

Working from Home Policy

Date	Review Date	Endorsed by	Approved by	Link Governor
Dec 2016	Dec 2017	Resources Committee	Governing Body	Giuseppe Sollazzo

We at The Devonshire Hill Nursery and Primary School recognise our responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and will take all reasonably practicable steps to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions (on the school premises and during school-sponsored activities), equipment and systems of work for all our pupils, school personnel and visitors to the school.

We believe working at home is a formal arrangement that allows a member of the school personnel to work at home when required or on a more regular basis as agreed with the governing body. We realise that working at home can provide a better work life balance and also allows individuals to complete assignments without interruption.

We will seriously consider all requests for home working if we think that the school and the individual member of the school personnel will benefit from it. However, on all occasions we must take in to account the home working arrangements of the member of the school personnel, the suitability of the home environment in regard to office space, office furniture and equipment. It is very important that a thorough risk assessment is carried out of the home office and that the public liability insurance also covers the school personnel's home office. We expect those members of the school personnel who periodically work from contact check with their own home insurers that they are totally covered.

We as a school community have a commitment to promote equality. Therefore, an equality impact assessment has been undertaken and we believe this policy is in line with the Equality Act 2010.

We believe it is essential that this policy clearly identifies and outlines the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the procedures and arrangements that is connected with this policy.

Aims

- To consider all requests for home working
- To ensure all arrangements are in place for working at home
- To share good practice within the school and with other schools
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation connected to this policy
- To work with other schools and the local authority to share good practice in order to improve this policy.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Managers Guidance on Working from Home (**Appendix A**)
- The right to request flexible working: An Acas guide (**Guidance Document A**)

Responsibility for the Policy and Procedure

The Governing Body has:

- Delegated powers and responsibilities to the Headteacher to ensure all school personnel and stakeholders are aware of and comply with this policy;
- Ensure funding is in place to support this policy;
- Responsibility for ensuring full compliance with all statutory responsibilities;

- Responsibility for ensuring that the school complies with all equalities legislation;
- Nominated a designated Equalities governor to ensure that appropriate action will be taken to deal with all prejudice related incidents or incidents which are a breach of this policy
- Make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy;
- Responsibility for ensuring this policy and all policies are maintained and updated regularly;
- Responsibility for ensuring all policies are made available to parents;
- Nominated a link governor to visit the school regularly, to liaise with the Headteacher and to report back to the Governing Body;
- Responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy.

The Headteacher will:

- Ensure all school personnel are aware of and comply with this policy;
- Consider all requests for working at home;
- Ensure risk assessments are in place for working at home;
- Ensure that public liability insurance covers the home worker's office;
- Ensure good practice is shared throughout the school;
- Work closely with the link governor;
- Provide leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- Make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy;
- Provide guidance, support and training to all staff;
- Monitor the effectiveness of this policy by school personnel;
- Annually report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy.

The Link Governor will:

- Work closely with the Headteacher;
- Ensure this policy and other linked policies are up to date;
- Ensure that everyone connected with the school is aware of this policy;
- Attend training related to this policy;
- Annually report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy.

School personnel will:

- Comply with all aspects of this policy;
- Ensure their home insurer has been notified of their home working arrangements and that their insurance covers this;
- Be aware of all other linked policies;
- Maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour within and outside school and not to undermine fundamental British values;
- Implement the school's equalities policy and schemes;
- Report and deal with all incidents of discrimination;
- Attend appropriate training sessions on equality;
- Report any concerns they have on any aspect of the school community;
- Comply with all confidentiality and data protection laws in relation to school documents being taken offsite.

Legislation

There is no specific legislation on relating to working from home, however the arrangements set out in this document incorporate reference, where appropriate, to The Devonshire Hill Nursery and Primary School's obligations under current Health and Safety legislation and the working time directive.

Definition of occasional working from home

Occasional working from home means the employee performing specific work obligations required under their contract of employment from their home on an irregular basis.

Whether or not an employee is permitted to work occasionally at home is entirely at the discretion of the Headteacher. Occasional working from home is neither a contractual nor a statutory right and the Headteacher is under no obligation to approve any request by an employee to work at home.

Requesting to work from home

Employees wishing to occasionally work from home must secure the agreement of the Headteacher prior to the actual date of home working. Retrospective requests will not normally be agreed and any absence maybe considered as unauthorised, which may lead to disciplinary action being taken.

When approving requests, the Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that there is a clear business requirement for the employee to undertake work from home rather than attending school. An example would be the employee benefiting from working on a specific task without the normal daily distractions. The Headteacher will also need to ensure that sufficient resources are available within the team to cover the employee's absence from work.

