



**Boroughbridge**  
High School

## **Flexi-School Policy**

<b>Policy Ratified by Governors</b>	November 2022
<b>Next Policy review due</b>	November 2024
<b>Staff Lead</b>	Headteacher

**Significant Revisions since last review:**

New Policy

## **Introduction**

When deciding whether to agree to a flexi-schooling arrangement, Local Authorities advise that Headteachers must consider the following criteria:

- current and anticipated level of educational attainment, achievement and progress of the individual pupil and the arrangements for monitoring the learning and progress of the individual pupil
- flexi-schooling education provided at home and that provided at school **must** together constitute a **full-time education provision**
- the effect on school dynamics and the morale and motivation of other children on roll at the school
- the effect on the school organisation, school resources and funding
- the impact on overall school attainment and progress figures

As a school we promote full time education within a school environment as a valuable way for all children and young people to enjoy, achieve and attain to their full potential. Our expectation is that all children will aspire to attend full time unless there are exceptional reasons for them not to.

We recognise that parents/carers may choose other ways for their child or young person to engage in effective, full-time, and suitable education, however our expectation is that it is in the child's best interest to engage in full time education delivered by school, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

A flexi-school request must emanate from the parent; it is not for a Headteacher, a member of school staff or an officer of the Local Authority to suggest or encourage a family to undertake flexi-schooling.

## **Background**

The responsibility for a child receiving full-time education while he or she is of statutory school age lies with the parent/carer.

Whilst a parent/carer may request that their child is flexi-schooled it is entirely at the Headteacher's discretion, acting with the authority of the governing body, as to whether the school is prepared to agree to a flexi-schooling arrangement.

Where a parent/carer educates a child partly at school and partly at home or elsewhere as an expression of parental preference through agreement with the head teacher this is called flexi-schooling.

In November 2007 the DCSF issued "Elective Home Education: Guidelines for Local Authorities" which contained the following paragraph (5.6)

*"Flexi-schooling" or "flexible school attendance" is an arrangement between the parent and the school where the child is registered at school and attends the school only part of the time; the rest of the time the child is home educated. This can be a long-term arrangement or a short-term measure for a particular reason. Flexi-schooling is a legal option provided that the head teacher at the school concerned agrees to the arrangement. The child will be required to follow the National Curriculum whilst at school but not whilst he or she is being educated at home. Local Authorities should make sure that head teachers are made familiar with flexi-schooling and how it may work in practice.*

More recent guidance is provided in the DfE's 2019 'Elective Home Education Guidance' for Local Authorities and Parents (see Appendix 2).

A parent/carer may request flexi-schooling on a long-term basis where he or she favours this form of education or they may request flexi-schooling for a short period, when, for example, the child is unable to attend school every day due to illness or injury.

### **How should an application for flexi-schooling be made?**

Flexi-schooling should not be confused with elective home education. Parents/carers have a legal right to choose to home educate their child, but **parents/carers do not have a legal right to insist on a flexi-schooling arrangement** being agreed by any school.

Whilst a parent/carer may request that their child is flexi-schooled it is entirely at the Headteacher's discretion, acting with the authority of the governing body, as to whether the school is prepared to agree to a flexi-schooling arrangement.

If a parent/carer is interested in making a request for a flexi-schooling arrangement, contact should be made directly with the Headteacher of the school so that the proposal may be considered.

### **What should parents/carers consider?**

The implications of making partial educational provision at home are significant, both in terms of expertise and resources and in the commitment to make a shared provision work.

The education provided at home and at school should together constitute a full-time provision.

While there is no statutory curriculum for the home education part of a flexi-schooling arrangement, parents/carers will need to be mindful of the impact on the child's access to the National Curriculum and the possible fragmentation of the learning experience.

Flexi-schooling is unlikely to succeed if the reasons for choosing it are negative and the choice is motivated by the desire to avoid difficulties around certain subjects, teachers, peers, aspects of schools' discipline or attendance itself.

If the child moves to a different school, there can be no guarantee that flexi-schooling would be able to continue. A fresh request for a flexi-schooling arrangement must be made to the new school Headteacher. It would then be a decision for the Headteacher at the new school to make.

