



**Wonder**  
Learning Partnership  
Educate | Empower | Engage | Enrich

## Flexible Working Policy

**This policy is applicable to the Wonder Learning Partnership (WLP)**

**Important:** This document can only be considered valid when viewed on the Wonder Learning Partnership website. If this document has been printed or saved to another location, you must check that the version date on your copy matches that of the document online.

The Wonder Learning Partnership welcomes the support of the recognised trade unions in seeking to implement this policy in a fair and consistent manner and actively encourages employees who are members of a trade union to seek the support of their trade union representative at the earliest opportunity.

**Version Approved: June 2026**

<b>Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Approved:</b>	Summer Term 2026
<b>Name of Responsible Committee/Individual:</b>	People & Culture Committee
<b>Implementation Date:</b>	Summer Term 2026
<b>Review Date:</b>	Summer Term 2029

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## Introduction

It is the Wonder Learning Partnership's view that the promotion of flexible working arrangements increases staff motivation, performance and productivity, reduces stress and encourages staff retention by enabling employees to balance their work life with their other priorities.

The Wonder Learning Partnership will deal with flexible working requests in a reasonable manner and within a reasonable time.

In any event, the time between making a request and notifying you of a final decision (including the outcome of any appeal) will be less than two months unless a longer period has been agreed with you.

## Context

This Policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment, and it may be amended at any time. The Wonder Learning Partnership may also vary any parts of this Policy including any time limits.

This Policy covers all eligible employees irrespective of their status, level or grade. It does not apply to non-employees (for example agency workers, self-employed contractors or volunteers).

This Policy has been implemented following consultation with the CEO, Trust Executive Board, Headteachers Board and Trade Union Representatives of NEU and NASUWT.

References to 'You' or 'Your' refer to any employee to whom this Policy applies.

Any meeting or hearing referred to in this policy may be conducted in person, via telephone or via videoconferencing.

## Eligibility for Flexible Working

To be eligible to make a flexible working request, you must:

- be an employee;
- not have made two flexible working requests during the last 12 months (which includes requests that have been withdrawn); and
- not make a request to work flexibly if a request you made previously has not been concluded.

## The Flexible Working Request

A flexible working request under this policy may include a request to:

reduce or vary your working hours;  
reduce or vary the days you work;  
work from a different location (for example from home).

## The Flexible Working Request Procedure

If you are eligible to make a request for flexible working, you are encouraged to first have informal

conversations with your line manager and/or the headteacher to discuss your request and explore options.

Once these informal discussions have concluded, or alternatively, you should complete a formal request using a Flexible Working Request Form which should be submitted to the Chief Operating Officer (Trust Central Team) Headteacher (School). A copy of the request form can be found in Section 9 of this document.

The procedure for all requests for flexible working arrangements is as follows:

### **Meeting to consult about your request**

If the Chief Operating Officer (Trust Central Team) or Headteacher (School) is happy with the flexible working request and has no issues then they will notify you in writing of their decision as soon as possible, setting out any action on which the agreement is dependent, and establishing a start date. No meeting will be required.

If the Chief Operating Officer (Trust Central Team) or Headteacher (School) requires a meeting to consult you about your flexible working request they will arrange a meeting at a convenient time and place to do so. The meeting will take place within 10 working days of the date on which the application is made to discuss the desired work pattern and any issues it raises for service provision. The meeting will also consider other alternative working arrangements where there may be difficulties in accommodating the original request. You may be accompanied at the meeting by a colleague of your choice or a trade union representative. Your companion will be entitled to speak and confer privately with you but may not answer questions on your behalf.

If a lengthy school closure intervenes, the 10 working day time limit may be extended, with agreement to accommodate this. However, it is important that the request is dealt with if possible, prior to, or as soon as possible after the school has re-opened to avoid any undue delay. If the Chief Operating Officer (Trust Central Team) or Headteacher (School) is absent for a lengthy period, the person assuming Headteacher responsibilities may consider the request in the Chief Operating Officer (Trust Central Team) or Headteacher (School) absence to ensure that there is no undue delay in dealing with the request.

Should you fail without good reason to attend meetings and rearranged meetings in accordance with this policy to discuss your flexible working request, the organisation will consider your request to have been withdrawn. Any withdrawn requests will count as a submitted request for the purposes of the eligibility criteria under this policy as set out above.

### **Consideration of your request and communication of the decision**

The Chief Operating Officer (Trust Central Team) or Headteacher (School) may communicate their decision verbally before sending the written confirmation.

