, if this is not possible, the employee will be informed of the reason for any delay.

An employee may, if they wish, ask a fellow worker, a trade union representative or an official employed by a trade union to attend the meeting with them.

The consultation meeting is an opportunity for the employee to explain how the proposed working arrangements would benefit them and for the headteacher to consider and discuss any alternative flexible working options that may be available and suitable for the employee and the school.

At the consultation meeting, the employee should be as open as possible about their needs so that the headteacher can engage in a constructive discussion about what is feasible.

Considering flexible working requests

The headteacher will consider proposed flexible working arrangements carefully weighing up the potential benefits to both the employee and the school, as well as any adverse effects of implementing the proposed changes.

Each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis, in the order they are received. Agreeing to one request will not set a precedent or create the right for another employee to be granted a similar change to their working pattern.

Communicating a decision after consultation

After the consultation meeting, a request for flexible working may be granted in full, in part or refused.

The headteacher will inform the employee in writing, usually within 10 working days of the consultation meeting, of their decision and why they have reached this decision.

Where a request is granted

A request may be granted in full or in part. For example:

- the school may propose a modified version of a request;
- a request may be granted on a temporary basis; or
- an employee may be asked to try the flexible working arrangement for a trial period.

Where a request is granted in full or in part, the headteacher will meet with the employee to discuss how and when the changes might be implemented.

Any agreed changes to terms and conditions of employment, whether permanent or temporary, will be put in writing and sent to the employee as an amendment to their contract of employment, which the employee will need to sign and return to the school.

Reasons for rejecting a request

While the school is committed to encouraging flexible working patterns, the headteacher needs to remain realistic. There may be cases where it is not possible for a request to be accommodated because of:

- the burden of additional costs;
- a detrimental effect on ability to meet demands of the pupils and school;
- an inability to reorganise work among existing employees;
- a detrimental impact on quality and/or performance;
- an inability to recruit additional employees;
- insufficient work for the periods the employee proposes to work; and
- a planned structural change to the school.

Requests will not be rejected for any other reason.

Right to appeal a decision

An employee has the right to appeal the decision if their request for flexible working is rejected or only agreed in part.

The employee should submit their appeal to the school's governing body within 5 working days of receiving the written notification of the decision. This should be done in writing and clearly state the grounds on which they are appealing.

An appeal meeting with a member/s of the governing body who did not make the original decision, will be held within 10 working days of lodging the appeal. An employee may, if they wish, ask a fellow worker, a trade union representative or an official employed by a trade union to attend the meeting with them.

Following the appeal meeting, the member/s of the governing body will inform the employee in writing, usually within 5 working days, of the outcome. The outcome of the appeal is final.

Trialling new working arrangements

Where there is some uncertainty about whether the flexible working arrangement is practical for the employee or the school, a trial period may be agreed. A trial period will allow enough time to implement and get used to the new arrangement before making any decisions on its viability. Before embarking on a trial period, the employee and the headteacher will need to extend the time limit during which the headteacher would normally reach a decision about a flexible working request (unless the trial period will be completed with the two-month period). In these circumstances, the headteacher will write to the employee stating:

- that their agreement to the request for flexible working is subject to the outcome of the trial period;
- the length of the trial period, i.e., the start and end dates;
- that the change to terms and conditions of employment during the trial period is for a temporary period;
- the nature of the change to terms and conditions of employment; and
- the date that the employee will revert to their previous terms and conditions of employment if the headteacher refuses the request for flexible working.

The working arrangements should be reviewed regularly during the trial period to review how the arrangements are working in practice and/or to address any issues that may have arisen.

Meetings

Meetings will usually be carried out in person or, if circumstances dictate remotely, via a video platform. An employee's trade union representative/work companion, if they choose to have one, will be able to join the meeting whether in person or virtually. Any informal meetings or discussions may take place over the phone.

Treating applications as withdrawn

An employee should inform their headteacher in writing if they wish to withdraw their application for flexible working. If an employee fails to attend, without good reason, meetings to discuss their application or to appeal, the school will treat their application as withdrawn and the headteacher will inform them of this.

