Spurcroft Primary School

FLEXI-SCHOOLING POLICY

Approved by Governing Board: 30th September 2025
Review: September 2027

BACKGROUND

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.

In November 2007 the Department for Education 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 reason. Flexi-schooling 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. Local Authorities should make sure that Headteachers are made familiar with flexi-schooling and how it may work in practice.

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 or when a child is not making expected progress.

FLEXI-SCHOOLING AT SPURCROFT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Spurcroft Primary School will consider the concept of flexi-schooling and deeply values the educational relationship it holds with parents. This section sets out the principles by which the Headteacher will manage and apply the flexi-schooling policy at our school.

Each application for flexi-schooling will be considered on its own merits, with the needs of the child (emotionally, socially and educationally) at the heart of all decisions.

A child's attendance should be above the National Average of 95%. However, there may be exceptional circumstances (such as medical requirements) that mean the school will agree to a flexi-school agreement for a child with low attendance.

When making a judgement about flexi-schooling, the school must take into account any safeguarding concerns around the child, including if a child is subject to a Child in Need or Child Protection plan.

In terms of a child's attainment, each case will be taken into account on an individual basis. A parent/carer may be requested to focus on some directed elements of their learning to support their child at home on a flexi-schooling day.

However, there is no expectation for the school or any school staff to provide learning activities, plans or resources for those children who may be in a flexi-schooling agreement.

Flexi-schooling, such as a short-term reduced timetable, may be considered as an option for some children who have specific educational, emotional or social needs and this will always be negotiated individually with parents/carers.

Once a parent/carer has agreed to Flexi-schooling, they are committed to the arrangement for an entire half term at a time. Parents/carers will be required to attend at least termly flexi-schooling meetings with a member of the Senior Leadership Team. If, following the commencement of a flexi-schooling plan, the school have any concerns about a child's safeguarding, the Headteacher is required to immediately terminate the flexi-schooling agreement.

APPLYING FOR A FLEXI-SCHOOLING ARRANGEMENT

Flexi schooling must 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 our school.

Whilst a parent/carer may request that their child is flexi schooled, it is entirely at the discretion of our Headteacher, acting with the authority of the governing board, 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 must be made directly with the Headteacher so that the proposal may be considered. Each proposal will be considered on its own merits and within its individual context.

Before a Flexi-Schooling arrangement may proceed, the following documents must be completed and signed by all parties:

- Flexi-School Request Form (Parents/Carers)
- Flexi-School Risk Assessment (School)
- Flexi-School Contract - Parts 1 & 2 and an Attendance Agreement

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 must together constitute a full-time provision. While there is no statutory curriculum for the home education, part of a flexi-schooling arrangement, parents/carers must be mindful of the impact on the child's access to the National Curriculum, peer relationships, life skills and the possible fragmentation of the child's academic and social earning experience. **Parents/Carers will be expected to adhere to the curriculum, providing their planning and evidence of learning, to support the school to meet its obligations to be responsible for the outcomes and provision for all pupils.**

Flexi-schooling within our school is unlikely to succeed if the reasons for choosing it are negative and the choice is motivated by a desire to 'cherry pick' certain activities only or aimed at avoiding difficulties around certain subjects, teachers, peers, aspects of the schools' discipline, or attendance itself. We view flexi-schooling as most likely to succeed if it meets the needs of a child in a way that may not otherwise be possible in a mainstream class setting (for example, where parents/carers are able to source or provide 1:1 tutoring).

There will be no automatic entitlement for a child on a flexi-schooling plan to attend or be involved in class/whole school events on days/times taking place outside of (or if just part of the time of event) the flexi-schooling agreement. Each event such as a trip, service,

performance will be judged individually by the school taking into account the time the child has had away from the organisation leading up to as well as the child's known and unknown capabilities, social skills, relationship with staff and ultimately safety. The decision of the school will be final and there will be no appeal available to parents/carers.

However, the school adopts an inclusive approach to education and is committed to working in partnership with parents and carers to support their preferences and decisions. In return, the school expects parents/carers of Flexi-children to uphold the school's ethos, values, policies and practice. Strong and reciprocal partnership between home and school is key to a successful and sustainable Flexi-schooling arrangement. Flexi-schooling does not give an alternative means of opting out of an element of the curriculum or peer relationships with which a child, for whatever reason, is uncomfortable.

