



Cokethorpe

SCHOOL

Remote/Hybrid Working Policy

September 2023

Reviewed: September 2023
Next review: September 2024

REMOTE/HYBRID WORKING

Introduction

Remote/Hybrid Working Policy

We support remote/hybrid working in appropriate circumstances, either occasionally (to respond to specific circumstances or to complete particular tasks) or in some cases on a regular (full or part-time) basis. In addition, occasional or permanent homeworking can, in certain circumstances, be a means of accommodating a disability and can be requested as a means of flexible working under our Flexible Working Policy.

This policy sets out how we will deal with requests for homeworking, and conditions on which homeworking will be allowed or in some circumstances required. If you are allowed or required to work from home, you must comply with this policy.

This policy does not form part of any employee's Contract of Employment, and the policy may be amended at any time.

Permanent Remote/Hybrid Working Arrangements

After successful completion of your probationary period, you may make an application for remote/hybrid working, which will be considered on its merits. However, not all roles and not all jobs are suitable for such arrangements. It is very unlikely that remote/hybrid working would be appropriate to a teacher's role who are required to be physically present in the classroom as well as be available for cover, other than if the School was operating "remote learning".

You may want to vary your working arrangements so that you may work from home permanently or for a fixed period, or you may wish to work from home for all or part of your working week. Any request to work from home or remotely must meet the needs of the School as well as your needs.

A request for remote/hybrid working is unlikely to be approved if:

- You need to be present in the School to perform your job (for example, because it involves a high degree of personal interaction with colleagues, pupils or third parties or involves equipment that is only available in the School);
- Your most recent appraisal identifies any aspect of your performance as unsatisfactory; or your line manager has advised you that your current standard of work or work production is unsatisfactory;
- You have an unexpired warning, whether relating to conduct or performance; or
- You need supervision to deliver an acceptable quality and/or quantity of work.

If you wish to apply for remote/hybrid working, you will need to be able to show in your application that you can:

- Work independently, motivate yourself and use your own initiative;
- Manage your workload effectively and complete work to set deadlines;
- Identify and resolve any new pressures created by working at home; and
- Adapt to new working practices, including maintaining contact with your line manager and colleagues at work.

To be considered for home or hybrid working, you must submit a written application to the Headmaster/Bursar where appropriate. Your application must state:

- Why you consider your job to be suitable for home or hybrid working and how you meet the criteria for home or hybrid working set out above;
- The date from which you wish the arrangements to start and, if you wish to work from home for a fixed period, the date on which you want the arrangements to finish. You should try to give us as much notice as possible and, in any event, make your application at least four weeks before your proposed start date so that your request can be considered;
- Whether you wish to work from home for all or part of your working week and, if only part, which days you propose to work from home;
- How you would organise your work from home, including how you would ensure the security of documents and information, where appropriate;

- If you are wishing to work from another remote location other than your home, providing details for that, including where, when, and how it would work;
- The extent to which you could be available to come into the School on days you are proposing to work from home if needed, for example to cope with high or unexpected levels of work or to attend meetings or training days;
- If different from your current hours of work, the hours of work that you propose apply when you are working at home; and
- How you envisage maintaining contact with your line manager, how your work will be set, and how progress will be monitored.

It may assist your application for remote or hybrid working if you first discuss your proposal with the Headmaster or Bursar informally. This may identify potential problems with your application, such as a need to be in the workplace on occasions you had not considered, which your application can then address.

In considering your application, the Headmaster/Bursar may invite you to a meeting to discuss your proposals in line with our Flexible Working Policy. If your request is refused, we will give you written reasons explaining why and you have the opportunity to appeal the decision under the Flexible Working Policy. We may also ask for you to agree to a home visit by the Health and Safety Officer in order to carry out a risk assessment, install or service equipment, or to reclaim equipment on termination of your homeworking arrangement.

Hybrid Working Arrangements

As part of our commitment to flexible working, we support hybrid working arrangements.

A hybrid working arrangement is a flexible working arrangement which allows you to split your working time between the workplace and an agreed remote working location, such as your home.

