



Neatishead and Salhouse Federation

Flexible School Attendance Policy

Formally adopted by the Governing Board/ Trust of:-	Neatishead & Salhouse Federation Primary Schools
On:-	17 th July 2019
Chair of Governors/Trustees:-	R Barker
Date for review:-	July 2021

Soar on wings

We aim for our school to be a happy and safe community where everyone shares a love of learning. Our Christian Core values of Compassion, Courage, Respect, Responsibility, Trust and Perseverance underpin all we say and do.

At Neatishead and Salhouse Federation, we recognise that parents/carers may choose other ways for their child or young person to support their engagement in full-time education that matches the need of the child. One way could be for them to request that our school considers a flexible attendance arrangement. We believe that for some children and families, it is of benefit but it is agreed on an individual case by case basis at the Headteacher's discretion.

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

Where a parent/carer educates a child partly at school and partly at home or elsewhere as an expression of parental preference, this is called flexi-schooling/**flexible school attendance**.

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

"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. Flexible school attendance is a legal option provided that the Headteacher 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.

There is no statutory curriculum for the home education element of our flexi-schooling arrangement. However we share individual plans for learning on a half-termly basis to promote opportunities for continuity of learning at home. Individual Learning Plans form the key to a successful relationship between the school, pupils and parents. It is important that these are reviewed on a regular basis, with clear goals, agreed by parents.

Our review timetable is usually half-termly, although this can be varied to suit individual circumstances.

How should an application for flexible school attendance be made?

If a parent/carer is interested in making a request for a flexible school attendance arrangement, contact must be made directly with the Headteacher of the school, preferably in writing, so that the proposal may be considered. Each proposal will be considered on its own merits and within its individual context.

Parents/carers do not have a legal right to insist on a flexible school attendance arrangement being agreed by our school, it is entirely at the discretion of the Executive Headteacher, acting with the authority of the governing body, as to whether or not the school is prepared to agree to an arrangement.

Parents agree through signing our Memorandum of Understanding that once a flexible school attendance application is accepted, our Executive Headteacher or a member of senior staff delegated by the headteacher will make a home visit to satisfy the basic Safeguarding, Health and Safety requirements set by our Governing Body.

This will be followed up once each subsequent year to ensure continuity and to discuss any working together arrangements between the school and home environment

What will the Headteacher consider?

No agreement will be reached or maintained where our Headteacher has concerns that it would put the child at risk of harm while not attending at our school.

The grounds for agreeing a Flexi-schooling place will always be at the discretion of the Head teacher. On application for an initial admission the Headteacher reserves the right to decline a request for a Flexi-schooling place

Each request will be considered on its own merit.

The Headteacher will take into account the best interests of the child; their potential and ongoing educational progress and achievement; their safety, safeguarding and welfare

Other aspects to be considered are:

- The likely impact on the discipline, morale and organisation of the school and the teaching, learning and outcomes of other children already within the class in question.
- 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 wishing to be Flexi-schooled.
- The appropriateness of the education proposed and maintained by the parents/carers away from school and the continuity of teaching and learning between home and school.

Attendance Codes

When using code B on the register for educational activity off-site, then the requirements prescribed in regulation 6 (4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 must be fully met, as should the code B and school attendance requirements in the statutory guidance and departmental advice DfE August 2013

Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity

An approved educational activity is where a pupil is taking part in supervised educational activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or alternative provision. Pupils can only be recorded as receiving off-site educational activity if the activity meets the requirements prescribed in regulation 6(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The activity must be of an educational nature approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school. The activity must take place during the session for which the mark is recorded.

Attendance codes for when pupils are present at approved off-site educational activity are as follows:

Code B: Off-site educational activity

This code should be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. Ultimately schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. Therefore by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard pupils. This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing school work. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

The Role of the Governing Body of a School

The governing body may be involved in agreeing and reviewing the school's approach to flexible school attendance requests but they will not become involved in individual cases. Governors may have a more formal role if a dispute arises and/or a complaint regarding flexi school attendance provision is made.

Our Governors must satisfy themselves that the Headteacher has fully considered the conditions for agreeing a flexible school attendance agreement and that they are fully conversant with the school attendance statutory guidance when reaching a decision.

Appeals

There is no appeal against the Headteacher's decision not to agree to a flexible school attendance request or deciding to cease an individual child's flexible school attendance arrangement.

Our agreements with Parents

A written and signed agreement is formulated between the school and parent/carer in line with the school's flexible school attendance policy in order to make expectations clear for all concerned. It will include:

- The expected pattern of attendance at school.
- The length of time the agreement is to run before being reviewed, typically this will be one term initially and one year thereafter.
- Flexibility regarding attendance for special events which fall outside of the normal arrangement such as, but not limited to, assemblies, school trips, school productions, sports events, visitors to the school.
- Registration and how the register will be marked.
- Circumstances in which the parents must contact school if the pupil is absent from a Flexi-schooling session.
- The school will require parents to provide the school with an overview of expected learning provision.
- Parents are expected to keep records of learning coverage and their child's progress and for this to be shared with school on a regular basis. It is likely that Ofsted would assess the evidence that parents keep. The format for the recording is not set by the school but could take the form of journal keeping including children's writing, parental observations, reports and photographs.
- Assessment- It is the expectation of the school that flexi-schooled children will be assessed at key points and will be required to attend additional days during assessment weeks.
- Parents/carer choosing to employ at their own expense another person to educate the child at home and that the parents/carer will be responsible for ensuring that person is suitable to have access to the child.
- The Headteacher will initiate regular planning meetings between parent/carer 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.
- Confirmation that the school will notify the Local Authority of the Flexi-schooling arrangement and that if it appears that the home educated part of the arrangement is not suitable then both these parties might be involved in resolving any concerns about the child's education.
- Confirmation that the Local Authority will be informed if it appears that the child is not receiving suitable full-time education.

