Special Partnership Trust

FLEXI-SCHOOLING POLICY AND FLOW CHART

Date Last Reviewed: September 2026

Review Date: September 2028

Special Partnership Trust

Flexi schooling Policy and flow chart

To guide any request made by a parent for Flexi-Schooling the Special Partnership Trust will use the Flexi schooling guidance for schools published by the Local Authority to guide each school's practice. The Flexi schooling guidance outlines the following:

Flexi-schooling is an arrangement where, following a formal request from parents and with the approval of the school, a child spends some part of the week attending school and the rest of it being educated at home. Combining schooling and non-schooling education in any ratio is perfectly legal, provided that the outcome is the provision of suitable full-time education for the child, and the Local Authority must satisfy itself that this is so.

In Cornwall, the Local Authority believes that full-time education within a school environment is usually the best option for all children and young people to achieve and attain to their full potential – this is also the option most parents choose. The Local Authority recognises, however, that parents may choose other ways for their child to engage in effective, full-time and suitable education. One way could be for them to request for a school to agree a flexi-schooling arrangement.

This request must emanate from the parent, it is not for a Headteacher, a member of school staff or an officer of the Local Authority to suggest or encourage a family to undertake flexi-schooling.

Flexi-schooling should not be confused with access to a reduced timetable or elective home education (EHE). In the case of a reduced timetable the school remains responsible for the educational provision and may propose a reduced timetable for a limited period of time, with the agreement of the parent.

This SPT policy and flow charts aims to condense the Local Authority paper providing Head Teachers/ parents with an overview of process.

1. **Basis for requests for flexi-schooling:**

The SPT recognises the responsibility for a child receiving full-time education rests with the parents. In England, education is compulsory but schooling is not. Where a parent elects to educate a child partly at school and partly at home or elsewhere as an expression of parental preference, this is called flexi-schooling. Where a parent favours this form of educational approach they may request flexi-schooling on a short-term or long-term basis. Flexi-schooling can apply to any pupil – there are no specific criteria.

Examples of where requests might be made include:

- for talented young sportspersons so they can benefit from elite coaching and training; or
- for children who are gifted in other areas so that they can benefit from expert tuition; or
- where parents feel that there are areas of their child's education (which may also be in relation to the child's faith and culture) which they wish to provide.

2. Flexi-school request process:

Using the Local Authority guidance, the SPT has identified a process in consideration of any request for Flexi-schooling (**Appendix A**); all Head Teachers will follow this process which is vital in ensuring the school and the Local Authority are in receipt of all necessary information. Through this process the Head Teacher will be able to make an informed decision following parental request.

As all pupils within the SPT have an EHCP, it will be necessary for the Head Teacher to contact the Statutory Special Educational Needs Team about any potential flexi-schooling arrangement for any child in our schools; discussions held will be recorded.

3. EHCP:

To secure compliance in process, a review of the EHC plan must be undertaken so that clear information on needs, proposed adjustments to provision and the anticipated benefits of flexi-schooling arrangements can be set out and considered by the Local Authority. When Flexi-schooling is agreed it will be the responsibility of the Local Authority to amend the EHC Plan. The duty to review a child's statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care plan on an annual basis, or sooner if appropriate, still applies.

Whilst a parent may request that their child is flexi-schooled it is entirely at the Headteacher's discretion, acting with the authority of the Trustees, as to whether or not the school is prepared to agree to a flexi-schooling arrangement. Parents do not have a legal right to insist on a flexi-schooling arrangement being agreed by any school. The Headteacher will consider each request individually and on its own merits satisfying Trustees that they have fully considered all points in the Local Authority Guidance and are fully conversant with the school attendance statutory guidance when reaching a decision. School data relating to the number of pupils in receipt of Flexi schooling will be relayed to the Governors and Trustees each term.

4. Children in Care:

The Education Welfare Officer, Cornwall Virtual School outlines:

Our expectation is that all Children in Care have access to their full educational entitlement, and therefore there should not be an occasion for a corporate parental request for flexi-schooling for a Child in Care unless this is based on the advice of health professionals involved with the child. This would then be regarded as a reduced timetable. If a child is on a reduced timetable, we expect this would be a short-term intervention to enable support to be put in place to enable a return to full time education.

Head Teachers will always seek advice/ guidance from the Virtual school prior to any implementation of a reduced or flexible timetable.

