



The Athelstan Trust

Flexible Working Policy

Date of Review	Approved by	Date of Approval	Next Review Date	Website
June 2023, June 2026	Board Staffing Committee	17 th June 2026	June 2029	Y

Flexible working policy

Introduction

- Aims:** The aim of our flexible working policy is to provide guidance on an employee's statutory entitlement to request flexible working. The aim of The Athelstan Trust is to support our employees, where possible, to manage the balance between work and home life. The Athelstan Trust is committed to equality of opportunity in employment for all its employees and to developing working practices and policies that support work life balance. The Athelstan Trust wants to support its employees and recognises that a better work-life balance can improve employee motivation, performance and productivity and reduce stress. The Athelstan Trust will consider all requests in a reasonable manner and in accordance with this policy and is committed to agreeing flexible working arrangements, provided that the needs and objectives of both the Trust and the employee can be met.
- Timeframes:** Requests will be considered and a decision reached within two months from receipt of the Request unless mutually agreed otherwise. This timeframe includes any appeal unless mutually agreed otherwise.
- Consideration:** Requests from School based staff will be considered by the Headteacher of the School. Requests from Central Team staff will be considered by the CEO. Headteacher / CEO will consider each flexible working request on a case-by-case basis. The fact that one request has been agreed does not necessarily mean that the School / Trust will be able to agree future requests. Consideration of a request may involve a need to plan alternative staffing arrangements and recruitment of new staff that directly result from the proposed change in working patterns. Staff are therefore encouraged to discuss the timing of their request with the Headteacher / CEO: this will help to ensure that recruitment cycles are factored in and reduces the risk of the Request being refused.

Right to request flexible working

- Entitlement:** From the commencement of your employment with The Athelstan Trust, you have the statutory right to request a change to one or more of the terms and conditions of employment referred to in the paragraphs below (**Request**)
- Request:** You are only able to make two requests in a 12-month period.
- Type of request:** Your Request must relate to one or more of the following terms and conditions of employment:
 - A change to the number of hours you work;
 - your times of work;
 - whether you carry out work from home or your normal place of work;



The Athelstan Trust

Flexible Working Policy

- A reduction in the working week;
- A shorter working year (term time);
- A job share arrangement.

- 7 **A Request:** A Request should be made in writing by completing the Flexible Working Request Form (see Appendix A) and passing it to the Headteacher.
- 8 **Consultation meeting:** As soon as possible, but in any event usually within 10 working school days of your request being received by the School / Trust, the School / Trust shall either notify you in writing that your Request has been agreed, stating the variation agreed to and the date from which it is to take effect. You will be asked to sign this letter to confirm acceptance of the changes and a copy of this letter will then be placed on your personnel file. Alternatively, a meeting shall be held to discuss your Request (**Consultation Meeting**). The Consultation Meeting will normally be held by a member of the senior leadership team. The meeting will normally be held at the School / Trust during working hours unless this is not convenient to either you or the School / Trust. At the meeting your request will be discussed to get a better idea of what changes you are looking for and how they might benefit the School / Trust and you as the employee. Alternative options that may be available will also be discussed. If rejection of your request is being considered, this will be discussed at the Consultation Meeting.
- 9 **Right to be accompanied:** You have the right to be accompanied to the Consultation Meeting by a work colleague or Trade Union Representative.
- 10 **Considerations:** On receipt of a Request the School / Trust will carefully consider the benefits of the requested changes in working conditions for you and the School / Trust and weigh these against any adverse impact of implementing the changes.
- 11 **Grounds for refusal:** Your Request (and your appeal) may be refused where the School / Trust considers that one or more of the following grounds apply:
- the Request would, if agreed, impose a burden of additional costs on the School / Trust;
 - the Request would, if agreed, have a detrimental effect on the ability to meet parents', guardians' or carers' or students' demands;
 - the School / Trust is unable to reorganise work among existing staff;
 - the School / Trust is unable to recruit additional staff;
 - the Request would, if agreed, result in a detrimental impact on the level of quality at the School / Trust;
 - the Request would, if agreed, result in a detrimental impact on the level of performance at the School / Trust;
 - the work available to be done during the periods you propose to work under your Request would be insufficient;
 - planned structural changes mean that the School / Trust cannot agree to your Request.



The Athelstan Trust

Flexible Working Policy

- 12 **Notification of decision:** ~~but in any event usually within 14 days of the Consultation Meeting,~~ The School / Trust will notify you in writing of the decision. Wherever possible, this will be within 10 working school days of the Consultation Meeting. Where the School / Trust agrees to your Request, the School / Trust will also confirm the variation agreed to and the date from which it is to take effect. You will be asked to sign this letter to confirm acceptance of the changes and a copy of this letter will then be placed on your personnel file. Where your Request is not agreed, the School / Trust will:
- confirm the grounds for refusal, explaining why the grounds apply in the circumstances
 - confirm your right to appeal
- 13 **Existing working arrangements:** If existing flexible working arrangements within the School / Trust mean that it will be difficult to agree a Request, the School / Trust will consider whether it is appropriate in the circumstances to ask other staff if they wish to volunteer changing their own working arrangements.

Appeal

- 14 **Your right to appeal:** You have the right to appeal the School / Trust's decision not to agree to your Request. Such an appeal must be exercised in writing within 10 working school days after the day the School / Trust's decision is given, giving full details of why you wish to appeal. Your notice of appeal must be dated and sent to the Headteacher / CEO.
- 15 **Appeal meeting:** The School / Trust will hold a meeting to discuss your appeal as soon as possible, but in any event usually within 10 school working days of your notice of appeal being given. The appeal meeting will be held by a person who has not been involved in the Consultation Meeting. The appeal meeting will normally be held at the School / Trust during working hours unless this is not convenient to either you or the School / Trust.
- 16 **Right to be accompanied:** You may be accompanied to the appeal meeting by a work colleague or Trade Union Representative.
- 17 **Notification of appeal decision:** The School / Trust will notify you in writing of its decision on your appeal as soon as possible, but in any event usually within 10 working school days of the appeal meeting. Where the School / Trust upholds your appeal, the School / Trust will also specify the variation agreed to and the date from which it is to take effect. Where your appeal is dismissed, the School / Trust will also confirm the grounds for refusal and explain why the grounds apply in the circumstances.

General

- 18 **Withdrawal of application:** You may withdraw your Request or your appeal at any time before the School / Trust reaches a decision. The School / Trust may regard your application as withdrawn (and will notify you as such) where you have failed without good reason to attend a Consultation Meeting or an appeal meeting more than once.
- 19 This policy will be reviewed every 3 years by the Staffing Committee of the Board of Trustees or following a change in legislation.



APPENDIX A - FLEXIBLE WORKING REQUEST FORM

Name	Department
I am making a request to work a flexible working pattern that is different to my current working pattern under my right provided in law. I confirm that I have not made more than one other request to work flexibly during the past 12 months (a maximum of 2 flexible working requests can be made in any 12-month period).	
Please set out the reasons for your request (in particular, if your request is to meet caring responsibilities or on health grounds)	
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 request that the change would become effective from (date) Signed..... Date.....	
Notes This form should be used by members of staff wishing to request a change to their working pattern under the Flexible Working Policy. A copy of the Flexible Working Policy can be found on the Athelstan Trust website.	