

Owlcotes Multi-Academy Trust

Flexi-Schooling Policy



March 2025

About Owlcotes Multi-Academy Trust (OMAT)

OMAT is committed to the development of inclusive schools, sharing a common purpose to provide excellent education and improved outcomes for pupils.

OMAT strives to provide high-quality education for all children within our local communities by inspiring innovation, creativity and aspiration through an enriched curriculum.

OMAT is committed to the principles of co-operation, collaboration and sharing best practice with a strong focus on staff development.

OMAT is also committed to the preservation of the unique identity of all schools within the trust: each school will have a Local Governing Board (LGB) which is involved in decision making at school level, with autonomy to make decisions for its own school in line with the scheme of delegation.

Flexi-Schooling Policy

1. Introduction

Within Owlcotes Multi-Academy Trust, we promote full time education within a school environment as a valuable way for all children to enjoy, achieve and attain to their full potential. The responsibility, however, for a child receiving full-time education whilst they are of statutory school age, lies with the parent.

Where a parent educates a child partly at school and partly at home, or elsewhere, as an expression of parental preference, this is called flexi-schooling. Flexi-schooling is different to Elective Home Education. Please refer to the April 2019 DfE Guidance for 'Elective Home Education' [for schools](#) and [for parents](#).

Flexi-schooling is also different from temporary part-time attendance arrangements which the school/parent may seek to make (sometimes called reduced timetables). Such arrangements, which may be agreed between parents and schools as an intervention to address specific issues, must be monitored and reviewed with the intention that the child be returned to full-time attendance as soon as possible.

Parents who request flexi-attendance are asking for a pattern of provision, which will involve both attendance at school as well as times when the child will receive educational provision at home. The child will be on the roll of a school. This request must be made by the parent, it is not for a Headteacher or a member of school staff to suggest a family to undertake flexi-schooling.

A parent 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 or on a longer-term basis where they favour this form of education.

2. How should an application for flexi-schooling be made?

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

Whilst a parent may request that their child is flexi-schooled, it is entirely at the Headteacher's discretion, acting with the authority of the Board of Trustees, as to whether or not the school is prepared to agree to a flexi-

schooling arrangement. The Headteacher will consult with external partners when making this decision – this may include social care, SEN caseworker, healthcare professional.

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

3. What should parents 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 must **together** constitute a full-time provision.

While there is no statutory curriculum for the home education part of a flexi-schooling arrangement, parents 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.

4. What does the Headteacher consider?

In considering the request, the Headteacher will take into account the reasoning behind the parent request and will take into account how a flexi-schooling arrangement will best meet the interests of the child:

Flexi-schooling may be appropriate when:

- A child is below the statutory school age;
- A child is returning to school education after a period of elective home education;
- A child has a medical condition or is recovering from a debilitating illness;
- A child has experienced / or is experiencing an adverse childhood experience;
- A child has specific/ additional needs or aptitudes that may be met better outside of school (including but not limited to such provision as therapeutic support, private tuition, expert coaching etc).

All requests must be considered by the Headteacher on their own merits, this will include previous attendance records, safeguarding and the child's wellbeing. They will do this in partnership with external agencies and the Owlcotes Multi-Academy Trust.

5. The Role of the Owlcotes MAT Trust Board

The Owlcotes Multi-Academy Trust Board of Trustees should be involved in agreeing and reviewing the school's approach to flexi-schooling requests but they will not become involved in the detail of individual requests. The school's Local Governing Board will monitor the attendance and progress of any agreed flexi-schooled children.

6. Appeals

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

7. Written Agreements with Parents

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

- The normal expected pattern of attendance at school – this will be monitored by the school in line with the whole school attendance policy.
- 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 attendance register will be marked (see section 8.2).
The parents 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 pupils.
- What the arrangement will be at times of statutory or school level assessment.
- Arrangements for regular planning and review meetings between parent, school and any other relevant professionals to ensure the child achieves his/her potential and to promote good home/school relationships.
- Safeguarding and wellbeing of the child will be reviewed throughout the arrangement.
- Any perceived special educational needs and associated provision.
- Under what circumstances and with what notice either party can withdraw from the arrangement.

8. Procedure for when a child is flexi-schooled

The child will already be registered at the school. On days when the child attends school, the National Curriculum will be followed as if the child were attending full-time.

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

- Those who are temporarily unable to do so due to exceptional circumstances such as prolonged absence from school on health grounds or family crisis.
- As a part of an Education, Health and Care Plan.

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

8.2 Marking the Attendance Register

The most recent clarification received from the DfE (2019) states that pupils should be marked absent from school during periods when they are receiving home education, as part of a flexi-school agreement. Schools should use the attendance code 'C'.

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

8.3 Safeguarding

Safeguarding and welfare of a child will be considered by all internal and external partners prior to the flexi-schooling agreement being made.

For the time the pupil who is flexi-schooled is receiving home education, the school has no supervisory role in the pupil's education at such times and has no responsibility for the welfare of the child whilst the child is at home. Where there are safeguarding and welfare concerns, the Headteacher has the right to terminate the flexi-schooling agreement with immediate effect.

