

Flexible working at WSS

At WSS, staff come first. This may sound strange coming from a school where all that we do is 'all about every child' however we understand that, unless we look after our own mental health and wellbeing, we are unable to effectively look out for the mental health and wellbeing of 'every child'. We are proud to support flexible working opportunities for all staff where possible.

The data is clear that benefits of flexible working are significant¹. HAMWIC Education Trust (HET) aim to deliver an outstanding education to young people and to do so, employs outstanding people. Our approach to flexible working enables us to:

- retain experienced staff
- recruit from a broader pool of teachers
- promote wellbeing
- improve work-life balance

Offering flexible working arrangements also ensures that we can offer roles which suit employees at different stages of their life, such as those:

- with caring responsibilities
- planning a phased retirement
- returning from a career break
- combining work in a school with professional development or work in their field of study

Overcoming challenges of flexible working

Whilst evidence wholly supports that the benefits of flexible working outweigh the challenges, it is important that we address how we are working to overcome challenges relating to meetings and communication raised in research data and surveys.

- a) Shared PPA time allows job share partners to have regularly scheduled meetings for joint planning. Handover time between job share partners is considered by many interviewees to be an essential element of effective job shares. Using this time to ensure clarity and consistency in approaches is felt to support planning, communication and behaviour management in the classroom.
- b) All staff briefing notes are available on the shared area.
- c) Regular (ranging from weekly to half-termly) informal reviews of a job share arrangement help to develop clear accountability, and for any issues in communication between partners to be identified and addressed at an early opportunity. These reviews can range from joint meetings, to short conversations with each teacher to keep track of progress.

¹ Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exploring-flexible-working-practice-in-schools>
Accessed 27/09/22.