Children who are flexi-schooled are still required to be assessed at the same intervals as their peers. This will help the school's leaders to identify if the agreement has had a positive, negative or neutral impact on a child's academic outcomes (although it should be noted that other information such as social wellbeing can be recorded and measured in other ways). If assessments indicate that the pupil has not made the expected progress or has fallen behind, the flexi-schooling arrangement will be reviewed and school leaders may decide to cease an individual child's flexi-schooling arrangement. As flexi-schooled children remain on our school roll, they will also be registered for statutory assessments such as the Reception Baseline, Year 1 Phonics Check, the Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check, and end of year assessments along with end of Key-Stage Assessments – SATS.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL'S HEADTEACHER CONSIDER?

AI; requests must be considered by the Headteacher on their own merits.

Safeguarding and welfare of the child is of paramount importance. Ultimately our school is responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off. No agreement will be reached or maintained where the Headteacher has concerns that it would put the child at risk of harm while not attending our school.

Secondary to safeguarding, the Headteacher must decide if a flexi-schooling requests meets the unique needs of the child. If there appears to be little or no educational, medical or socio-emotional rationale for a request, then it is likely to be declined.

At Spurcroft Primary School, the grounds for agreeing a flexi-schooling place will always be at the discretion of the Headteacher alongside the consideration of the Governing Board. On application for an initial admission the Headteacher reserves the right to decline a request for a flex-schooling place. If an application is declined by the headteacher, there is no right of appeal and parents may not reapply before 1 year.

In addition to the consideration of the principles set out above, grounds for declining a place could also be that adding to the number of children attending on a flexi-basis would create an imbalance and be detrimental to teaching and learning and the outcomes of other children already within the class in question. In such circumstances a full-time place will be offered on proviso that a place is available within the class.

THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNING BOARD

The governing board may be involved in agreeing and reviewing the school's approach to flexi-schooling requests, assisting the Headteacher in deliberation of decisions always with the best interest of the child and children in a wider context of the whole school.

Governors may have a more formal role if a dispute arises and/or a complaint regarding Flexi-schooling provision is made. In that event our Governors must satisfy themselves that the Headteacher has fully considered the conditions for agreeing a Flexi-schooling agreement and that they are fully conversant with the school attendance statutory guidance when reaching a decision. Parents who wish to raise a complaint to the Governing Body should do so by following the school's Complaints Policy.

Appeals

There is no appeal against the decision of our Headteacher not to agree to a flexi-schooling request, or if our Headteacher decides to cease an individual child's flexi-schooling arrangement. In such circumstances, the Headteacher is required to report the request and outcome (or agreement and termination) to the full governing body (FGB).

ATTENDANCE CODES FOR FLEXI-SCHOOLED PUPILS

At Spurcroft, we follow the West Berkshire guidance when entering register codes as part of a flexi-schooling arrangement. At their advice, we will enter the ‘out of school’ sessions as a C (Other Authorised Absence).

We acknowledge that flexi-school arrangements recorded in this way will impact a child’s attendance figures for the term or year, and indeed those of the whole school. For context, when evaluating a child’s attendance, we will consider the number of sessions we would expect them to be on site (and how many of these they attended).

Pupils are expected to attend school during the times agreed in their flexi-schooling timetable. If a pupil is unable to attend during their allotted time due to illness or other circumstances, the absence must be reported in accordance with the school's Absence Policy.

APPENDIX 1

FLEXI-SCHOOLING INFORMATION FORM

(To be filled in alongside – if applicable – the School Enrolment form either by parents/carers)

Additional Information Form

Child's name:	
Current academic Year Group: (Or Year group entering on enrolment/admission)	
Name of parent(s), carer(s)	
Admissions form completed	Yes / No
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)

Form of Education to date:	F/T School P/T School Home Education N/A

Additional Needs (if applicable)	
Please tell us anything else you feel we may find useful about yourself or your child	

APPENDIX 2

FLEXI-SCHOOLING CONTRACT

Parts 1 & 2 of the contract, and the attendance agreement, must be signed and returned to the Headteacher before the flexi-schooling provision may commence.

Contract for Provision of Education – Part 1(School)
Child's Name
Name of Parent(s)/Carer(s)

Spurcroft Primary 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.