Changes to terms and conditions of employment

Where flexible working practices are agreed, any changes to terms and conditions of employment – temporary or permanent – will be put in writing. However, all arrangements may be reviewed in the event that circumstances change. Changes to working patterns/hours will result in a change in salary and if the employee is in the pension scheme, it may also affect their pension.

The headteacher must inform the school's payroll provider of all contractual changes.

Data protection

When managing flexible working requests, personal data collected will be processed in accordance with the school's data protection policy. Data collected from the point at which a flexible working request is received is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of managing their request for flexible working.

Equality

The school is committed to promoting equal opportunities in employment. Employees (and any job applicants) will receive equal treatment regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation or caring responsibility. This means that the application of the procedure may need to be adjusted to cater for the specific needs of an individual including the provision of information in alternative formats where necessary.

Monitoring and review

The school will monitor this procedure to ensure that it is operating fairly, consistently, and effectively. The procedure will be reviewed in the light of operating experience and/or changes in legislation.

Appendix 1 – Flexible working options

The table below summarises the most common types of flexible working arrangements as outline in this policy.

Part-time working	Part time working is when an employee is contracted to work less than 32.436 hours for teachers or 37 hours for support staff per week. This is agreed when first taking up the appointment. The salary and annual leave are pro-rata in accordance with the number of hours worked.
Term-time working	This applies when an employee only works during school terms. Employees are paid for the number of weeks they work during the year plus their holiday entitlement, which is then averaged out and paid over a 12-month period. Any time taken outside of the agreement will be unpaid.
Job sharing	This is where two employees may share one full time post. The headteacher/manager and the job share partners agree the precise pattern of working, and the job sharers have an obligation to ensure work priorities are met. The job sharers have the same rights as a full-time employee.
Compressed hours	This allows an employee to work their total number of hours in fewer working days, e.g. 5 days have been compressed into a 4-day week. This option is only applicable to support staff.

Appendix 2 – Flexible working application form

You can use this form to submit a formal request for flexible working on or after 6 April 2024. Before completing this form, you should first read the Flexible Working Policy and Procedure. You should note that under the right it may take up to two months to consider a request before it can be implemented. You should therefore ensure that you submit your application to your headteacher/manager well in advance of the date you wish the request to take effect.

Please note that any change requested will be a permanent change to your terms and conditions unless stated otherwise in your application.

Request for flexible working	
Employee name:	
Employee number:	

Job title:		
Department:		
<p>All employees have the statutory right to request flexible working. Under the statutory procedure, you can make two requests in every 12-month period. If you have submitted a flexible working request, you must wait until that one has been considered and any appeal has been dealt with, before submitting another. If you are uncertain whether you are eligible to make a request, please contact your headteacher.</p> <p>We treat personal data collected while managing your flexible working request in accordance with data protection legislation.</p>		
Date form submitted:		
Previous applications for flexible working		
Have you submitted a previous request for flexible working? If yes, please answer the next question	Yes	No
When did you submit your last two requests for flexible working?		
Are you a disabled person whose request for flexible working is related to your disability?	Yes	No
I wish to submit a statutory request for flexible working as detailed below		
Please set out the pattern of working that you are seeking. For example, if you wish to change your hours of work, please state what your current hours are and what you would like your new hours to be.		
I would like the above change(s) to my working pattern to take effect on:		

I would like the above change(s) to be permanent:	Yes	No
If no, I would like the above change(s) to be temporary and to end on:		
<p>Once you have submitted a valid application for flexible working, your headteacher will contact you to arrange a consultation meeting. The consultation meeting is an opportunity for you to explain how the proposed working arrangements would benefit you and for us to consider and discuss any alternative flexible working options that may be available and suitable for you and the school.</p> <p>We urge you to be as open as possible about your needs so that we are able to engage in a constructive discussion about what is feasible.</p>		
<div> <div>Signed:</div> <div>Date:</div> </div>		
<p>Please return your completed form to your headteacher, preferably by email</p>		