Contact details:
https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/education-and-learning/virtual-school-for-children-in-care/
Tel: 01872 323565

5. **Attendance:**

Pupils will be marked absent (authorised) from school during periods when they are receiving home education (**Code C**). On days the pupil is attending school as a registered pupil, he or she will follow the curriculum used in the school. On the days for which it has been agreed the pupil will attend school the Pupil Registration Regulations appropriate codes for attendance will apply.

In deciding whether to agree to a request for a flexi-schooling arrangement, a Headteacher may consider such issues as:

6. **Safeguarding**

Safeguarding: **NO** agreement to Flexi-schooling will be reached where any SPT Headteacher has concerns that it would put the child at risk of harm while not attending his or her school; any such request may be discussed with MARU

Additional issues considered:

- Continuity of teaching and learning between home and school
- The effect on school organisation and funding
- The effect on school resources
- The effect on school discipline and the morale and motivation of other children
- Peer relationships/ support
- Flexi-schooling should not be agreed where it becomes evident that the arrangements being sought can be made outside of normal school hours or are more to do with accommodating the needs of the parents (e.g., where they might have unusual working patterns) rather than those of the child

7. Right of appeal:

There is **no appeal** against the decision of a Headteacher not to agree to a flexi-schooling request or if a Headteacher decides to cease an individual child's flexi-schooling arrangement.

8. Formulating a flexi-schooling agreement:

A written and signed Flexi school checklist and agreement must be formulated between the school and parent, this will help the Head Teacher in making a decision regarding any request. The checklist/ agreement will make expectations clear for all concerned providing clarity behind the request (**Appendix B**); a copy of this form once completed, will be sent to the LA included within the review of the EHCP paperwork when a flexi schooling request has been agreed by the Head Teacher. A copy will additionally be sent to parents and a copy retained on the pupil's school file.

Following discussion and if the request has been approved by the Headteacher, the school/ parents will draw up a flexi-schooling agreement (**Appendix C**).

Monitoring:

Neither the school nor the Local Authority has statutory duties in relation to monitoring the quality of education provided at home as part of a flexi-schooling arrangement. However, if it appears to the school that parents are not providing a suitable education it may ask parents for further information about the education they are providing. If a parent declines to do so, the school may withdraw its agreement to the flexi-schooling arrangements and notify the Local Authority of its concerns. Where this is the case, this action would not necessarily be considered a precursor to any formal procedures; however, the following may occur:

- The pupil would be required to attend school on a full-time basis and absences would be marked and followed up by the school in the usual way

- The parent may remove the child from the school roll

In the event of the child being removed from the school roll the SPT will notify the Local Authority and may consider further action under section 437 of the Education Act 1996.

9. Attendance:

The SPT attendance policy will be applied as normal to those sessions when the agreement has outlined when the pupil will be required to attend school

- When in school the pupil will receive structured teaching/ learning sessions as outlined within the class/ personalised learning timetable, this school-based timetable will form a part of this agreement
- The class teacher will be responsible for relaying progress over time via the school-based home/ school communication process
- The pupil will be marked present for any pre-arranged session attended (morning/ afternoon)
- The pupil will be marked absent for any pre-arranged session during which they were scheduled to attend school but does not do so; parents will be expected to report any absence in accordance with the SPT pupil attendance policy, providing the reason for the absence
- When the pupil is not attending school under the flexi-schooling arrangements, s/he must be marked as 'Authorised Absent' (Code C)

10. Assessment:

- The pupil will be entered by the school for modules of accreditation/ public examinations organised via the school examination officer providing attendance at lessons has been sufficient to enable the pupil to sit the exams/ meet module criteria with some success

11. Education Transport:

Where a child attends a school for which they have an entitlement to transport free of charge in accordance with Cornwall's Home to School Transport Policy, this entitlement will not be affected by the flexi-schooling arrangement. However, in line with the Council's Policy transport will only be provided at the standard school start/ end times on those days the child attends under the flexi-schooling arrangement.

12. Responsibility:

The parent should apply to the Pupil Transport Team via the normal transport application form, indicating that a flexi-schooling arrangement is in place, the days on which transport is required and the duration of the agreement, if known. Where an agreement ends earlier than planned and a child returns to full-time schooling, it will be the responsibility of the parent to request that full-time transport provision recommences.

