



LDBS Academies Trust

**LDBS Academies Trust
&
LDBS Academies Trust 2
Flexible Working Policy**

DATE APPROVED BY THE LDBS ACADEMIES TRUST	December 2024		
NEXT REVIEW DATE (Biennial)	May 2026		
SIGNED (EXECUTIVE) HEADTEACHER		DATE	
SIGNED CHAIR OF THE LOCAL ACADEMY COMMITTEE		DATE	



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Vision Statement

Our schools serve the whole community where all are welcomed valued and supported. We aim to enrich the life experiences of all the children and families we come into contact with helping our children to grow spiritually, mentally, and academically. We seek to have a broad curriculum where all faiths are honoured within a Christian context.

Jesus promised a life in all its fullness which means that we value each person as the individual God made them to be; we encourage creativity and teamwork in our schools; we encourage forgiveness and put others' needs before our own; we actively encourage everyone to work to care for creation; learning the full range of subjects (including Religious Education) and always aiming for excellence. Daily Collective Worships is provided as a space to ask big questions, reflect on what is happening in the world around us and pray. Put simply, our schools are life-giving.

In our school we demonstrate how we support this vision through our values which are [\[insert text\]](#) and summed up in the following statement [\[insert text\]](#).

We live out our values and vision through our key policies e.g. The behaviour policy is supported through the values described in the rewards and sanctions section of the policy demonstrating the importance of dignity and forgiveness.

The school admissions policy decided by the Local Academy Committee shows our inclusivity and the importance we place on service to our local community.

The breadth of the curriculum and the creative projects which we enjoy are key to providing opportunities for children to experience life in 'all its fullness', so that alongside learning and wisdom they also experience joy and delight in learning.

Care for the individual and their needs is crucial and the school's policies regarding inclusion and SEND are constant reminders that each of us is known to God and our names are 'inscribed on the palms of His hands'.

The HR policies are common in all Trust schools and are created to ensure that individuals are treated fairly and with dignity. All HR policies have been scrutinised by the various unions to ensure that they contain acceptable procedures.



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The Flexible Working Policy

The LDBS Academies Trust and the LDBS Academies Trust 2 (collectively referred to as ‘the LAT’) are committed to providing equal opportunity in employment and to develop work practices and policies that support a healthy work-life balance. The LAT recognises that, in addition to helping balance work and personal lives, flexible working can raise staff morale, reduce absenteeism and improve our use and retention of staff. **However, the education and well-being of children at our schools will always be the priority.**

Definition of flexible working

Flexible working refers to the number of hours an employee works, the pattern of those hours (including the start and finish times) and the place (or places) of work.

Right to ask for flexible working

This policy outlines the LAT’s commitment to consider flexible working arrangements for all its employees. It is important to understand that this is not a right to work flexibly but to ask the (Executive) Headteacher to consider whether such a way of working is an appropriate alternative to the way in which the employee currently works.

No employee will be treated less favourably, suffer detriment, or be dismissed because they request, or have, flexible working arrangements.

The opportunities for flexible working will depend on the needs of the school, but the LAT recognises that employees may be interested in reducing working hours, or changing their working pattern. The LAT will make every effort to accommodate the requests for flexible working, provided that the employee is able to perform their duties effectively and without detriment to the children’s education and welfare.

The LAT will not reject any requests for flexible working without first considering whether arrangements can be made to accommodate them. If the employee wishes to change to working on a part-time or job-share basis, the employee will be offered an appropriately adjusted contract of employment containing the new terms and conditions of employment. The LAT will preserve the employee’s continuity of employment and all related rights in this situation.



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If an employee reduces the number of hours they work as part of a flexible working arrangement (i.e. part-time, days off, etc.), the employee will be remunerated accordingly at a pro rata rate.

Where a job-share arrangement, which is acceptable to the school, cannot immediately be identified, the employee will nevertheless be encouraged to continue to work full-time and will be offered a job-share position in a suitable post as soon as one becomes available.

Eligibility

Under The Employment Relations (Flexible Working) Act 2023 the right to request flexible working is a day 1 statutory right and employees can make up to two requests within any 12 month period.

An employee is entitled to additional requests if they relate to a statutory entitlement e.g. the Equality Act 2010 right to request reasonable adjustments, in which case this should be made clear in the application.

Managers have a duty to consider a request in a reasonable manner. The law requires that all requests, including any appeals, must be considered and decided on within a period of two months from first receipt, unless there is an agreement to extend this period with the employee.

If the employee does not meet the criteria above but still wishes to work flexibly then they should discuss the matter with the (Executive) Headteacher in the first instance.

