



The Consortium Trust

Where together excellence and pupils thrive

Working from Home Policy

1. Background

- 1.1 Working from home is when an employee carries out their duties from home on an occasional, temporary or permanent basis. All employees have the legal right to request flexible working. An employer must consider a request for flexible working, including a request to work from home, from an employee with 26 weeks of continuous service.
- 1.2 The Trust aims to develop and enable a flexible and committed workforce. As an organisation, whatever the local or global challenge presented to us, we will respond with considered determination to fulfil our responsibilities towards our children, communities and staff. It is necessary, therefore, that the Trust adopts policy to reflect this mode of working that protects the Trust's interests and meets its duties to employees.
- 1.3 It is clear that 'traditional' working modes must adapt to the pressures presented by the current Covid 19 pandemic. However, we view this as an opportunity to explore innovative ways of working that expand our ability to respond to an unpredictable future.
- 1.4 There will inevitably be times when it is necessary for staff to work from home. While this may be unfamiliar to some, it presents a chance to contribute in new ways, to develop a sense of self-determination and help shape the future of the Trust.
- 1.5 Successful home-working relies on achieving a reasonable balance between the competing needs of home and work. We acknowledge that this can be difficult and that an equal split is rarely possible. However, the Trust seeks to encourage a home working style that values the quality and flexible nature of staff member's contributions rather than a time-measurement model.
- 1.6 In adopting this approach, we aim to move towards a mature and responsive method of home working that secures the organisational aims of the Trust, while offering staff members the opportunity to work in new ways alongside fulfilling their individual responsibilities. Clearly, remote home working relies on a spirit of shared-endeavour, openness and flexibility by both the Trust and the individual staff member.



2. Health and safety

- 2.1 Employers are legally responsible for the health and safety of all employees, including those working from home. The Trust should ensure that:
- > employees are comfortable that their work can be done safely at home
 - > employees have appropriate equipment to work safely
 - > regular contact is made with employees
 - > reasonable adjustments are made for any employee with a disability
- 2.2 The Trust must carry out a risk assessment of home working arrangements to determine any relevant risks and to prevent harm to the employee and others. This may include an element of self-assessment by the employee. The employee should actively facilitate and pro-actively cooperate with the Trust's requirement for a risk assessment.
- 2.3 Employees have a responsibility to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and to report any concerns or needs to their employer.
- 2.4 An employee working at home must report according to the agreed procedure any accident or potentially dangerous incident that occurs while working.

3. Display screen equipment

- 3.1 An employee working from home must carry out an assessment of their workstation and the positioning of their display screen equipment to ensure that they have a safe and healthy working environment.

4. Working practices

- 4.1 Line managers should agree with employees:
- > when they will be available to work
 - > how they will communicate
 - > how data will be protected
 - > how performance will be monitored and assessed
- 4.2 Employees working from home have the same contractual rights and obligations as before, including core working hours. Employees are responsible for ensuring that they take their rest breaks as defined in their employment contract.



5. Expenses and taxation

- 5.1 An employee may be able to claim tax relief for some expenses arising from having to work at home on a regular basis, but not if the employee voluntarily chose to work from home. The employee can only claim for things to do with their work, such as business telephone calls. The employee cannot claim for things that they use for both private and business use, such as rent or broadband. Relief can be claimed by self-assessment or via the Government Gateway.

6. Insurance – Trust

- 6.1 The Trust and its schools (but not Kirkley Nursery, alternate insurance provision is in place) are members of the Risk Protection Arrangement. This gives unlimited cover for the employer's liability for death, injury or disease sustained by employees and arising out of and in the course of their employment. Similarly, there is cover for accidental bodily injury to employees (and trustees) whilst on the business of the Trust in the UK. Personal injury risks arising from working from home would therefore be covered, but only to the extent that they are engaged in their duties.
- 6.2 Items such as computers owned by the Trust are covered for loss or damage, subject to a £250 excess.

7. Insurance – Employee

- 7.1 Employees should check that their home insurance policies permit working from home and ensure that their cover is adequate.

8. Mortgage provider or landlord

- 8.1 Employees should check with their mortgage provider, landlord or local authority if there are any issues that affect their working from home and obtain any necessary permissions.

9. Pregnancy

- 9.1 A specific risk assessment must be carried out with respect to an employee who informs the Trust that she is pregnant.



10. Electrical equipment

10.1 The Trust is responsible for ensuring the safety of electrical equipment that it provides employees, including those working from home. The employee is required to comply with any procedures set by the Trust for the use of such equipment. The employee is responsible for the safety of any other electrical equipment used by them in their work and for the safety of electrical sockets and wiring in their home.

11. Data security

11.1 Employees working from home should be vigilant in their handling of data. Procedures regarding the accessing, handling and disposing of personal data must be followed. Unique, complex passwords must be used to restrict access to devices and data. Particular care must be taken with written or printed data that is taken home or printed at home. Cloud storage should be used in preference to printing out or storage on a hard or flash drive.

11.2 Care should be taken when using email that no personal data is sent unencrypted or to an inappropriate recipient. Confidentiality requirements should be considered when making phone calls in a home shared with others.

11.3 Employees should ensure that they regularly update software, including antivirus software.

11.4 Employees should be aware of their responsibility to protect data and the requirement to report any breach.

12. Resource Management

12.1 Employees working from home are entitled to be supplied with (or claim for) items including but not limited to: paper, printer ink, general stationary, office furniture. All items are to be used only for the employees work purposes and any claims must be approved by the relevant budget holder / line manager before purchase.

12.2 It should be noted that this entitlement is for colleagues that are required to work from home, permanently or temporarily. It doesn't apply to colleagues that choose to work at home, for example taking a PPA session at home on an adhoc basis.

12.3 There are no further entitlement of payment to the employee for utilities etc beyond the Trusts discretionary payment as laid out in section 5 above.



Document Control

Changes History

| Version | Date | Amended by | Details of Change |
|---------|--------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| V1 | October 2020 | Andrew Aalders-Dunthorne | Policy creation |
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Approval

| Name | Job Title | Signed | Date |
|-------------------|----------------------|----------------------|------|
| Dawn Carman-Jones | Chair of Trust Board | Electronic signature | TBC |
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Equality Impact Assessment

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