



Thinking Schools Academy Trust

“Transforming Life Chances”

Hybrid Working Policy

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What is hybrid working?

Hybrid working is a form of flexible working where employees spend some of their working hours or working days at their contractual place of work and some of their time remotely, usually at their home.

In this policy, the term 'office or school' means your contractual place of work within the Trust, 'remotely' usually means working from home but may mean another location which is not a Trust site.

Hybrid working can also be combined with other kinds of flexible working such as part-time hours or a job share and is not meant to replace any other flexible working opportunities available to Trust staff. If your request is in relation to the above matters, please view our [Flexible Working Policy](#).

Eligibility for hybrid working

Before hybrid working can be considered, the role and the staff member undertaking the role must meet these criteria:

- The role does not exclusively require in-person contact or a physical presence within the office/school. Where roles require extensive or exclusive physical presence (such as facilities or teaching staff) hybrid working will not be an option, however other forms of flexible working can be considered.
- Employees carrying out the role can meet the obligations and responsibilities set out in this document.
- Employees are able to actively engage, communicate and work effectively with their team and manager whilst working remotely.
- Employees must have an appropriate workspace to undertake work and meetings, this includes a professional workspace appropriate for video meetings with attendees external to the Trust.
- The role meets the definitions of one of the hybrid category types (detailed below).

Where hybrid working is agreed it will not be unreasonably withdrawn. Circumstances where hybrid working arrangements may be withdrawn include:

- Where an employee is not meeting acceptable performance standards.
- Where an employee is failing to meet the obligations set out in this document.
- Where there has been an identifiable operational impact of hybrid working arrangements.
- Where an employee's role or duties change such that hybrid working is no longer suitable.

Hybrid levels

Agreeing which level of hybrid working a role falls into will not result in any contractual changes or change to a staff members terms and conditions of employment. These categories can be used to identify the most appropriate level of Hybrid Working for all roles.

For each category, the suggested proportions of time within the office/school and remote working are based on a full time equivalent and these should be applied in whole day equivalence for staff working part-time.

Roles will fall into one of the three categories.

Level 1 – Office/School Based

These roles need to be carried out within the school or central service office. Remote working will only take place exceptionally if business needs allow, and with the agreement of the line manager.

Example: John is a Facilities Manager, his team is responsible for delivering planned and reactive services in a busy, fast-paced environment. His role mainly involves practical skills in person.

As a supervisor, John is responsible for a range of planning and reporting activities. He usually sets aside one day every month to complete these scheduled tasks and arranges the team's rota to support this routine. John could work from home occasionally when writing reports or planning work rotas, but he works on-site because his role often includes reacting quickly to unexpected issues.

Level 2 – Predominantly office/school based – hybrid

These roles are eligible for hybrid working with 60-80% of the work being carried out within the office/school and the rest remotely, as agreed with the manager. This will typically involve working at least 3 days from a Trust site and up to 2 days from home.

The days working from a Trust site will usually vary from week to week to meet operational needs. In all cases these should be discussed and agreed with line managers ahead of time. The recommendation is at least a working weeks' notice.

Example: Louise is a Business Manager for several schools, her role requires her to work closely with staff members and to undertake site walks. However, her role also requires financial reporting and other work that can be completed offsite without any impact to her work.

Level 3 – Remote Working

Roles that are identified as eligible for remote working would allow the employee to spend the majority of their time working remotely. However, the employee will be required to travel to a Trust or relevant third-party site to adequately fulfil their role, and would be expected to attend in person meetings at the request of their line manager.

Employees working remotely shall be required to be available during the school/central service core hours and operating days, which shall be defined by the school/central service and provided to the employee prior to the agreement for remote working. The Trust reserves the right to amend the core hours/operating days for an employee based on school/service need to ensure that service levels are maintained, with an adequate period of notice.

Staff working within a Level 3 post will not be able to take annual leave during term time.

Example: Lucy works in the Trust Thinking Horizons team

Her role is not student facing and requires a detailed focus on a wide range of data and records from a range of different sources. She spends a lot of time in discussion with colleagues via video calls, which can be undertaken remotely. However, Lucy has fortnightly meetings with the local Headteacher around their staff CPD needs, and this meeting requires an onsite presence.

Policies and procedures

If you are carrying out hybrid working you still need to comply with all Trust policies, procedures, and standards. Contractual obligations set out in your Contract of Employment continue to apply. In particular staff must:

- Comply with Sickness Absence Policy and Procedures, including sickness absence reporting procedures.
- Comply with all data protection and information obligations; this must include ensuring that no unauthorised person has access to systems or data.
- Must ensure that all working conditions to adhere to all policies relating to IT/Cyber security, the acceptable use of IT Facilities and Services, and standard operating procedures.

Remote working environment

If you are carrying out remote working, you must ensure that you have a suitable environment to work in. This should consider health and safety and confidentiality and information security requirements.

- Staff should not undertake caring responsibilities whilst working remotely and must have adequate arrangements in place. If you have childcare issues, you should use the Trust's Special Leave policy.
- You are responsible for assessing the personal implications of remote working, and your own needs and ensuring that you're able to fully undertake your work duties. The Trust will not be responsible for any additional costs that this may incur.
- You are responsible for ensuring you have a good quality, reliable internet connection when working remotely.
- You are required to use the computer, software and services provided by the Trust for your work (such as OneDrive, MS Teams), including for communications and calls, avoiding the to use your personal phone for work related purposes, unless strictly required, and a Trust device has not been provided
- Employees should have a dedicated workspace when working remotely with appropriate space, lighting, and equipment to enable safe and comfortable working.
- You are responsible for assessing the personal implications of remote working.
- Under no circumstances should you hold meetings in person at your own home.
- You are responsible for providing appropriate and sufficient equipment for working remotely such as a desk or chair.
- The Trust is not responsible for the provision, maintenance, replacement, or repair of any personal equipment.
- You are expected to take reasonable care of equipment provided to you. Any equipment provided by the Trust must be returned if requested.
- You are not permitted to work remotely outside of the UK.

Obligations of hybrid workers

- Staff members who carry out hybrid working will still be required to attend their contractual place of work on a basis agreed between the individual and their line manager.
- You are expected to comply with the appropriate dress code for video meetings.
- You must keep in touch with your team including regular check in's and engagement with the Trust Professional Growth scheme.
- You are expected to comply with your schools/central service rules for hybrid working such as attending team meetings and carrying out your agreed working hours.
- You may be required to work on site on different days of the week as required by your manager.
- You must ensure you are available and accessible whilst working remotely. This will include sharing calendars and agreeing methods for contact/signalling availability.
- The expectation of performance and attendance will remain.
- You must follow all relevant health and safety expectations whilst working from home.

- An employee may decide to not undertake Hybrid working and is under no obligation to do so. Equally roles that have been assigned a level are unable to work at a higher level of HYBRID WORKING.

Responsibilities of managers

Managers are responsible for:

- Managing the effectiveness of the Hybrid working arrangements for the posts within their structures
- Establishing effective communication and collaboration within a team which includes hybrid workers.
- Working with their teams to establish local principles for effective hybrid working.
- When working in a hybrid way themselves, ensure that they are on site regularly enough to provide full management support to their teams.

Costs and expenses

We will not make financial contributions for normal household expenditure such as heating, lighting, and broadband costs for hybrid workers. Hybrid working is optional, and staff may opt not to undertake it and remain working at their contractual place of work.

Employees remain responsible for costs associated with travelling to and from their contractual place of work in all circumstances. The Trust will supply one set of work equipment (including IT equipment), it is the employee's responsibility for transportation and set up of equipment between the Trust site and home working location.