



Ravenswood School Flexi-Schooling Policy

Home Schooling or Elective Home Education

Some parents/carers may decide to provide a suitable education by educating their child at home, rather than seeking to enrol their child at a school. This is known as home schooling or Elective Home Education and is where the Parent/Carer takes full responsibility for the education of the child. There is a legal right to a school placement and to Elective Home Education.

Flexi-schooling, making a request, and the flexi school agreement

Flexi-schooling is not the same as home schooling/Elective Home Education. Parents/Carers 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.

Flexi-schooling is also different from temporary part-time attendance arrangements which the school/Parent/Carer may seek to make. Such arrangements are monitored and reviewed with the intention that the child be returned to full time attendance as soon as possible. Flexi-schooling is full time, although the provision may be split.

Arrangements for flexi-schooling can only be made at the request of a Parent or Carer with parental responsibility. This is not an arrangement that can be initiated by the school. ***Parents/Carers with parental responsibility will need to make a written request to the Headteacher, explaining why a flexi-schooling request is being made.***

Whilst there is a legal right to a school placement and to Elective Home Education there is no legal right to flexi-schooling. Headteachers can refuse to agree to such requests. There is no right of appeal against the decision of a Headteacher not to agree a flexi-schooling request.

Head teachers in schools must consider all requests for flexi-schooling arrangements on a case by case basis. Decisions to approve or refuse requests must be made in the best interest of the child in that school's context. A school cannot control the delivery of education outside the school and should satisfy itself that the home and school elements combine to provide a suitable education in a safe environment.

Families of students who have requested flexi schooling will need to read and sign an agreement between home & the school. The school will agree an agreed pattern of attendance for each student who is flexi schooling which will be outlined on the agreement. The school & Parents/Carers will identify why the flexi-schooling arrangement is in the best interests of the pupil.

The agreement will include:

- the normal expected pattern of attendance at school;
- the rationale for why the flexi-schooling arrangement is in the best interests of the pupil concerned;
- procedures for flexibility around special events which fall outside the normal arrangement;
- how the register will be marked;
- that the school will follow up any unexpected or unexplained absence in the same way as it does for other children;
- arrangements at times of assessment;
- agreement that if the Parent/Carer chooses to employ other people to educate their child at home, they will be responsible for making sure that those whom they engage are suitable to have access to children and will be responsible for meeting all costs related to this decision;
- agreement on who will meet the cost of exam entries (if relevant to the pupil). These are the responsibility of the parent but the school may choose to support with some or all of the costs;
- details of any special educational needs and associated provision;
- arrangements for regular planning and review meetings between parent/carer and school to ensure the child achieves his/her potential and to promote good home/school relationships;
- clarity about the circumstances under which and with what notice either party can withdraw from the arrangement;
- the arrangements for the resolution of any disputes

The LA, SEN Team, and other agencies working with the pupil will be notified of the flexi school arrangement.

Flexi schooling will be reviewed on a termly basis with each family.

Responsibilities

The responsibility to ensure that a child receives full time education while they are of statutory school age lies with the parent/carer with parental responsibility.

The Education Act 1996 states that the parent/carer of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him or her to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age,

ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

If the Parent/Carer chooses to employ other people to educate their child at home, they will be responsible for making sure that those whom they engage are suitable to have access to children and will be responsible for meeting all costs related to this decision.

If relevant to the pupil, the school and Parent/Carer will need to make an agreement on who will meet the cost of exam entries. These are the responsibility of the Parent/Carer but the school may choose to support with some or all of the costs.

Procedures for flexibility around special events which fall outside the normal arrangement

The pupil is welcome to join events or trips that fall on the days that the pupil is not at school. School will request Parents/Carers to notify the school if they wish for the pupil to join in the week before so we can arrange the necessary paperwork and permissions. Sessions or days may be swapped with prior arrangement and agreement with the Senior Leadership Team.

Attendance at exams and assessments will need to be considered for any pupils this may apply to.

How the register will be marked

It is important to note that any sessions where the pupil is receiving education at home will be recorded as 'authorised absences' within the school's register. The code which schools are required to enter into their register for any such sessions is the 'C' code which reflects that the pupil is absent due to 'other authorised circumstances' – in other words, the flexi-schooling arrangement has permitted the pupil to be absent from school.

The school will follow up any unexpected or unexplained absence in the same way as it does for other children.

Details of any special educational needs and associated provision

Where a child has an Education Health and Care plan (EHCP) the decision to agree flexi-schooling must be taken in conjunction with the local authority (LA). Where flexi-schooling is agreed for a child with an EHCP this should be recorded on the EHCP and progress monitored through the usual annual review process.

The school receives full funding for flexi-schooled pupils and they must be included on all census returns. The responsibility for the flexi-school arrangement lies with the school and not the LA.

Arrangements for regular planning and review meetings between Parent/Carer and school to ensure the child achieves his/her potential and to promote good home/school relationships

Aside from the impact that a flexi-schooling arrangement will have on a school's overall absence levels, the implications of agreeing 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 school should, together, constitute a full-time, suitable education.

Whilst there is no statutory curriculum for the home education part of a flexi-schooling arrangement, Parents/Carers will need to be mindful of the impact on the child's access to the School curriculum and the possible fragmentation of the learning experience.

Flexi-schooling should not be seen as a means of opting out of an element of the curriculum with which a child, for whatever reason, is uncomfortable. The child may find that their limited attendance makes it difficult to maintain strong relationships with peers and may experience an element of social exclusion. If a child moves to a different school, there will be no guarantee that flexi-schooling will be able to continue. This will be a decision that the Headteacher of the new school will be required to make.

There is no opt-out for schools regarding the National curriculum based on a flexi-schooling proposal, although the child is not attending all school sessions, the school will need to ensure that the child has appropriate access to the National curriculum. The child cannot be dis-applied from the statutory curriculum or assessment arrangements because of flexi-schooling agreements. When the curriculum is delivered through cross-curricular activities, arrangements made with the Parent/Carer would need to protect the cohesion of the child's experience.

The class teacher will liaise with the parents on a weekly basis around weekly topics and lessons so that lessons and activities at home can be planned to link with a broad and balanced curriculum across both settings. The Parents/Carers will also be informed of any lessons missed at school so that Parents/Carers have the option of ensuring that these are covered at home if they so wish. The school is not obligated to provide work on the days where the pupil does not attend school during a flexi school agreement.

Withdrawing from the arrangement

Neither the LA nor the school have a statutory duty to monitor the quality of home education on a routine basis, however if it appears to the school that Parents/Carers are not providing a suitable education 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 education at home, the school may withdraw its agreement to the flexi-schooling arrangement. The child would then be required to return to school on a full-time basis.

Arrangements for the resolution of any disputes

The usual processes are for disputes to be resolved at the most informal level possible, but ultimately any complaints will need to be considered by the Headteacher first and then the Governing Body as set out under the school's complaints procedure.

History of document

Issue No.	Author/Owner	Date Reviewed	Approved by Governors on:	Comments
1	Ravenswood School/ Cheri Frost	June 2023	05/07/2023	Updated in line with family request for flexi arrangements.

Links to other documents:

This policy is based on information provided by the Local Authority as follows:

Education Access - Flexi-Schooling (essex.gov.uk)

Flexi-schooling policy – Education and Families (devon.gov.uk)

Ravenswood School Complaints Policy