

Flexible Working Policy

This policy (and the procedure outlined within) applies across all partner schools in the Stephen Sutton Multi-Academy Trust (SSMAT). It is available on the SSMAT website and is accessible from our schools' websites.

POLICY APPROVAL and REVIEW

Review date: **Mar. '20**

Approval needed by: **Trust Board**

Next review date: **Mar. '22**

1. Introduction / Overview



1.1 Stephen Sutton Multi-Academy Trust (SSMAT) believes that flexible working can increase colleagues' motivation, promote work-life balance, reduce employee stress and improve performance and productivity.

1.2 Flexible working requests may include:

- changes to the number of working hours;
- changes to working days;
- changes to the pattern of work; and/or
- a change of work location, including working from home.

2. Eligibility

2.1 All colleagues with a minimum of 26 weeks of continuous service may request flexible working.

2.2 Only one request can be made in every 12 month period.

2.3 All requests must be considered carefully and seriously and dealt with in a reasonable manner.

3. Application

3.1 All requests for flexible working must be made in writing to the Headteacher, using the Flexible Working Application Form (Appendix 1).

4. Discussion and Decision

4.1 On receipt of the Flexible Working Application Form, the Headteacher will generally arrange a meeting to deal with the request. The purpose of the meeting is to find out more about the proposed changes to working arrangements and how they could be workable, ideally to the benefit of both the applicant and the school. Where a request can, without further discussion, be approved in the terms stated in the colleague's written application, a meeting will not be necessary.

4.2 The Headteacher will consider the proposed flexible working arrangements carefully, weighing up the potential benefits to the colleague and to the school against any adverse impact of implementing the changes. Each request will be considered on a case by case basis.

4.3 The Headteacher will inform the colleague, in writing, of their decision, as soon as practicable after the meeting (where a meeting takes place) or (where a meeting does not take place) following receipt of the application.

- 4.4 The request may be granted in full or in part. The school may propose amendments to the request, the request may be granted on a temporary basis, or the colleague may be asked to undergo the flexible working arrangement for a trial period.
- 4.5 Where the decision is to grant the request, the Headteacher (or a senior manager with delegated responsibility) meets with the colleague to discuss how and when the changes will be implemented.
- 4.6 Where a flexible working request is rejected, written reasons are given to the colleague. Those reasons must be for one or more of the following (legally) prescribed business reasons:
- the burden of additional costs;
 - an inability to reorganise work among existing staff;
 - an inability to recruit additional staff;
 - a detrimental impact on quality;
 - a detrimental impact on performance;
 - a detrimental effect on ability to meet customer demand;
 - insufficient work available for the periods the colleague proposes to work; and/or
 - a planned structural / organisational change.

5. Appeals / Grievances

- 5.1 The applicant has the right to appeal a decision to reject their flexible working application, including if it is rejected in part. An appeal should be made in writing, without delay, to the Chair of the Governing Body.
- 5.2 Where a colleague fails to attend a meeting, including an appeal meeting, and then fails to attend a rearranged meeting without good reason, the application or appeal will be deemed to have been withdrawn.
- 5.3 All requests will be dealt with within three months from first receipt to notification of the decision on appeal. With this in mind, the Headteacher should hold the initial meeting without delay to enable notification of the outcome and any appeal to take place within the prescribed timescale.
- 5.4 Where an employee is dissatisfied with the way in which their request has been handled, they should raise a grievance under the Trust's Staff Grievance Policy.

6. Implementation

- 6.1 A change granted under flexible working grounds is a permanent contractual change (unless it is agreed on a temporary basis) and a variation to the colleague's contract of employment is issued.

- 6.2 The time limit may be extended where both the colleague and employer are in agreement, e.g. to give the colleague a trial period on the flexible working arrangements.

Stuart Jones; Mar. '20



Appendix 1

APPLICATION FOR FLEXIBLE WORKING

You must have 26 weeks of continuous service with Stephen Sutton Multi-Academy Trust to make an application under this policy. You can only make one request in a 12 month period. Please note that if your application is granted, the change to your working arrangements is a permanent change to your contract of employment.

All sections of the application must be completed in full and the form must be signed.

Name:	
Job Title:	
Department:	
Employment start date:	
Current weekly working hours and pattern of work:	
Date that you would like your flexible working to start:	

Have you made an application for flexible working previously?	Yes*	No*
	Date:	
Is your application for flexible working related to disability?	Yes*	No*

Describe the pattern of work that you are requesting, including any change to your working hours or work location.
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The proposed change to my working pattern will affect my colleagues and school as follows:
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