Approving requests for working from home

The Headteacher is advised that, as a guide, occasional working from home means that an employee does not develop a regular pattern of being away from the school.

The Headteacher should consider requests for working from home on the following criteria:

- **The nature of the employee's job:** for instance, does the employee's job require regular, face-to-face contact with other employees or members of the public, meaning that it is unsuitable for the post holder to work from home. Relevant examples would include: a receptionist; estate based employees whose duties cannot be carried out at a different location;
- **The applicant's skills, abilities and personal attributes:** The employee's performance should be considered in determining whether the employee is considered suitable to work unsupervised;
- **Impact to team:** The demands likely to be placed upon the employee's colleagues and the impact upon members of other teams with whom the employee works with. In other words, the Headteacher needs to be confident that sufficient resources are available within the team to cover the employee's absence from work;
- **The suitability of home location:** The suitability of the employee's home location should also be considered.

Requests for working from home which coincide with medical appointments are permitted, however the Headteacher should approve such requests where there is a clear business benefit for the employee to work at home rather than at the workplace.

Requests by staff to work at home during allocated PPA time will not usually be permitted unless there is a clear business benefit for the employee to work at home rather than at the workplace.

Expectation of employees who occasionally work from home

While working at home, employees must be engaged on agreed school work and be contactable during normal hours of business operation.

IT equipment

Laptop, phone and wireless router may be provided to employees who anticipate working from home on a more frequent occasional arrangement. Any request for such equipment will need to be authorised by the Headteacher and agreed on a case-by-case basis.

Should the above equipment be provided, the employee has to agree to an ADSL line being installed in their home and to an authorised engineer attending their home on an annual basis to carry out electrical safety inspections of said equipment.

Telephone

Unless a school telephone has been provided, the employee will be required to use their own telephone for making occasional telephone calls while working from home.

Security

When working from home, the employee must be aware of the increased risk of a security breach. The employee must ensure that all documentation is stored securely and that any laptop or PC is password protected and turned off when not in use.

IT equipment provided to the employee to support working from home is for the exclusive use of that employee alone. The employee is not permitted to allow family members or friends to use IT equipment provided to them.

The employee is also required to comply with School policies that cover the use of IT equipment and applications.

Absence and sickness

If an employee is unable to work on the day which they had expected to work from home due to sickness, injury or otherwise, they must follow The Devonshire Hill Nursery and Primary School's absence reporting procedure. The employee is required to keep the Headteacher informed of the likely date of return to work, the reason for the absence, and progress, as if they were normally attending work.

Disciplinary procedures

The "Employee Disciplinary Procedure and Code of Conduct Policy" apply equally to office-based and working from home arrangements. Any abuse of the working from home arrangements amounting to misconduct may be subject to disciplinary action.

Health and safety

The School's "Health and Safety Policy" remains applicable to employees working at home. Copies of the Health & Safety policies and procedures are available on the Intranet and school website. Hard copies are also available in the staff room to view only.

Employees will be required to carry out an on-line workstation assessment on their home's workstation and to take any necessary corrective actions. Failure to carry this out may result in the privilege of working from home to be removed.

It is the responsibility of the employee to care for their own Health and Safety and make the school aware of any issues that may have an impact on this. Accidents to employees sustained while working at home must be reported in the same way as if office based.

Confidentiality

While working from home employees will remain subject to all confidentiality clauses contained within their contract of employment. A disclosure of confidential information during the course of employment may be considered by the school as gross misconduct and grounds for termination of employment without notice.

Monitoring and review

The line manager will be responsible for monitoring the employee's performance while working occasionally from home.

Variations

The Governing Body of The Devonshire Hill Nursery and Primary School reserves the right to vary this policy.

Raising Awareness of this Policy

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- The School website
- Meetings with school personnel

Training

All school personnel:

- Have equal chances of training, career development and promotion
- Receive training on induction which specifically covers:
 - All aspects of this policy
 - Health and Safety
 - Medical and First Aid
 - Fire Safety
 - Equal opportunities
- Receive periodic training so that they are kept up to date with new information

Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school.

Monitoring the Effectiveness of the Policy

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed annually or when the need arises by the coordinator, the Headteacher and the link governor.

A statement of the policy's effectiveness and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be presented to the Governing Body for further discussion and endorsement.

This policy was reviewed and endorsed by the Full Governing Body of The Devonshire Hill Nursery and Primary School on Tuesday 20th December 2016.