



The Catholic Schools of The Waveney Valley

Policy: Flexi Schooling

September 2024

Review September 2026

The Catholic Schools of the Waveney Valley firmly believe that full time education within a school environment is the best option for all children and young people to enjoy, achieve and attain to their full potential.

However, we also recognise that 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.

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 April 2019, DCSF issued "Elective home education: Guidance for local authorities" which contained the following paragraph (1.3) *"Although children being home-educated are not normally registered at any school, parents sometimes choose to make arrangements for a child to receive part of the total provision at a school - the purpose of this will often be to provide education in specific subjects more easily than is possible at home. Such arrangements are sometimes known as 'flexi-schooling'. Schools are under no obligation to agree to such arrangements, but some are happy to do so. When a child is flexi-schooled, the parents must still ensure that the child receives a suitable full-time education but the element received at school must be taken into account in considering whether that duty is met, just as it should be when a child attends other settings on a part-time basis as described above. Bearing that in mind, this guidance applies as much to children who are flexi-schooled as it does to others who are educated at home."*

How should an application for flexi-schooling 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 CPSWV that flexi-schooling children attend on a minimum of **three** full days per week. There would be half termly reviews with class teachers where a review and an outline of the next term's provision shared and the expectation that experiences from the education provided at home are shared through email on a weekly basis.

There is a commitment to the expected pattern of attendance and that parents/carers must contact the school if the child is absent from a session that they would normally be present at school or at an approved educational activity.

Families are flexible regarding attendance for special events which fall outside of the normal arrangements such as, but not limited to, assemblies, school trips, school productions or performances, sports events, visitors to the school Flexi schooling within CPSWV 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.

CPSWV 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.

Our Head Teacher will consider:

- All requests must be considered by the Head Teacher on their own merits

- The Head teacher will consider the best interests of the child; their potential and ongoing educational progress and achievement; their safety, safeguarding and welfare
 - The Head Teacher will also consider the likely impact on the discipline, morale and organisation of the school

Considerations that our Head Teacher will make when deciding whether to agree to a flexi-schooling arrangement:

- Safeguarding and welfare of the child is of paramount importance.
 - 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. Therefore; when agreeing to flexi-schooling arrangement our school is certifying that the education is supervised and all reasonable and appropriate measures have been taken to safeguard pupils
 - Current and anticipated level of educational attainment, achievement and progress of the individual pupil and the arrangements for monitoring learning and progress of the individual child
 - The appropriateness of the education proposed and maintained by the parents/carers away from the school
 - Flexi-schooling education provided at home and that provided at school must together constitute a full-time education provision
 - The effect on school discipline and the morale and motivation of other children on roll at the time
 - The effect on the school organisation and funding
 - The effect on school resources

The grounds for agreeing a Flexi-schooling place will always be at the discretion of the Head Teacher. Grounds for declining a place could mean that adding to the number 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.

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.

When the education being provided at home is not suitable If it appears to our school that parents/carers are not providing a suitable education or not working with the school to uphold its values, policies and practices as agreed between the school and the parent/carer; the school may ask the parent/carer to take remedial action.

If the parent/carer declines to do so or the school is still concerned about the provision of the education at home or adherence to the Flexi-schooling agreement, the school may withdraw its agreement. The child would then be required to attend school on a full-time basis.