



Little Strides

Flexible Working Policy



Introduction

Flexible working is any type of working arrangement that gives some degree of flexibility on working hours, where and when an employee works. This includes requests for part-time, term time, flexitime, compressed hours and varied working locations. The Company recognises that there may be alternatives or a combination of flexible work options which are suitable for both the business and the employee.

This policy and procedure sets out a framework for developing individual flexible working arrangements that meet the requirements of the relevant employment legislation and enables the Company to meet its commitment to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion.

Aim of policy

All employees have the right to request flexible working from day one of their employment and have their request considered formally. The Company recognises that a better work-life balance can improve employee motivation, productivity and performance and reduce stress. Therefore, the Company aims to support its employees in achieving a work-life balance where possible.

Eligibility

All employees are eligible to apply to work flexibly and able to make two formal requests in a 12-month period. It is recognised that not all working patterns or flexible working options will be suitable for all roles, for instance it may be difficult to accommodate the flexible working requests of several employees in the same setting or department. The flexible working arrangements available to staff will be kept under review and may be amended from time to time subject to feasibility.

Submitting a flexible working request

All requests must be made in writing by completing an application form that is available from the line manager. Any request made must include:

- a statement that it is being made under the employee's statutory right to apply for flexible working;
- the employee's reason for making the application;
- the changes that the employee is seeking to their terms and conditions;
- the date on which the application is made and the dates and results of any previous applications to work flexibly;
- the date from when the employee would like the proposed change to come into effect.

All flexible working requests will be dealt with within a period of two months from first receipt to notification of decision on appeal.

Meetings regarding flexible working

Upon receiving a written request for flexible working, the line manager will arrange a meeting with the employee to:

- discuss the request;
- find out more about the proposed working arrangements;
- consider how flexible working could be of benefit to both the employee and the business.

The manager will arrange a meeting with the employee to discuss the request normally within one month but this time limit may be extended if necessary. The employee may bring a colleague to the meeting if they wish.

The employee will be notified of the decision in writing normally within 14 days of the date of the meeting. This notification will either:

- accept the request and confirm the start date as well as any other action. Where flexible working practices are agreed as a permanent change, a variation will need to be made to the employee's contract of employment;
- reject the request and give clear business reasons for doing so together with details of the appeals process or
- agree to trial a flexible work arrangement for an initial period of three months. At the end of the agreed trial period, the Company reserves the right to require the employee to revert to their previous working arrangement. Where a request to work flexibly is granted, there is no automatic right for the employee to return to their previous pattern of work.

The Company will only refuse a valid request to work flexibly on one or more of the following grounds:

- 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 the employee proposes to work or
- planned structural changes.

Right to appeal decision

An employee who wishes to appeal should do so in writing to the Area or Senior Manager within 5 working days of being notified of the decision.

The employee will be notified of the appeal date and the employee is entitled to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative if they wish.

The employee will be notified of the appeal decision normally within 14 days of the appeal meeting but the time limit may be extended if necessary. The appeal decision is final and will either:

- uphold the appeal, specify the agreed variation and start date or
- dismiss the appeal, state the grounds for the decision and contain a sufficient explanation for this.

Review date	Name	Position	Signature
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