In all circumstances, whether formal or informal, the employee is asked to consider the needs of the school and ensure that any proposal or request will not prevent the employee from being available during the term-time.

Scope

If the employee is deemed to be eligible, the employee will be able to request:

- A change to the contracted hours; and / or
- A change to the times when the employee is required to work (i.e. working pattern adjustment).

Applications for a change in working pattern will not always require a significant alteration. However, all staff must expect that the core working time of a school is covered.



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Procedure

The employee must make an initial application for flexible working in writing, which must be submitted by hand, letter, fax, or electronically) and specify:

1. That the application is for flexible working made under the terms of The Flexible Working Regulations 2014;
- Whether a previous application for flexible working has been made, and if so, when it was submitted and what was the outcome;
- As much information as possible about the employee's current working pattern and specify the flexible working pattern applied for and the date on which it the proposed changes should come into effect;
- What effect, if any, the proposed changes would have on the school, on the employee's colleagues and on teaching and learning of the pupils and how, in the opinion of the employee, any such effect might be dealt with;
- That the employee meets with the eligibility criteria, as set out in this policy; and
- The employee's signature and date on the application.

The school and the LAT will consider all eligible applications, following which a meeting will be arranged between the employee and the (Executive) Headteacher as soon as possible to further discuss the request. This will provide the employee and the school with the opportunity to explore the desired work pattern in depth and to discuss how best it might be accommodated. It will also provide an opportunity to consider alternative working patterns should there be problems in accommodating the desired working pattern outlined in the application.

Once a decision has been made by the (Executive) Headteacher, it will be conveyed to the employee in the form of a letter. The decision will either be to agree a new work pattern and a start date, confirming a compromise agreed at the discussion, such as a temporary agreement to work flexibly, or to provide clear business grounds on why the application was not accepted.

If the school cannot accommodate the request, the Headteacher will explain to the employee, in writing, the statutory reason for not accepting the application. The statutory reasons can be:

- The burden of additional costs;
- A detrimental effect on the school's ability to meet the pupils needs and welfare;
- Inability to reorganise work among existing staff;
- Inability to recruit additional staff;
- A detrimental impact on quality of teaching and learning;
- A detrimental impact on performance;
- Insufficiency of work during the periods the employee proposes to work; and / or
- Planned structural changes incompatible with request.

The law requires that all requests, including any appeals, must be considered and decided on within a period of three months from first receipt, unless the school agrees to extend this



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period with the employee. Should additional time be required to make a decision, then the school will give a timescale which it believes to be reasonable.

Trial period

The school may decide to offer the new way of working on a temporary basis initially, if the school is not certain what the impact of the new arrangement will be on its business. In such circumstances, the changes to the employee's terms and conditions of employment during the trial period will be temporary.

If the trial is not successful, the employee will revert back to their previous terms and conditions of employment. If the requested change of working arrangements is accepted at the end of the trial period then the temporary terms and conditions will become permanent.

Handling requests from multiple staff members

There may be some occasions when the school receives more than one request to work flexibly from different employees at the same time. Where this happens, it may still be possible to grant all the requests received. However, before doing so the school would need to look closely at the impact this would have on the school before coming to a decision.

Requests will normally be considered in the order that they are received.

When the school receives more than one request, the school will not be required by law to make value judgements about the most deserving request. The school will consider each case on its merits, while evaluating the impact on its business.

The school may decide to ask for the agreement of all the employees concerned to consider some form of random selection if the school is unable to distinguish between the applicants.

The school may also consider calling for volunteers from existing flexible working employees to change their contracts back to other arrangements thereby creating capacity for granting new requests to work flexibly.

Appeals

If the applicant is unhappy with the outcome of the application, then the applicant may make an appeal to the Chair of the Local Academy Committee within five working days of being



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notified of the outcome of the application. The appeal process is designed to be in line with the overall aim of reaching a satisfactory outcome at the school.

The school will, upon receipt of the applicants appeal request, arrange a further meeting to with the applicant to discuss the matter. The letter of the appeal must clearly state the grounds for the appeal. The applicant will be entitled to bring a work colleague or a trade union representative to the appeal meeting.

Once a decision has been made, the school will confirm in writing any agreement that has been met or an explanation of the grounds for dismissing the appeal. The decision at the appeal hearing stage is final.

Withdrawing an application

A request to work flexibly can be withdrawn at any time before it has been accepted and any new terms and conditions agreed and put in place. If the employee withdraws their application they will not be eligible to make another flexible working request for a further twelve months.

If the employee fails to attend more than one meeting arranged to discuss the request and does not provide a reasonable explanation, the school is entitled to assume that the application has been withdrawn.

The school may also treat an application as withdrawn if the employee does not provide the required information as stated in this policy.