Flexi schooling and elective home education

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Parent's guide to flexi-schooling

Flexi-schooling

Flexi-schooling is not the same as home education. It is a full-time education, but the provision is split between home and school.

It is not the same as reduced timetables, also known as part-time timetables.

You should only consider flexi-schooling for positive reasons and the best interests of your child. You must be confident that you can meet your child's educational needs.

You can ask a school to teach your child part-time whilst your child is home educated the rest of the time. You should explain your reasons for requesting this arrangement.

Headteachers are also required to discuss with Ofsted inspectors your flexi-schooling arrangements. They will be held accountable for the performance of flexi-schooled children.

If the headteacher does agree to flexi-schooling, you need to be aware that if a new headteacher comes into the school, they do not have to the agree to the arrangement or keep it in place.

Flexi-schooling may not be agreed at another school if you decide to move your child or when they transition to high school.

There is no legal right to flexi-schooling and head teachers can refuse. If your request is refused, there is no right of appeal against the decision.

Your child may find that their limited attendance makes it difficult to make and maintain friends.

The school does not need to let us know of the decision to agree to flexi-schooling. However, they do need to let us know that your child is being home educated for part of the school week.

Suitable education

The education that school provides is taken into account when we are considering if the child is in receipt of suitable education, under the elective home education guidance.

If the school thinks that parents or carers are not providing a suitable education as agreed, the school may ask the parent or carer to correct this.

If the parent or carer declines to do so or the school is still concerned about the provision of education at home, they may withdraw its agreement to the flexi-schooling arrangement. Your child would then be required to return to school full-time.

School attendance

The school will be required to monitor your child's attendance as they would for any other child on the school roll.

Any attendance concerns will need to be addressed through the school's attendance processes.

School admissions

Children who attend school under a flexi-schooling arrangement must follow the same admissions processes as other children.

Agreeing how flexi-schooling will work

The expectations and arrangement for flexi-schooling should be put into a written agreement between the school and parents.

The agreement should include information such as:

- Reasons why flexi-schooling is in the best interests of your child
- Pattern of attendance - how your child will split their time between being in school and being home educated
- Who is responsible for your child's safety and when
- How parents and school will keep in contact
- Arrangements for assessments and entrance for public exams - including an agreement on who will meet the cost of exam entries
- Details of any special educational needs provision
- Any other activities your child will access, for example, will they be included on trips or events which take place on a home-schooling day?
- How flexi-schooling will be monitored and when it will be regularly reviewed
- How the curriculum is fully tailored to your child's individual needs, including:
    - Their academic needs, based on progress and attainment
    - Any health-related needs
    - Your child's interests and aspirations
- How the register will be marked
- How the school will follow up on any unexpected or unexplained absence in the same way as it does for other children
- Circumstances under which either party can withdraw from the arrangement and the notice needed

The agreement should also include arrangements for the resolution of any disputes.

The responsibility for the flexi-school arrangement lies with the school and not the local authority.

You will need to work directly with the school should any issues arise.

Recording and monitoring flexi-schooling

Any sessions where your child is receiving education at home are recorded as authorised absences in the school's register. This will have a detrimental impact on the absence levels of the school.

The code schools enter into their register for any such sessions is the 'C' code. This means that your child is absent due to other authorised circumstances. In other words, the flexi-schooling arrangement has permitted your child to be absent from school.

Statutory curriculum

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, you will need to be mindful of the impact on your 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 your child, for whatever reason, is uncomfortable. Your child cannot be dis-applied from the statutory curriculum or assessment arrangements simply because flexible attendance has been agreed upon.

Special education needs and disabilities (SEND)

Arrangements for flexi-schooling may make both the identification of SEND and the ability to meet those needs more difficult to secure.

An effective assessment would need to take place across both the school and home-schooling elements of your child's education which could present logistical challenges.

Education, health and care plan

Where a child has an education, health and care plan (EHCP) the decision to agree to flexi-schooling must be taken in conjunction with the local authority.

If flexi-schooling is agreed upon for a child with an EHCP, this should be recorded on the EHCP and progress monitored through the usual annual review process.

Additional information

↑ Back to top