The Chief Operating Officer (Trust Central Team) or Headteacher (School) should notify you in writing of the decision within 5 working days of the meeting:

- accepting the request, setting out the details of the new working arrangements and the date on which they will commence. You will be asked to sign two copies of the letter and to return a signed copy to the School;
- confirming the compromise offered in the meeting and asking for a response within 5 working

days;

- rejecting the request and giving an explanation of the business/ operational reasons for doing so and setting out the appeals procedure.

A flexible working request under this policy may be rejected for one of the following business reasons:

- The burden of additional costs;
- Detrimental effect on ability to meet customer demand;
- Inability to reorganise work among existing staff;
- Inability to recruit additional staff;
- Detrimental impact on quality;
- Detrimental impact on performance;
- Insufficiency of work during the periods that you propose to work; or
- Planned structural changes.

If the Chief Operating Officer (Trust Central Team) or Headteacher (School) is unable to agree to your request, they will confirm which of the above grounds applies to your request.

If the organisation cannot immediately accept your request, it may require you to undertake a trial period before reaching a final decision. Details of any trial, and the grounds on which the trial is deemed necessary, will be set out to you in writing.

## Appeal

As part of any outcome decision the organisation will set out your right to appeal. You may appeal any decision made by the Headteacher under this policy within 10 working days of receiving the written decision. This includes a decision following any trial period.

Your appeal should be submitted to the Chief Operating Officer. The appeal must be clearly dated and set out the grounds on which you are appealing. A meeting shall be convened to discuss your appeal. You may be accompanied to the appeal meeting by a colleague or a trade union representative.

A meeting of the Governing Body Appeals Committee/Trust Board (CPP Committee) should be arranged within 10 working days of receiving the notice of appeal. The Governing Body Appeals Committee/Trust Board (CPP Committee) will consider the appeal and notify you in writing of the decision within 5 working days of the meeting:

- that the appeal is upheld setting out any action on which the agreement is dependent and establishing a start date;
- that the decision remains the same and giving a short explanation of the business/ operational reasons why;
- or explaining the investigation which has been undertaken into the challenge that a fact in the previous explanation of the business reasons for rejection was incorrect.

The final decision shall be communicated to you as soon as possible after the appeal meeting and will set out the reasons and, if relevant, the corrective action that will be taken following the appeal.

An appeal decision will be final, and you will have no further right to appeal.

### **Right to Accompaniment**

You have the right to be accompanied to all meetings under this policy by a work colleague, providing they work for the Wonder Learning Partnership, or a trade union representative.

An employee who has been requested to accompany a colleague and has agreed to do so is entitled to take a reasonable amount of paid time off to fulfil this responsibility. The time off required must be approved by the Chief Operating Officer (Trust Central Team) or Headteacher (School) in the normal way.

If your work colleague or trade union representative is not available at the time proposed for the meeting, the Chief Operating Officer (Trust Central Team) or Headteacher (School) will postpone the meeting to a time proposed by you, provided that the alternative time is reasonable and falls within a period of 5 working days beginning with the first day after the day proposed by the Chief Operating Officer (Trust Central Team) or Headteacher (School).

### **Extension of Time Limits**

The Chief Operating Officer (Trust Central Team) or Headteacher (School), or the Governing Body Appeals Committee/Trust Board (CPP Committee) in the case of an appeal, together with you, can agree to an extension of the two month time limit or any of the recommended time limits in relation to the original meeting to discuss your application, the notice of the employer's decision, the notice of appeal, the appeal hearing and the notice of the Governing Body Appeals Committee/Trust Board (CPP Committee) decision on appeal. Any extension to timescales will be confirmed in writing.

## Flexible Working Request Form

<p><b>FLEXIBLE WORKING REQUEST FORM</b></p> <p>Before completing this form, you should first check that you are eligible for flexible working. Further details on flexible working and eligibility requirements, can be found above in the Flexible Working Policy.</p> <p>For further information, you can speak to the Chief Operating Officer (Trust Central Team) or Headteacher (School) or People Lead within the School.</p> <p>Please forward completed forms to the Chief Operating Officer (Trust Central Team) or Headteacher (School) and please keep a copy for your own records.</p>	
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Name:				
I have not already made two requests to work flexibly under this right during the past 12 months: (please tick)	Yes		No	
Date(s) of any previous request to work flexibly:				
I confirm that I am applying to work a working pattern that is different to my current working pattern under my right provided under Part VIIIA of the Employment Rights Act 1996 (please tick ü).				