For all queries regarding transport, please contact the Pupil Transport Team on 0300 1234 101 or email pupiltransport@cornwall.gov.uk.

13. Reporting:

All SPT schools will report any flexi-schooling arrangements to the Local Authority using the Reduced Timetable notification form in School Messenger (www.cornwall.gov.uk/reducedtimetables) and complete a review form at regular intervals while the flexi-schooling arrangement remains in place.

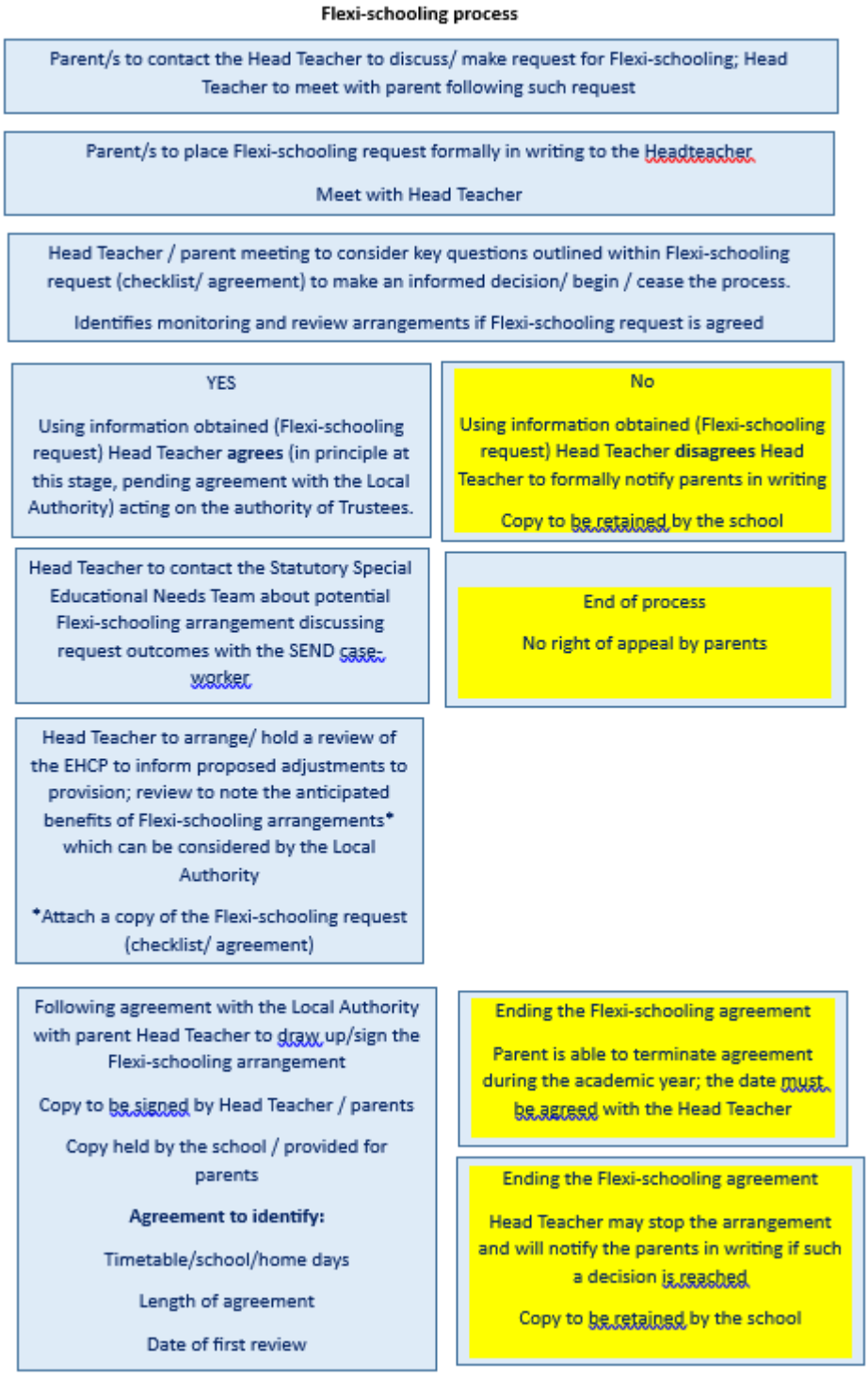
Head Teachers will include in their report to Trustees/ LGBs the number of pupils in school in receipt of Flexi-schooling arrangements.