It is imperative that all children are prepared for the next stage of education, i.e., between Years, Key stages, and school transfers. Therefore, at each review meeting we will reflect and consider the attendance pattern of each child and if it is their best interests to continue with or increase their attendance at school.

### **What does the Headteacher consider?**

All requests must be considered by the Headteacher on their own merits. The Headteacher will consider how a flexi-schooling arrangement will best meet the interests of the child; their educational progress and achievement; together with the likely impact on dynamic, morale and the organisation of the school.

When deciding whether to agree to a flexi-schooling arrangement, Local Authorities advise that Headteachers must consider:

- current and anticipated level of educational attainment, achievement and progress of the individual pupil and the arrangements for monitoring the learning and progress of the individual pupil

- flexi-schooling education provided at home and that provided at school must together constitute a full-time education provision,
- the effect on school dynamics and the morale and motivation of other children on roll at the school,
- the effect on the school organisation, school resources and funding
- the impact on overall school attainment and progress figures

### **The Role of the Governing Body**

The governing body may be involved in agreeing and reviewing the school's approach to flexi-schooling requests, but they should not become involved in individual cases, as some governors may have a more formal role if a dispute arises and/or a complaint is made.

Governors should satisfy themselves that the Headteacher has fully considered the points highlighted above and are fully conversant with the school attendance statutory guidance when reaching a decision.

### **Appeals**

There is no appeal against the decision of a Headteacher not to agree to a flexi-schooling request or if a Headteacher decides to cease an individual child's flexi-schooling arrangement.

### **Written Agreements with Parents/Carers**

A written, and signed agreement (see appendix 1) must be formulated between the school and parents/carers to make expectations clear for all concerned. The agreement will be formalised by the school's flexi-schooling policy and will include:

- The reasons for requesting flexi-schooling
- The normal expected pattern of attendance at school including threshold for attendance and termination of contract.
- The length of time the agreement is to run before being reviewed. Typically, this may be one term.
- What flexibility there will be regarding special events which fall outside of the normal arrangement such as, but not limited to, assemblies, school trips, school productions or performances, sports events, visitors to the school.
- How the register will be marked (see section Marking the Attendance Register)
- The parents/carers must contact the school if the child is absent from a session that they would normally be present at school or at approved educational activity.
- How the school will follow up any unexpected or unexplained absence as it would for other children.
- What the arrangement will be at times of children's assessment.
- If parents/carers use a private tutor, they remain responsible for the welfare and education of their child/young person. It is recommended that parents/carers check the tutor's identity and qualifications, take up appropriate references and ensure that the tutor has a recent Disclosure and Barring service (DBS) disclosure certificate that they are satisfied with. We advise parents/carers to monitor the teaching and learning and the progress of their child/young person makes
- Any perceived special educational needs and associated provision.
- Recommended regular planning meetings between parents/carers and school to ensure the child achieves his or her potential and to promote good home-school relationships.
- Under what circumstances and with what notice either party can withdraw from the arrangement.

## **Procedure for when a child is flexi-schooled**

The child/young person will already be registered at the school. On days when he or she attends school, the National Curriculum must be followed as if the child were attending full-time.

### **The requirement to follow the National Curriculum will apply to all children except:**

- Temporarily, due to exceptional circumstances such as prolonged absence from school on health grounds or family crisis.
- As a part of a Statement of Special Educational Needs.
- With the permission of the Secretary of State to allow curriculum development and experiment to take place, for an agreed period.

On days when he or she does not attend school, the child need not follow the National Curriculum.

## **Marking the Attendance Register**

The DfE's Elective Home Education guidance (April 2019) states that pupils should be marked absent from school during periods when they are receiving home education as part of the flexi-school agreement. Registers should be marked with attendance code 'C' (authorised absence) on the days that the pupil is being educated at home. It is not appropriate to mark this time as 'approved off-site activity' as the school has no supervisory role in the child's/young person's education at such times and also has no responsibility for the welfare of the child/young person while he or she is at home.