Procedures for when a child is flexi-schooled

- The Admissions department at County Hall will be informed that a parent has approached the school to consider a Flexi-schooling agreement.

- If agreed, a monthly 'out of school provision' return will be completed and sent to County.
- When attending our school on school based days the National Curriculum will be followed.

Marking the Attendance Register

Schools are ultimately responsible for the attainment of every child registered on their roll. Whilst being educated at home, parents are responsible for pupils, not schools.

The DfE (March and August 2013) states that pupils should be marked absent from school during periods when they are receiving home education.

School will mark a pupil as attending school, using the attendance **Code B** for off-site education activity where the school is satisfied that the following criteria are met:

- The school is responsible for supervising the off-site education. The school must be satisfied that it can ensure the safety, safeguarding and the welfare of the pupil off-site. In partnership with parents the school will undertake a risk assessment of the location[s] for the provision of off-site education
- The flexible school attendance activity is taking place during the session for which the mark is recorded and that any absence is being notified to the school and coded accordingly

If the school is not satisfied that the criteria for using Code B are met an appropriate absence code will be used.

On the days for which it has been agreed the pupil will attend school the Pupil Registration Regulations appropriate codes for attendance will apply.

These sessions will be included in the number of possible sessions and the absence and attendance figures in the Attainment and Achievement tables.

Children with a Education Health and Care Plan

Contact will be made with the Special Educational Needs Assessment and Provision Team about a potential flexible school attendance arrangement for children with EHCPs. A review would be undertaken so that clear information as to the anticipated benefits of flexible school attendance can be set out and considered by the Local Authority.

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 count returns as for other children.

Admissions

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

Infant Class Size Legislation (ICSL)

Our school makes no distinction between children who are to be flexible school attenders and those who are not. Whatever the degree of attendance, a child will not be an exception to ICSL (sometimes called Key Stage One legislation) solely by being flexi-schooled.

Insurance

There is no distinction between children who are to be flexible school attenders and those who are not.

Liability

For activities beyond the sole care and charge of school staff, the parents/carers of flexible school attenders are responsible for their own children when they are educated at home (or offsite venue), even when completing assigned school work.

Children Educated outside their Chronological Age Group

There is no distinction in the flexible school attendance agreement between children who are outside their Chronological Age Group and those who are not.

When the education being provided at home is not suitable

If it appears to our school that parents/carers are not providing a suitable education or not working with the school to uphold its values, policies and practices as agreed between the school and the parent/carer; the school may ask the parent/carer to take remedial action.

If the parent/carer declines to do so or the school is still concerned about the provision of the education at home or adherence to the flexible school attendance agreement, the school may withdraw its agreement. The child would then be required to attend at school on a full-time basis.

A school attendance order would not need to be initiated as the child is on the roll of our school.

If a child fails to return to full-time attendance our school will record the absence unauthorised and refer the case in line with school and County procedures.

Monitoring and review

We are aware of the need to review our flexible school attendance policy regularly so that we can take account of new initiatives, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school.

Implementation of this procedure / policy

Our school will manage implementation of this procedure/policy with the support and guidance of the Local Authority.

General

This procedure/policy and its guidance will always reflect the present and future needs of all stakeholders and to support this we are always open to suggestions for changes and alterations of and to any specific individual provision/requirement to ensure full access to all.

Flexible School Attendance Agreement

Pupil name

D.O.B

Expected pattern of attendance

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
am					
pm					

Areas shaded indicate times pupil educated off school site

Starting Date of Agreement

Review date of agreement

Do school and home agree to be flexible with the pattern to allow attendance at special **school** organised events Parent/carer Yes/No Headteacher Y/N

The register will be marked as attendance code B when educated off school site according to this agreement

How will parents provide school with an overview of expected learning provision?

How will parents record learning activities a school?

- The school will carry out assessments and key points in the school calendar which will be shared with parents/carers .
- Parents/carer choosing to employ at their own expense another person to educate the child at home and that the parents/carer will be responsible for ensuring that person is suitable to have access to the child.
- The Headteacher will initiate regular planning meetings between parent/carer and school to ensure the child achieves his or her potential and to promote good home-school relationships.

- Both school and home can withdraw from the agreement with a full half term notice either party.
- school will notify the Local Authority of the flexible school attendance arrangement and that if it appears that the home educated part of the arrangement is not suitable then both these parties might be involved in resolving any concerns about the child's education.
- School will notify the Local Authority if it appears that the child is not receiving suitable full-time education.

Signed parent carer Date

Signed headteacher Date

A signed copy to be kept by parent/carer

A signed copy to be kept by Headteacher