If you need any support or advice relating to your child's attendance at school, please email educationwelfare@cornwall.gov.uk.

For Special Educational Needs advice contact the Statutory SEN Service on 01872 324242.

If Cornwall Council is not aware of the reduced timetable arrangement, or you are unhappy with the arrangement, please email schoolaccess@cornwall.gov.uk.

Appendix A – Flexi-schooling flow chart/ process



Appendix B: Flexi-schooling request: Checklist and agreement

Flexi-schooling request: Checklist and agreement

Name of pupil:	
DoB:	
UPN:	
Academic Year:	
Parent/ carer name:	
Date when request first made by parents/ carers:	
Have the parents fully explained the exact details of the flexi-schooling arrangements they have in mind & the reasons behind their request. Are these reasons appropriate?	Record details: Yes/ No
Has the request been confirmed by the parents in writing & request stored on the child's file?	Yes/ No
Is the school able to accommodate any concerns expressed by the parents within the parameters of full-time schooling?	Record details: Yes/ No
Has the parents request been referred to the Statutory SEND Team?	Yes/ No Date:
Does it appear likely that the request, if approved, would impose an additional workload on members of staff? What is the nature of this additional workload?	Yes/ No Record details:
Is the programme/ activity proposed by the parents educational and appropriate? Have the parents produced any documentary evidence to support this? – e.g. – letters from other educational institutions, sporting academies etc?	Yes/ No Record details: Yes/ No Record details:
Have the parents been made fully aware of their child's current and anticipated level of educational attainment and the potential impact which their request for flexi-schooling might have on this?	Yes/ No Record any issues specifically discussed:
Have the parents been made fully aware of any critical aspects of the curriculum/ assessment/ teaching in school which their child will miss if their child is flexi-schooled?	Yes/ No Record details:

Should the school agree to the parents' request, have arrangements for monitoring and review been discussed and agreed? What timescales have been set? Has an initial review date been agreed?	Yes/No Record date of initial review and proposed days of attendance
Have the parents been made aware that the school has the right to withdraw any agreement it might make to flexi-schooling arrangements if it considers that the original intentions and expectations are not being met?	Yes/ No
Should the school be unable to agree to the parents' request, have the reasons for this been fully explained and confirmed in writing and saved on the pupils' file?	Yes/ No Record details:
Have the parents been informed that their child will accrue absences (authorised for the periods of time they are flexi-schooled?)	Yes/ No
DECISION:	
Approved/ Not approved (delete as appropriate)	
Reason/ comment:	
Signed (Head Teacher):	
Date:	
This document will be used /retained by the school, a copy will be provided for parents	

Appendix C: Flexi schooling agreement:

IF the arrangement is approved:

- This attendance pattern identified via the flexi-schooling agreement will only be changed with both the parents and the Head Teacher
- The school will allow the pupil to special events which take place on the agreed non-school days/ times in consultation with the class teacher or other relevant people
- Parents will have the same access to records, reports and opportunities to meet with teachers as the other young people who attend school on a full-time basis e.g.: parents' evenings, school reports
- This arrangement may be terminated by the parent during the academic year. However, the date must be agreed with the Head Teacher in advance
- The Head Teacher retains the right to inform parents if s/ he believes that the arrangement is detrimental to the progress of the child and, if necessary, stop the flexi-schooling arrangement
- The parent will apply to the Pupil Transport Team via the normal transport application form, indicating that a flexi-schooling arrangement is in place, the days on which transport is required and the duration of the agreement, if known
- Where the flexi-schooling agreement ends earlier than planned and a child returns to full-time schooling, it will be the responsibility of the parent to request that full-time transport provision recommences

DECLARATION – FLEXI-SCHOOLING AGREEMENT:	
Name of child:	
Date of birth:	
UPN:	
Parent/ carer name:	
The days chosen for my/ our child to attend school are:	
The agreement will commence:	Date:
And will run (term-time only):	From: To:
The date for the first formal review will be:	Date: Time: Venue: Review Lead:

- I/ we fully understand the contract which I/ we have entered into with the school and agree to uphold the criteria which are outlined

• I/ we wish my/ our child named above to attend the school named in accordance with the flexi schooling agreement	
Head Teacher signature:	
Date:	
Parent/ carer signature/ s:	
Date:	
This document will be retained by the school, a copy will be provided for parents	