

# Learning Accord Multi Academy Trust

## Home Working Policy



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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy sets out best practice for working from home (or another agreed location), as and when specifically approved by management, by identifying correct procedures to be followed. It is **not** applicable to organised activities such as school visits or trips, attendance at conferences or off-campus events such as concerts, etc.
- 1.2 Furthermore, it is recognised that many employees may already carry out certain elements of their professional duties off-site (not least in terms of planning and marking etc) but this policy is specifically concerned with those who have been granted dispensation to work from home for other identified (and normally time-limited) reasons (such as those exemplified below in section 3).
- 1.3 Whilst there is an expectation that staff will normally (other than in accordance with the above examples) discharge their duties within the workplace it is nonetheless accepted that there may be occasional circumstances in which working from home (or another agreed location) may be appropriate, and that authorising such an arrangement will be to the benefit of the employee concerned and/or that of the academy.
- 1.4 This policy will define arrangements for this practice with the intention that both management and employees may gain assurance that fairness of treatment and consistency of approach will be applied throughout the organisation.
- 1.5 It is not envisaged that any staff member will obtain authorisation to work from home (or any other identified location as may be agreed) on anything other than an ad hoc basis (given the nature of their employment within an educational establishment) and accordingly the policy is drafted on that specific understanding.
- 1.6 Home working should never create a situation where staff members feel obliged to work excessive hours. It should not involve additional workload for the staff member (or indeed for other employees) and neither should it impact adversely on operational efficiency and effectiveness.
- 1.7 Working from home is not a contractual right through either express or implied terms and nothing in this policy should be regarded as suggesting otherwise.

## 2. Purpose and scope

- 2.1 The policy is applicable to all staff members.
- 2.2 For the purposes of this policy the definition of staff members extends to all employees (or workers) of the academy, including trainees, in addition to any other individual who has gained authorisation to carry out work (whether paid or unpaid) either for, or on behalf of, the academy at any location other than school premises.
- 2.3 Adherence to the procedures outlined in this policy is required to ensure that the staff member (as defined above) devotes their time appropriately to the performance of their contracted duties.
- 2.4 Adherence to such procedures is also necessary to ensure that all confidential information held by the academy (or, on the academy's behalf, by any of its staff members) remains protected and secure on a continuous basis.
- 2.5 **Other than in relation to work undertaken in accordance with section 1 above**, no staff member is permitted to carry out any work away from school premises without having

previously gained appropriate authorisation in writing (this is taken to include email) from the headteacher (or, in the case of the headteacher, from the chair of governors).

### **3. Objectives**

- 3.1 The objective of this policy is to recognise, and issue guidance in respect of, those (relatively rare) occasions on which certain members of staff (and/or the academy itself) may benefit from the granting of authorisation for individuals to work (on an ad hoc basis) in isolation from a location other than school premises.
- 3.2 This may be indicated for a variety of reasons including (but not necessarily limited to) the following:
- to enable the staff member to complete vital work without the inherent distractions of their normal workplace
  - to meet a short-term need, for instance in the event of the staff member being unable to access their normal workplace due to an inability to travel caused by either:
    - i. adverse weather conditions; or
    - ii. limited (personal) mobility due to illness or injury, with working from home (although this will only be with the full agreement of the individual concerned) representing a possible alternative to sickness absence in such circumstances.
- 3.3 This policy should not be used to accommodate a staff member's caring responsibilities, either short-term or long-term, which should be addressed with management in the appropriate manner.
- 3.4 This policy is additionally intended to ensure that any work carried out for the academy in such circumstances represents appropriate value for money (and this consideration should always be taken into due account before such an arrangement is sanctioned by management).
- 3.5 This policy is similarly designed to ensure that any staff member working away from school premises is fully aware of their individual responsibility to observe best practice in relation to data protection and other relevant matters.

### **4. Practical procedures**

- 4.1 Other than work undertaken as part of their normal professional responsibilities (as described above in section 1), no staff member should undertake any work from home, or from any location other than school premises, unless this has previously been authorised by the headteacher (or the relevant line manager) (or, in the case of the headteacher working from home, previously authorised by the chair of governors).
- 4.2 Communication is a vital element of any successful home working arrangement. Any staff member who has been granted authorisation to work from home, or indeed from anywhere other than school premises, should remain available for contact by telephone and/or email as normal throughout their working day, and accordingly in such circumstances it may be necessary to alert line managers, and/or other relevant staff members, as to that person's whereabouts.

- 4.3 It is the staff member's responsibility to ensure that functional telephone and broadband services are available within the home environment, and to contact the service provider in the event of any technical issues becoming apparent.
- 4.4 It is the staff member's responsibility to ensure both that the academy is in possession of up to date contact details, and that other relevant persons are aware of where such details may be accessed as and when required. However, neither the headteacher nor any other colleague should divulge the staff member's personal telephone number or email (as opposed to their school email) address to any third party without express permission.
- 4.5 If the purpose of occasional homeworking is to allow a period of dedicated work with minimal interruption the staff member should make this reason evident to close colleagues but must nonetheless remain available for emergency contact throughout.
- 4.6 Staff members are responsible for ensuring that all reasonable precautions are taken to prevent damage or theft of any academy property (such as IT equipment or data – see below) whilst in their personal possession away from school premises.
- 4.7 For the avoidance of doubt, no expenses such as contribution to costs of internet access or mobile phone (the issue of travel expenses is addressed separately within the relevant policy) will be payable by the academy to individuals working away from school premises.

## **5. Data protection**

- 5.1 In respect of data, all staff members must ensure that they fully understand their obligations under GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) and must take appropriate security measures to protect personal and/or confidential data, whether held electronically or in manual format, from unauthorised loss, destruction, corruption or access by third parties.
- 5.2 To ensure compliance with GDPR, and to minimise risk of data breach, it is vital that all staff members working from home, or from anywhere other than school premises, adhere without exception to the provisions of the academy's Data Protection, E-Safety and Clear Desk and Screen policies.
- 5.3 Staff members must always be alert to the possibility of adverse events which could potentially lead to unauthorised access of personal data. These include (amongst others) the following eventualities:
- leaving confidential or sensitive records in household areas where they may be visible to third parties
  - accidental loss (such as mislaying either physical devices or hard copy records whilst in transit)
  - criminal activity, whether physical (such as burglary) or electronic (such as hacking).
- 5.4 Staff members are therefore responsible for ensuring that adequate protection, whether physical or electronic (such as appropriate antiviral software), is always in place.
- 5.5 In the event of any potential data breach occurring, the circumstances must be brought to the attention of the headteacher immediately in order that the academy's data protection officer (DPO) can be informed.

## **6. Other policies and procedures**

- 6.1 This policy will be supported by the following policies and procedures:

- Clear Desk and Screen Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- E-safety Policy
- Travel and Subsistence Policy