



## **FLEXIBLE WORKING POLICY FOR STAFF AT RUSH COMMON SCHOOL**

In this policy as in all documents of Rush Common Academy Trust (“RCAT”) any reference to Governors of Rush Common School or Trustees of RCAT is a reference to the Board of Directors of RCAT and any reference to the Headteacher of Rush Common School is a reference to the Chief Executive Officer of RCAT.

### **Introduction**

This policy applies to all employees working at Rush Common School. It should be read in conjunction with the relevant terms and conditions and other relevant policies of Rush Common School. Advice and support on the application of this policy is available from the Head of Business and Finance at Rush Common School.

### **Policy**

1. The School recognises that people work more effectively when they are able to strike a healthy balance between their work responsibilities and other aspects of their lives.
2. The School will consider all requests for flexible working, ensuring that the needs and priorities of the School can be met before agreeing to any new arrangements.
3. The nature of the work in schools means there can be limited flexibility in some roles, but the Headteacher will work with employees to try and identify solutions, where possible, that suit both the individual and the School.

### **Common types of flexible working:**

- Part Time working.
- Term time working - getting paid for the 38 or 39 weeks of term time worked, plus annual leave entitlement. The employee is paid monthly with pay spread evenly over the twelve months.
- Work times and patterns different from the standard school working hours.
- Compressed hours - where an employee works their normal contractual hours over fewer days than the standard work pattern.
- Annualised Hours - the employee is contracted to work a certain number of hours over the year but has some flexibility about when they work. There are

sometimes 'core hours' which the employee regularly works each week, and they work the rest of their hours flexibly or when there's extra demand at work.

- Job Sharing Scheme - a full time job is split between two people, each sharer working half the hours, undertaking a proportion of the duties and receiving proportionate pay and benefits. Job sharing requires a high level of co-operation and communication between the sharers.
- Home Working - it may be possible for employees to achieve more flexibility and a better work/life balance by working some of their time from home.

### **Who can apply to work flexibly?**

4. Any employee with 26 weeks continuous service with the employer.
5. Employees can make one application a year. Each year runs from the date when the application was made.
6. The Headteacher has the discretion to agree to consider another request during a year. This may be appropriate where requests are declined due to changes expected in the School but the Headteacher agrees to consider another request once the changes have taken place.

### **Procedure for requesting flexible working**

7. There is no legal obligation to agree to requests for flexible working but the law does require managers to objectively consider all requests.
8. To apply for flexible working, employees must fill in a flexible working application form (see Annex 1) setting out:
  - The change to working arrangements they are seeking and when they would like the change to come into effect.
  - What effect they think the requested change would have on the School and how, in their opinion, any such effect might be dealt with.
  - That the request is a statutory request and if they have made a previous application for flexible working the date of that application.
9. Requests for flexible working cannot be considered without this information being provided in writing.
10. The application form must be sent to the Headteacher. Requests from the Headteacher should be sent to the Chair of RCAT.
11. By law, requests must be dealt with within three months from receipt, including any appeal. The time scales set out in paragraphs 14 to 23 comply with this requirement.
12. The three month period can be extended by mutual agreement between the Headteacher and the employee. An extension could, for example, be used to trial new arrangements before the Headteacher makes a final decision.

13. Within 28 days of receiving the application, the Headteacher will arrange to meet with applicant to discuss the request. This discussion may be held on the phone if a meeting is not practical.
14. The meeting provides an opportunity to consider the employee's request and explore how it may be accommodated. Some flexibility may be required to explore alternatives or a compromise.
15. Employees can be accompanied to the meeting by a work colleague or trade union representative if they wish.
16. The Headteacher will write to the employee to notify them of their decision within 14 days of the date of the meeting. Where a request is rejected the reasons will be given and the employee will be reminded of their right of appeal.
17. The Headteacher can only refuse requests for the following reasons:
  - The burden of additional costs is unacceptable for the School
  - Work can't be reorganised amongst existing staff
  - An inability to recruit additional staff
  - The new arrangements would have a detrimental impact on quality
  - The new arrangements would have a detrimental impact on the performance of the individual, team or School
  - A detrimental effect on ability to meet pupil/student needs or work demand
  - There is insufficient work for the periods the employee proposes to work
  - The School is planning structural changes to the workforce
18. A four week trial period for the new arrangements can be agreed.
19. Where flexible work arrangements are approved they will normally constitute a permanent change to the contract of employment, with no automatic right to change back to the previous work pattern.
20. Agreement can be given for flexible work arrangements to be for a temporary period, allowing the employee to return to their normal working pattern or hours on an agreed date.

## **Appeals**

21. Where an application is refused employees should speak with the Headteacher to understand the reasons. There may be some simple misunderstanding which can be resolved.
22. Employees have the right to appeal against a decision to refuse an application. The grounds for appeal must be set out in writing within 10 days of receiving the decision. The appeal will be dealt with within 21 days. The employee has the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative to any appeal meeting.





## **Annex 1**

### **Flexible working Application Form for Staff at Rush Common School**

**Information you provide in this application will be treated in the strictest confidence.**

Please refer to the School's Flexible Working Policy for guidance.

Complete this form if you wish to apply to work flexibly - this could be to reduce or change your hours, job share etc.

**Name:**

**Payroll Number:**

**Job Title:**

I would like to apply to work a flexible working pattern that is different to my current working pattern under my right provided by law. I confirm I meet the eligible criteria as follows:

- I have worked continuously as an employee of the School for the last 26 weeks.
- I have not made a request to work flexibly under this right during the past 12 months.

If you have made a previous request in the last 12 months please provide details.

Please give the reason you are requesting to work flexibly:

Are you making this request as a reasonable adjustment due to ill-health and/or disability? (Please indicate which)

If yes please provide details of how flexible working will support you to attend work.

Describe your current working pattern (days/hours/times worked):

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

I would like this working pattern to commence from:

Impact of the new working pattern:

What effect do you think this change will have on your work and the School?

How do you think any effect may be dealt with?

Is your request to change your working pattern permanent or temporary?

If you are requesting a temporary change give details of when you would want to revert to your previous working pattern.

Please be aware that if your request is approved and it is a permanent change, you do not have the right to request another variation in contractual terms for a period of 12 months, although your manager does have discretion to agree to consider additional requests.

Signed:

Date:

Employee action – send to Headteacher once completed.

Headteacher action – keep a record of this application on the employee's file.

If the request is agreed and it affects the employee's pay, notify payroll services promptly to avoid salary errors.