

Alex Park Democratic School



FLEXI-SCHOOLING POLICY

Pre-amble

Here at Alex Park Democratic School, we recognise the right of parents to choose a suitable and personalised education for their child according to the child's dispositions and needs coupled with the families' beliefs and values.

We welcome all children irrespective of need, background or belief to our school, and we firmly believe that our Flexi-schooling provision can be an arrangement which is beneficial to all.

In all circumstances, each application is considered on a case by case basis, even within the same family. It is important that prospective parents are aware that schools are not required by law to provide or offer Flexi-schooling. When such offers are made each place at Alex Park Democratic School is granted at the sole discretion of our Headteacher – there are no rights of appeal to Directors, LA, DfE or through the legal system if this provision is declined, varied by the school, or revoked.

If a situation occurs where the Flexi-schooling arrangement is varied or revoked, then those children would be required to attend for additional days if requested or in some cases full-time. If a parent disagrees with this, they are free to take their child or children to another school or to de-register and return the EHE. If a parent elects to de-register, then we are legally required to inform the relevant Local Authority of the de-registration and pass records on to that authority so that they can effectively liaise with the family.

Key Points to Note

It is important for parents to note the following statement provided by the Department for Education (DfE);

'Where parents choose not to have their child educated by full-time attendance at school, then they are responsible for the whole of their child's education.'

DfE 2018

It is also worth noting that in any instance the Education Act clearly states that parents are responsible for the education of their children – this applies to all parents in all circumstances and applies to the delivery of an appropriate education be that by the parent or through the state or independent sectors including individuals.

□ Flexi-schooling is a legal option provided that our Headteacher agrees to the arrangement, this arrangement can be amended or withdrawn without challenge.

- We are more than willing to accept children with an EHCP, on the understanding that they required to attend on a full-time basis. Thereby ensuring that we can meet any Statutory Duties the EHCP places on our school, regarding its commitment to the child, extending to the appointment of key staff dedicated to the child and to ensure that 'Best Value' is achieved.**
- We will not automatically offer Flexi-Schooling to children with an EHCP (Education Health and Care Plan - Former Statement of Educational Need) that comes with prescribed hours and funding attached unless clear guidance is issued in writing by the commissioning Authority giving clear permission for such an arrangement.**
- This approach will also apply to children who currently attend on a Flexi-schooling basis and are found to need the support of an EHCP.**
- Parents should be aware that Flexi-schooling is not to be taken as a means to avoid education or to avoid expulsion, and we will not accept any children on Flexi-schooling arrangements who have been expelled. If a parent misleads our Headteacher in this matter and a past exclusion is uncovered, the flexi-school arrangement will be automatically revoked, and the child in question will be required to attend on a full-time formal basis.**

What is Flexi-schooling?

Flexi-schooling or flexible school attendance is an arrangement between the parent and the school where the child is registered at school and attends our school for at least three days; the rest of the time the child is home educated or attending other provisions. This arrangement is an open ended offer. However, the terms of this arrangement can be varied over and above the minimum number of days, or withdrawn if our Headteacher decides to do so, and decisions in this regard are not open to challenge.

Flexi-schooling is a legal option provided that our Headteacher agrees to the arrangement. The child will be required to follow the National Curriculum whilst at school but not whilst they are being educated at home'.

There is no statutory curriculum for the home education element of our flexi-schooling arrangement. None the less we promote without pressure the opportunities the partnership flexi-schooling brings - and from that, we hope that this partnership will develop in a manner that is mutually beneficial to all parties.

All teaching and learning offered on the core days reflects our curriculum policies as offered to children who attend on a formal basis. This policy and our other school policies do not seek to prescribe how children should be taught at home for the home education element of the Flexi-schooling arrangement.

Our Principles of Flexi-schooling

We see Flexi-schooling as;

- a process of co-operative teamwork, within which we welcome and encourage the involvement of parents in the education of their children**

Within which;

- we treat all children fairly and give them equal opportunity to take part in class activities
- we treat all children with kindness and respect
- we praise all children for their efforts and, by so doing, we help to build positive attitudes towards our academy and learning in general
- our teachers apply our policies with regard to discipline and classroom management
- teaching staff make clear the class code of conduct
- all children are expected to comply with the rules that are in place to promote the best learning atmosphere for all
- we insist on good order and behaviour at all times
- children who misbehave will be managed fairly within the guidelines for sanctions as outlined in our school Behaviour Policy
- We conduct all our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect for all.