Hybrid working arrangements will differ depending on the nature of your role, duties and responsibilities and so are discretionary and subject to agreement in writing with the Headmaster or the Bursar.

Any hybrid working arrangement is subject to you spending a minimum proportion of your work time working from the School. Your remaining working time may be worked from your workplace or your remote working location, as agreed in writing with the Headmaster/Bursar where appropriate.

The days and times worked from the School and your agreed remote working location are subject to agreement with the Headmaster/Bursar where appropriate and may vary to accommodate the needs of the School.

Whether hybrid working arrangements can be accommodated will be subject to the same considerations and conditions as set out in this Policy.

All remote/hybrid working arrangements will be subject to a trial period of six weeks. We may, at our discretion, extend this period for up to a further six weeks. During the trial period the remote/hybrid working arrangements will be monitored. At the end of the trial period, you will be informed in writing if the new working arrangements are considered appropriate to be continued. If it is agreed that your arrangement can be continued, it will be reviewed at regular intervals on an on-going basis.

Conditions and Rules Relating to Remote and Hybrid Working

Any terms on which it is agreed that you may work remotely either on a temporary or permanent basis will include the following:

- We reserve the right to terminate any remote or hybrid working arrangements, for example if your role changes such that remote/hybrid working is no longer suitable, subject to reasonable notice.
- You will be subject to the same performance measures, processes and objectives that would apply if you worked physically in the School.

- If you receive an unsatisfactory appraisal or are subject to a written warning for any reason, your remote or hybrid working arrangements may be terminated immediately, and you will be expected to return to work at the School.
- Your line manager will remain responsible for supervising you and will regularly review your remote/hybrid working arrangements and take steps to address any perceived problems. They will ensure that you are kept up to date with circulars and information relevant to your work.
- You agree to attend the School or other reasonable location for meetings, training courses or other events which we expect you to attend. You understand that when you do attend the School, you may have to hot desk or share a desk with someone else.
- Working at or from home may affect your home and contents insurance policy, mortgage, lease or rental agreement. You must make any necessary arrangements with your insurers, bank, mortgage provider or landlord before commencing homeworking.

Requests to Return to Work in the Office

If you want to terminate your remote/hybrid working arrangement, you must notify the Headmaster/Bursar in the first instance. We will only be able to accommodate your request if there is sufficient office space and a suitable desk for you.

Temporary or Occasional Remote Working

There are a number of circumstances in which the ability to work remotely on an occasional or temporary basis may be of benefit to you and the School:

- When a child or elderly relative becomes unwell or arrangements for their care break down at short notice;
- When, despite being fit to work, travelling to the School is difficult (for example, due to recovery from an injury such as a broken leg);
- When public transport has been disrupted (for example, by the weather or by a strike that affects your travel arrangements);
- When a quiet, uninterrupted work environment will assist in dealing with a backlog of administrative tasks or in writing reports to a deadline; or
- During any period when you are unable to work from the School such as during severe weather or a global pandemic.

In these circumstances, working at remotely can be authorised by your line manager where, in their opinion:

- You have work that can be undertaken remotely;
- You have the required equipment to work remotely; and
- Working remotely is cost-effective and any increase in work that may be passed to your colleagues as a result is kept to a minimum.

Your line manager will, where necessary, liaise with the Headmaster/Bursar where appropriate to confirm arrangements.

In the event that you are suffering from a mild illness but are well enough to work, we may require you to work remotely during your illness if you are suffering from symptoms associated with a contagious disease. This is in order to protect the health and safety of your colleagues and to prevent the spread of infections within the workplace.

In addition, if circumstances affect our ability to allow you to come into the workplace because of, for example, government restrictions and/or health and safety requirements, we may require you to work remotely.

Remote/Hybrid Working: Equipment

We will provide any equipment that we consider you reasonably require to work remotely which will remain our property. We will make all necessary arrangements for, and bear the cost of, installing and removing equipment from your home. Where equipment is provided, you must:

- Use it only for the purposes for which we have provided it;
- Take reasonable care of it and use it only in accordance with any operating instructions and our policies and procedures; and

- Make it available for collection by us, or on our behalf, when requested to do so.

