

STROUD GREEN



SCHOOL

FLEXI-SCHOOLING POLICY

Developed: December 2017
Review due: December 2019

Flexi-Schooling Policy

Stroud Green School is a two form entry primary school in the London Borough of Haringey north London. At Stroud Green we recognise the importance and value of children learning through a home/school partnership model. As such a parents/carers may choose other ways for their child or young person to engage in very effective, full-time, and suitable education. One way could be for them to request that our school considers entering into a Flexi-schooling arrangement.

In order for our school to enter into and continue a Flexi-schooling arrangement parents and carers must accept and maintain the rigorous framework of expectations reflected within this policy.

The initial request must emanate from the parent/carer. The school will not suggest or encourage a family to undertake flexi-schooling.

Haringey Local Authority guidance forms the basis of our school policy intended to:

- clearly establish the statutory arrangements for full-time education, • assist a parent/carer considering whether to request that the education of their statutory-age child is partly at this school and the remainder elsewhere, • assist our school in our:
- responses to parents/carers who request to have an arrangement for a child to attend part-time at our school and receive the remainder of their education at home or elsewhere, organised by the parent/carer;
- awareness of the legal/statutory regulations needed to be considered and instituted when discussing with parents/carers their request for flexi schooling.

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 particular reason. Flexi-schooling is a legal option provided that the head teacher 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 head teachers 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.

Flexi-schooling arrangements at Stroud Green

Stroud Green Primary school embraces the concept of flexi-schooling and deeply values the educational relationship with parents. This section sets out the principles by which the Head Teacher will manage the flexi-schooling policy at our school.

- Each application for flexi-schooling will be considered on its own merits balancing out the needs of the child emotionally, socially and educationally
- A child's attendance should be above National Averages of 95% (*however, if there is exceptionally medical requirements which has impacted on attendance this of course will be taken into consideration*)
- A child's attainment should be at or above age related expectations (however, each case will be evaluated on its own merits and a parent/carer may be directed to support their child at home on a flexi-schooling day if they need some specific support in certain elements of their learning)
- Flexi-schooling may considered as an option for some children who have specific educational, emotional or social needs and this will always be negotiated individually with parents
- Flexi-schooling is limited to one day per week and each agreement between the Head Teacher and parent is made on a half termly basis (broadly six weeks)
- Once a parent has agreed to Flexi-schooling they are committed to the entire half term.
- Our Flexi-schooling day is Friday only, which allows us to manage our whole school timetable so children don't miss out on trips, visitors or any specific new learning. (*the exception will be Friday infant assembly which children ideally should attend and then go off on their flexi-schooling day afterwards*)
- Parents/carers are required to attend at least termly flexi-schooling meetings – group meetings with the Head Teacher will take place half termly

How should an application for flexi-schooling at be made?

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 Head teacher, acting with the authority of the governing body, as to whether or not 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 Head teacher of our school so that the proposal may be considered. Each proposal will be considered on its own merits and within its individual context.

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 and the possible fragmentation of the child's learning experience.

It is a requirement of Stroud Green Primary that Flexi-schooling children attend on a minimum of four full days per week.

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 schools discipline or attendance itself.

The school has an inclusive approach to education and strives hard to work with the wishes and choices of all parents. The school expects parents 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 with which a child, for whatever reason, is uncomfortable.

Our Head teacher will consider:

All requests must be considered by the Head teacher 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 site and an appropriate, quality assured risk assessment must be undertaken in advance of any agreement made • no agreement will be reached or maintained where our Head teacher has concerns that it would put the child at risk of harm while not attending at our school.

The grounds for agreeing a Flexi-schooling place will always be at the discretion of the Head teacher. On application for an initial admission the Head teacher reserves the right to decline a request for a Flexi-schooling place. Grounds for declining a place could be that adding to the amount 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 maximum number of flexi pupils in each class will be 50%.

Attendance codes for when pupils are present at approved off-site educational activity 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.

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 if 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. DfE August 2013

The Role of the Governing Body of a School

The governing body may be involved in agreeing and reviewing the school's approach to flexi-schooling requests but they will not become involved in individual cases. 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 Head teacher 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.

Appeals

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

Our agreements with Parents

A written and signed agreement is formulated between the school and parent/carer, in order to make expectations clear for all concerned. The agreement is formalised in line with the schools flexi-schooling policy and will include:

- The expected pattern of attendance at school.
- The length of time the agreement is to run before being reviewed. *Typically this will be one half term initially*

Appendix 1

Flexi-schooling Additional Information Form

(to be filled in alongside School Enrolment form either by parents or during meeting)

Additional Information Form	
Child's name	
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)
Do you intend to follow the National Curriculum at Home?	
If so, do you require any help with this? (e.g. worksheets, assistance with attainment targets etc)	
Form of Education to date	F/T School P/T School Home Education N/A
Levels of attainment achieved (if applicable)	
Additional Needs (if applicable)	
Educational Assessment/Review Acceptable	Yes / No
Child will complete record of achievement	Yes/No
Please tell us anything else you feel we may find useful about yourself or your child	

Appendix 2 – Stroud Green Primary school

Flexi-schooling Contract

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

Stroud Green 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*.

Whilstis 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

Head Teacher:	Date:
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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*:

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

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

Parent/carer:	Date:
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Appendix 3 – Stroud Green Attendance Agreement

Flexi-schooling: Attendance Agreement

Child's name

Name of parent(s) / carer(s)

	MORNING	AFTERNOON
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		

Head Teacher: _____ Date: _____

Parent/carer: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 4

Relevant Legislation and Guidance

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 Section 6¹

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 authorised 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 authorised 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. 110166²

Alternative/off-site provision

130. It is becoming increasingly common for secondary schools and pupil referral units to use alternative provision in order to meet pupils' particular 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.

133. Inspectors must evaluate:

- how well the school identifies provision that matches pupils' needs and interests and enables them to gain appropriate knowledge and skills
- how well the school assesses the quality and safety of the provision
- the quality of information that the school gives to the alternative provider, for example about the pupil's special educational needs, behaviour and/or literacy levels.
- how well the school monitors and evaluates pupils' progress, attendance and behaviour and intervenes to support pupils where needed
- the progress that pupils make while attending alternative provision
- whether any qualifications being taken are at the appropriate level

Elective Home Education Guidelines webpage on the DfE website³: Clarification on Flexi-Schooling

¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2006/1751/regulation/6/made>

² <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/subsidiary-guidance-supporting-inspection-of-maintained-schools-and-academies-september-2012>

³

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/parents/involvement/homeeducation/a0073367/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 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 flexischooling here rather than the formal flexischooling 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 2013⁴ 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 if 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.

⁴ <http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/advice/f00221879/advice-on-school-attendance>