When an absence occurs on days when the child is due to attend, school will follow up the absence in the usual way in line with the school policy.

## **SEND and Children/Young People with an Education, Health and Care Plans'**

There is no distinction between children who are to be flexi-schooled and those who are not. The duty to review a child's statement of special educational needs on an annual basis or sooner if appropriate, still applies.

## **Funding**

The child will be recorded by the school as attending full-time – with sessions not in school being recorded as per agreement. Therefore, the school will receive full-time funding.

Flexi-schooled children are included in census returns as for other children.

Parents/Carers assume full financial responsibility for their Child/Young Persons educational provision which is not at the school, including the cost of any external assistance used such as tutors, parent groups or part time alternative provision'

## **Expected patterns of attendance**

Patterns of attendance are agreed in discussion with the Headteacher but would usually be based on a minimum of 2 school days per week. For all children, spending at least two consecutive days in school each week will be recommended. Variations to this will be at the Headteacher's discretion.

## **Safeguarding**

There is no distinction between children who are flexi-schooled and those who are not. The usual safeguarding policy applies to all children.

**Admissions**

There is no distinction between children who are flexi-schooled and those who are not. Whatever the degree of attendance, the child will count towards admissions numbers on roll as full-time.

**Insurance**

There is no distinction between children who are to be flexi-schooled and those who are not.

**Children Educated outside their Chronological Age-Group**

There is no distinction between children who are to be flexi-schooled and those who are not.

**When the flexi schooling arrangement is not working**

If it appears to the school that the flexi schooling arrangement is not working, the school will liaise with parents/carers to try to address this. If the situation cannot be rectified, then the flexi schooling offer may be withdrawn. This is at the Headteacher's discretion and there is no right to appeal this decision. The notice period for this will be 4 weeks. The child would then be required to attend school on a full-time basis.

If parents/carers wish to cease the flexi-schooling arrangement and revert to full-time schooling, then the notice period for this will be 1 week.

Any non-attendance would be recorded following the school's usual absence procedures.

## Flexi Schooling Contract and Attendance Agreement

To be completed by parents and discussed at Meeting

<b>Child's name</b>			
<b>Name of parents</b>			
Admissions form completed/Child already on school roll			
What attracted you to flexi schooling?	(continue overleaf if necessary)		
What are your expectations of the school-based part of the Education?	(continue overleaf if necessary)		
What are your expectations of the home-based part of the Education?	(continue overleaf if necessary)		
Do you intend to follow the National Curriculum at Home?			
If so, do you require any help with this? (eg worksheets, assistance with attainment targets etc)			
Form of Education to date	F/T School N/A	P/T School	Home Education
Additional Needs (if applicable)			

Please tell us anything else  
you feel we may find useful  
about yourself or your child



**Flexi-schooling:  
Contract for Provision of Education – Part 1 School**

**Child's name \*\***

**Name of parents**

Boroughbridge High School is responsible for the education of the above named child on the days and times set out in the attached Attendance Agreement and timetable. Should special events fall outside of your child's arranged school days, there will be flexibility and your child can attend these events.

The educational provision will be suitable to \*\*'s age, aptitude and ability as set out in s7 of the Education Act 1996 and will include:

Access to the whole curriculum with a focus on building knowledge and skills around the core curriculum. \*\* will also have access to Careers advice to enable preparation for education post-16.

Whilst \*\* is on school premises the School is acting in loco parentis and will maintain primary responsibility for \*\*'s safety and welfare.

School will follow procedures for supporting a child with Special Education Needs in the same way as if \*\* was attending full time.

The school and parents will meet every four weeks for a review meeting to discuss \*\*'s progress and review the attendance agreement.

I/we understand that if we wish to withdraw from this agreement and revert to full-time schooling then the notice period for this will be one week.

**Headteacher**

**Date**

**Flexi-schooling:  
Contract for Provision of Education – Part 2 Home**

I/we are responsible for the education of the above-named child on the days and times set out in the attached Attendance Agreement and timetable.