We are not responsible for associated costs of you working remotely including the costs of heating, lighting or electricity. However, we will reimburse you for any telephone accounts used in connection with the School's business. Any payment will be subject to you providing evidence of business use [in accordance with our expenses policy].

Any equipment including mobile phones provided by us to you as a homeworker, must be used only for work-related purposes.

Remote/Hybrid Working: Data Security and Confidentiality

The School takes its data protection obligations very seriously and our high standards must be adhered to at all times. You should remind yourself of our Data Protection Policy in particular.

All equipment and information must be kept securely. You should take all necessary steps to ensure that private and confidential material is kept secure at all times. Your line manager must be satisfied that all reasonable precautions are being taken to maintain confidentiality of material in accordance with the School's requirements.

You may only use equipment which has been provided by or authorised by us. You agree to comply with our instructions relating to software security and to implement all updates to equipment as soon as you are requested to do so.

You confirm that you have read and understood our policies relating to computer use, electronic communications and data security and that you will regularly keep yourself informed of the most current version of these policies.

If you discover or suspect that there has been an incident involving the security of information relating to the School, pupils, parent, customers or anyone working with or for the School, you must report it immediately to your line manager.

Remote/Hybrid Working: Health and Safety

When working at home or from another remote location, you have the same health and safety duties as other staff. You must take reasonable care of your own health and safety and that of anyone else who might be affected by your actions and omissions. You must attend/complete the usual office health and safety courses and undertake to use equipment safely.

We retain the right to check remote working areas for health and safety purposes. The need for such inspections will depend on the circumstances, including the nature of the work undertaken.

You must not have meetings in your home with parents, pupils or suppliers and must not give parents, pupils or suppliers your home address or telephone number.

You must ensure that your working patterns and levels of work both over time and during shorter periods are not detrimental to your health and wellbeing.

If you are a remote worker, the School will normally expect you to contact your line manager regularly.

Remote workers must ensure that they take adequate rest breaks as required by the Working Time Regulations 1998. You must:

- Take a break during each working day of at least 20 minutes, during which you must stop work;
- Ensure that you have a daily rest break of at least eleven continuous hours, i.e. the time period between stopping work one day and beginning work the next day must not be less than eleven hours; and
- Have at least one complete day each week when no work is done.

You must use your knowledge, experience and training to identify and report any health and safety concerns to your line manager.

Remote/Hybrid Working Process:

1. Employee requests Remote/Hybrid Working
 - a. Discuss with line manager if appropriate
 - b. Discuss with Headmaster/Bursar as appropriate

2. Time to consider/consult by Headmaster/Bursar as appropriate
 - a. Impact on others
 - b. Changes to management
 - c. Attendance at meetings/training
 - d. Visit to school site

3. Remote/Hybrid working agreed
 - a. New Remote/Hybrid working agreement created
 - b. Health and Safety assessment
 - c. IT and Office kit supplied as required
 - d. IT protocols to be adhered to

4. Review and Management
 - a. To be reviewed on a half termly basis with line manager

Managing Remote/Hybrid Working

Employees who work remotely are subject to the same rules, procedures and expected standard of conduct and performance as all other employees. Contractual obligations, duties and responsibilities remain in place, as do our School policies.

We want you to remain as involved as possible in the School activities while you are working remotely. This includes having access to news from the School, as well as opportunities for professional development, training and promotion. We will keep in regular contact with you during your remote working via phone, email, telephone and video calls. If you at any point feel isolated, left out, or lacking guidance or support you should discuss this with your line manager.

We treat all staff fairly and equally and do not disadvantage anyone who is working remotely/hybrid working.

Where an IT or other problem prevents you from working remotely effectively, you should contact your line manager immediately.

If you cannot work on a remote working day because of illness or injury, you must follow the Absence procedure set out in the Employee Handbook.