All flexible working requests must include full responses to the following questions (continue on further sheets if necessary):

Describe your current working pattern (including place/days/hours/times worked):
Describe the working pattern you would like to work in future (including place/days/hours/times worked):

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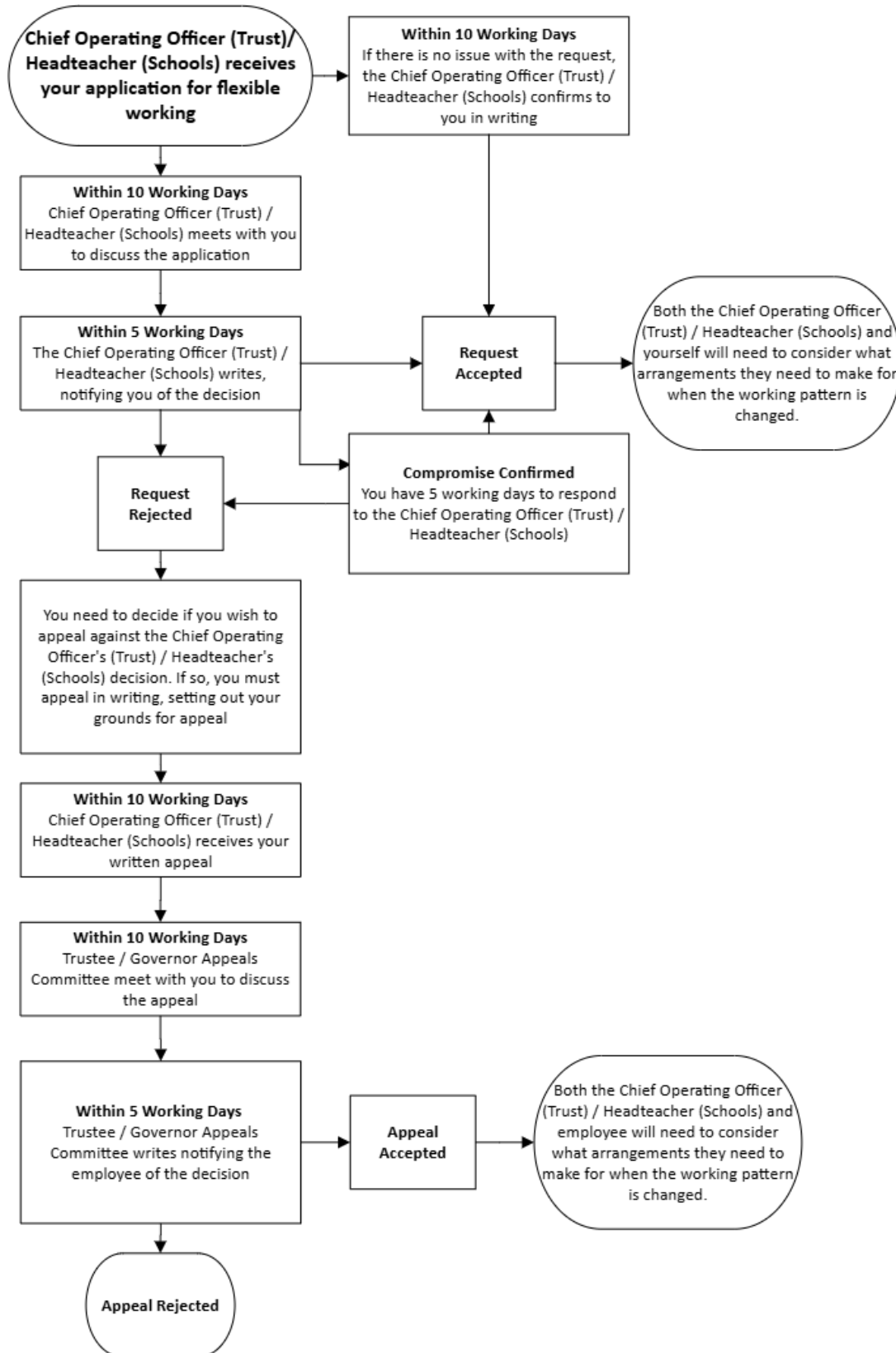
I would like this working pattern to commence from:	
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I declare that the information I have given on this form is true and accurate. I understand that it is a serious disciplinary offence to provide false information on this form.

Signed:
Dated:

This form is to be submitted to the Chief Operating Officer (Trust Central Team) or Headteacher (School).

## Flexible Working Request Flowchart



How the process works and the recommended time limits to assist in compliance within a two-month time limit.