The educational provision will be suitable to ……'s age, aptitude and ability as set out in *Section 7 of the Education Act 1996* and will include:

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

The school and parent/carer will meet every half term for a review meeting to discuss …….'s progress and review the attendance agreement. The school can withdraw from this agreement at any time by giving reasonable notice in writing. If safeguarding concerns are raised, the school may call an immediate termination to this agreement

Signed Headteacher: **Date:**

Signed Parent / Carer: **Date:**

Signed Child: **Date:**

Contract for Provision of Education – Part 2 Home
Child's Name:
Name of parent(s)/carer(s)

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 *Section 7 of the Education Act 1996* and will include:

During school hours timetabled for home-based education I/we will maintain primary responsibility for ……'s safety and welfare

I/we agree that we are required to attend a termly review of the Flexi-Schooling Arrangement

I/we understand I can withdraw from this agreement at any time by giving reasonable notice in writing

Signed Headteacher: **Date:**

Signed Parent / Carer: **Date:**

Signed Child: **Date:**

Appendix 3

FLEXI-SCHOOLING ATTENDANCE AGREEMENT

Child's name:

Name of parent(s) / carer(s):

I/We agree that ……. will attend school per the agreed times below.

DAY	MORNING	LUNCHTIME	AFTERNOON
MONDAY			
TUESDAY			
WEDNESDAY			
THURSDAY			
FRIDAY			

Signed Headteacher: **Date:**

Signed Parent / Carer: **Date:**

Signed Child: **Date:**

Appendix 4

Relevant Legislation and Guidance

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 Section 6[1]

Contents of Attendance Register

(4) An approved educational activity is either—

(a) an activity which takes place outside the school premises and which is—

(i) approved by a person authorized in that behalf by the proprietor of the school;
(ii) of an educational nature, including work experience under section 560 of the Education Act 1996(1) and a sporting activity; and
(iii) supervised by a person authorized in that behalf by the proprietor or the head teacher of the school; or

(b) Attendance at another school at which the pupil is a registered pupil.

Ofsted Subsidiary Guidance

From Part 2: Further guidance about specific settings April 2013, No. 110166[2] Alternative/off-site provision

130. It is becoming increasingly common for secondary schools and pupil referral units to use alternative provision to meet pupils' curriculum needs including college placements, vocational and work placements.

131. Schools are responsible for the outcomes and provision of all their pupils on roll, including those who attend alternative provision.

132. Inspectors must evaluate the robustness and effectiveness with which the school monitors the learning, progress, attendance and behaviour of pupils that receive alternative provision.

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Elective Home Education Guidelines webpage on the DfE website : Clarification on Flexi-Schooling
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751/regulation/6/made
http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/subsidiary-guidance-supporting-inspection-of-maintainedschools-and-academies-september-2012

http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/parents/involvement/homeeducation/a0073367/s elective-home-education-guidelines

On 22nd February 2013, the Government published revised advice on school attendance. The advice clarified the Government's expectations on how various school attendance codes should be used to record pupil school attendance.

Schools should not mark a pupil as attending school, using the attendance code B for off-site education activity, unless the school is responsible for supervising the off-site education, and can ensure the safety and the welfare of the pupil off-site. Schools are ultimately responsible for the attainment of every child registered on their roll. Whilst being home educated, parents and carers are responsible for pupils, not schools.

Where parents/carers have entered in to flexi-schooling arrangements, schools may continue to offer those arrangements. Pupils should be marked absent from school during periods when they are receiving home education.

The reference in the Government's revised advice on school attendance, that was categorical that a school could not agree to a flexi-schooling arrangement, has been removed.

Note: The DfE are in part describing blended flexi schooling here rather than the formal flexi schooling dealt with in this document. This makes the advice slightly confusing.

In addition, they have over interpreted section 6 (4) of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 which does not say that the school must "ensure" the health and safety of the pupil offsite. Of course, normal safeguarding procedures and welfare considerations exist, as with any pupil, but to infer that there are additional safeguarding concerns where a child spends more time with his parents is not logical.

DfE Advice on School Attendance March 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 it 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 school 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.

Note: It is acceptable in law to assume that a child is safe with his own parents unless there is evidence to the contrary. In other words, risk and or safety assessments of the home are not required even if they would be required of another setting if the non-school provision was in another setting.

http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/advice/f00221879/advice-on-school-attendance