Aims

Being small offers our school the ability to offer some opportunities not readily offered elsewhere – Flexi-Schooling is one of these opportunities that work well in our unique small school environment.

We believe that people learn in many different ways and we endeavour to provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows children to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential.

We believe all children are important and from that we tailor our teaching and learning suited to the needs of each child, to ensure they develop at their own pace, with access to any level of education irrespective of their age.

Flexi-schooled pupils also indirectly expand what we can offer to our regular pupils, encouraging them to focus on the benefits of learning after normal hours at home and thereby enhance their opportunities also.

Summarised - these points are what we offer all pupils;

- a more flexible approach to education that encompasses and supports all children
- access to a happy, stimulating, secure and safe environment both in school and at home that offers all children an equal opportunity to develop their abilities and personalities, helping to unlock their potential
- access to the bank of knowledge, skills, concepts, attitudes, and values of our broad and balanced curriculum. This fosters a lifelong love of learning, in a shared environment where pupils, parents and teachers can effectively work together, enhancing the education provision for all.
- the opportunity for our children to share a healthy respect for personal choice and a clear understanding and acceptance of others and their ideals
- the opportunity to develop a responsible and independent attitude towards learning

Introduction, Integration and General Attendance

Initial meeting

We arrange an initial meeting to ensure that the new child/children and parent(s) understand the clear need for a partnership between parents, children, and school.

The integration of Flexi-schooled pupils within the school community

All children have access to the full curriculum. Work can be provided for parents to use at home should they wish to use it and we will provide the children with follow up work for home if they cannot finish it in the school, but it homework is optional.

If a child is accepted on roll to attend on the flexi-school basis, parents need to be aware that they are fully responsible for the Safeguarding and Child Protection elements relating to their child when away from the school and being Home Educated. This extends to Education provided by a 3rd party arranged by the parent/carer/responsible adult. These responsibilities pass to the school only when the child attends normal lessons or attends academic visits arranged by the school with our staff present.

Our Academic day begins with Registration at **9 am** and ends at **3.30pm**.

We are not able to vary start times, as this disrupts lessons already in progress. All children are expected to arrive promptly for the start of the day; subject to one-off extenuating situations, i.e. medical appointments, accidents etc. All sickness events require that the parents notify the school.

Lateness is recorded and parents need to be aware that persistent lateness could lead to the revocation of the school place.

Strategies for Teaching and Learning

Each class teacher is aware of the children who are going to attend on a given day and lessons are planned to accommodate all children.

In all cases, lessons are differentiated so that they can be accessed at different levels, with children encouraged to preview or review the topic at home.

Our Strategies for Teaching and Learning are organised on a subject by subject basis, within a progressive curriculum framework.

Liability

For activities beyond the sole care and charge of academy staff, the parents/carers of flexi-schooled pupils are fully responsible for their child or children when they are educated at home (or at their chosen offsite venue), even when completing assigned class work. Activities/visits arranged by parents/carers in the same vein are also covered by the same parental responsibility.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

Unless there are extenuating circumstances, we need to see children at least once every ten days to fulfil our Child Protection and Safeguarding obligations.

As with all children, we have a statutory duty to inform our local Child Protection and Safeguarding officers if any child presents with unusual injuries, or discloses any information that requires their involvement; and then to co-operate fully with any investigations, or follow up actions they deem necessary.

Parents need to be aware that by choosing to Flexi-school their child or children, that they are therefore accepting that they alone are responsible for any future legal redress their child or children may seek.

It is extremely important for the parents to be able to share samples of work carried out at home.

Regular feedback will be provided to parents regarding their child.

Our eLearning platform can allow children to;

- View or read lesson materials
- Be offered additional tasks
- Play interactive games that give the school feedback on their progress across a range of subjects, including.
 - Mathematics
 - Literacy
 - Coding

Parents can have access to;

- Long and medium term plans
- access work at a suitable level for their child
- contribute to their child's assessment through uploading work
- access records and assessments on their child
- possible access to a variety of additional tools and materials that may be too expensive or unavailable to them when outside the normal mainstream education system

In addition to the above, we will also offer individual meetings with parents to share experiences from home and school, share ideas and devise a common learning plan.

Monitoring and review

We are aware of the need to review our flexi-schooling policy regularly so that we can take account of new initiatives, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology, or changes to the physical environment of the school.

General

This procedure/policy and its guidance will always reflect the present and future needs of all stakeholders and to support this we are always open to suggestions for changes and alterations of and to any specific individual provision/requirement to ensure full access to all.

Date – January 2021

Signed Headteacher–

Review – January 2022

Signed Director -