8.4 SEND and Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan

Prior to the agreement being made the Headteacher will consult with all external professionals involved in the EHCP, including the SEN Caseworker.

The duty to review a child's Education, Health and Care Plan on an annual basis, or sooner if appropriate, still applies.

8.5 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 and will be expected to attend school on Census days. Parents assume full financial responsibility for the child's educational provision which is not at school, including the cost of any external assistance used such as tutors, parent groups or part-time alternative provision.

8.6 Expected patterns of attendance

There will be some flexibility over the pattern of attendance for each child attending on a flexi-schooling basis and this will be at the discretion of each individual setting. There should be a minimum of 3 days per week within school unless exceptional circumstances mean that this is not appropriate. Children must spend a minimum of two consecutive days in school each week and variations to this will be at the headteacher's discretion. Prior to the agreement being made the child's current attendance will be taken into account. Attendance will be closely monitored by the school leaders in line with the whole school attendance policy.

8.9 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.

8.10 Infant Class Size Legislation (ICSL)

There is no distinction between children who are to be flexi-schooled and those who are not. Whatever the degree of attendance, the child will not be an exception to ICSL.

8.11 Children Educated outside their Chronological Age-Group

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

9. When the flexi schooling arrangement is not working

Any safeguarding concerns will mean the flexi-schooling agreement is terminated with immediate effect.

Where the child's attendance on expected flexi-school days is giving cause for concern, the Headteacher must review the flexi-school agreement.

If it appears to the school that the flexi-schooling arrangement is not working, the school will liaise with parents to try to address this.

This may be due to any of the items listed under section 4. If the Headteacher does not feel the suitability threshold for the education overall has been met and the situation cannot be rectified, this will result in the Headteacher ceasing the flexi-schooling arrangement. 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 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.

10. In conclusion

The decision to request and agree to flexi-schooling should only be considered when the reasons for doing so are exceptional and in line with the considerations in this policy. Both parties (parents and the school) must agree that it is in the best interests of the child. The parents and the school must be confident that the parent can meet the educational needs of the child. If arrangements are agreed upon, the school will retain responsibility for the child's progress and absence reporting.

Appendix 1

Date:

Dear [NAME OF PARENTS]

I enclose the written flexi-schooling agreement. Please sign and return one of the copies to school to show your agreement.

Reasons for requesting flexi-schooling for [NAME OF CHILD]

As discussed with school, below are the following reasons in support of this flexi-school agreement and how this will benefit [NAME OF CHILD]:

The views of the child/young person:

The normal expected pattern of attendance for [NAME OF CHILD] will be as follows:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
AM					
PM					

Should special events fall outside of your child's arranged school days, there will be flexibility and your child can attend these events. Events such as, but not limited to: assemblies, school trips, school productions or performances, sports events, visitors to the school.

When your child is not at school, due to this flexi-school arrangement, the code C (circumstances authorised by the school) will be entered into the register. This code will count towards your child's absence record.

Parents must contact the school if your child is absent from a session that they would normally be present at school; school will apply usual absence procedures.

At times of national assessment and school assessment periods, your child will be in school for all tests and assessments. This helps teachers to identify next steps for children. Parents will be expected to attend the termly parent teacher consultation meetings.

School will follow procedures for supporting a child with Special Educational Needs in the same way as if the child was attending full time. Parents will work with school to support this, attend meetings and agree a consistent approach.

Parents take responsibility for any additional adults working with their child when not in school (e.g. tutors). If they use a private tutor, they remain responsible for the welfare and education of their child. It is recommended that parents 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 to monitor the teaching and learning and the progress your child makes.

As a school we will work with parents to address any concerns or difficulties arising. However, if these concerns cannot be addressed, then it will be at the **Headteacher’s discretion to end the arrangement**. 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. However, if there is a safeguarding or welfare concern the flexi-schooling arrangement will be terminated immediately.

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

This arrangement will be reviewed half termly. The next review meeting will take place on :

Parents

Signed.....Date.....

Signed.....Date.....

Headteacher

Signed.....Date.....

Appendix 2

Flexi-Schooling Half Term Review for [Insert name of child] [Date]

Attendance for half term:

Academic Progress

Parent/ Child comments

External Agencies Input (Social Care, SEN Caseworker, Health etc)

Safeguarding and welfare

Actions from review /Additional Comments

Signed (parent)

Signed (Headteacher)

Date of next review: _____

**This Flexi-Schooling Policy was adopted by Owlcotes Multi-Academy Trust on
20/03/2025**

Chair of Trustees: Mrs Judith Norfolk		
Signature:		Judith Norfolk
Frequency of review:	3 years	
To be approved by:	OMAT Full Board	
Date of next review:	March 2028	

REVIEW RECORD

Date of review	Reason for review	Date of next review

Name:		Signature:	
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on behalf of OMAT Full Board

Date of review	Reason for review	Date of next review

Name:		Signature:	
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on behalf of OMAT Full Board

Date of review	Reason for review	Date of next review

Name:		Signature:	
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