The educational provision will be suitable to \*\*’s age, aptitude and ability as set out in s7 of the Education Act 1996 and will include:

\*\*\*\*

I/we take responsibility for any additional adults working with \*\* when not in school (e.g. tutors). If I/we use a private tutor, I/we remain responsible for the welfare and education of \*\*. (It is recommended that parents check the tutor’s identity and qualification, take up appropriate references and ensure that the tutor has a recent DBS certificate that they are satisfied with. We advise parents to monitor the teaching and learning and the progress your child makes.)

During school hours timetabled for home-based education I/we will maintain primary responsibility for \*\*’s safety and welfare.

I/we understand that when \*\* is not at school, due to this flexi-school arrangement, the code C will be entered into the register. I/we must contact the school if \*\* is absent from a session that he would normally be present at school; school will apply usual absence procedures.

School will follow procedures for supporting a child with Special Education Needs in the same way as if the child was attending full time. I/we will work with school to support this.

I/we understand that, at times of national assessment and school assessment periods, \*\* will be in school for all tests and assessments. This helps teachers to identify next steps. I/we will attend Parents’ Evenings. In addition we agree to continue to have regular dialogue between with school to help support \*\*’s learning.

I/we agree to meet every four weeks for a review meeting to discuss \*\*’s progress and review the attendance agreement.

I/we understand that if we wish to withdraw from this agreement and revert to full-time schooling then the notice period for this will be one week.

**Parent**

**Date**

**Flexi-schooling:  
Attendance Agreement**

**Child's Name \*\***

**Parent's Name**

	<b>MORNING</b>	<b>AFTERNOON</b>
<b>Monday</b>		
<b>Tuesday</b>		
<b>Wednesday</b>		
<b>Thursday</b>		
<b>Friday</b>		

\*\*'s education will be split between home and school as set out in the above timetable. Should special events fall outside of your child's arranged school days, there will be flexibility and your child can attend these events

**Headteacher** **Date**

**Parent** **Date**

## **Appendix 2**

### **DfE Elective Home Education Guidance for Local Authorities, April 2019**

#### **What is elective home education?**

1.3 Although children being home-educated are not normally registered at any school, parents sometimes choose to make arrangements for a child to receive part of the total provision at a school - the purpose of this will often be to provide education in specific subjects more easily than is possible at home. Such arrangements are sometimes known as 'flexi-schooling'. Schools are under no obligation to agree to such arrangements, but some are happy to do so. When a child is flexi-schooled, the parents must still ensure that the child receives a suitable full-time education, but the element received at school must be taken into account in considering whether that duty is met, just as it should be when a child attends other settings on a part-time basis as described above. Bearing that in mind, this guidance applies as much to children who are flexi-schooled as it does to others who are educated at home.

#### **Flexi-schooling**

10.7 Although most children educated at home have all the provision made at home, or alternatively partly at home and partly in other ways such as attendance at privately-run part-time tuition settings, it is not essential that this be so. Some children who are educated at home most of the time are also registered at school and attend school for part of the week – perhaps one day a week. The purpose of this is usually to ensure the provision in specific subjects is satisfactory, although it can also help in other ways such as socialisation. If a child is of compulsory school age he or she must, overall, be receiving full-time education even if components of it are part-time.

10.8 Schools are not obliged to accept such arrangements if requested by parents. If they do, then time spent by children being educated at home should be authorised as absence in the usual way and marked in attendance registers accordingly. It is not appropriate to mark this time as 'approved off-site activity' as the school has no supervisory role in the child's education at such times and has no responsibility for the welfare of the child while he or she is at home. The department does not propose to institute a new attendance code specific to flexi-schooling. Some schools have expressed concern that such absence may have a detrimental effect for the purpose of Ofsted inspection, but this is not the case; some schools with significant flexi-schooling numbers have had good outcomes from Ofsted inspections. Schools which have flexi-schooled pupils should be ready to discuss with Ofsted inspectors the arrangements they have in place to deal with the requirements caused by such pupils. Schools are held to account through inspection for the performance of pupils, and that will include any who attend the school as part of a programme of flexi-schooling.