



# **KINGSWAY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

## **Agile/Mobile Working Policy, Procedure & Guidance**

**January 2021**

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## 1 Kingsway Primary School Policy Statement

This document sets out the Kingsway Primary School policy and guidance on agile/mobile working. It is designed to assist the head teacher and staff with agile/mobile working arrangements. Agile/mobile working forms part of the Kingsway Primary School Agile Working framework which sets out a range of different working methods which differ from the traditional working models of fixed location and regular school hours. This type of working is now employed within many organisations and there can be benefits in utilising an agile/mobile way of working both to individuals and organisations.

The school wishes to maximise the opportunities made available in job roles where staff do not require allocated desks usually because their job roles require that they spend significant time away from the school.

Agile/mobile working forms part of the Kingsway Primary School agile working framework and in many cases a member of staff's working pattern will include working at a school office-based desk, and/or potentially home-working or working in an alternative location on an occasional or regular basis as part of the arrangement.

The availability of new technology has made working at a distance viable for job roles which may not traditionally have been considered in the past. Technologies such as email and Microsoft TEAMS and other similar products have opened up opportunities to be more agile when working.

The key to agile/mobile working's effectiveness is ensuring staff are provided with the appropriate facilities and technology to enable them to work as productively as possible off-site and between appointments without the requirement to return to school.

Where agile/mobile working arrangements also involves a degree of homeworking, both the head teacher and the member of staff must be familiar with the terms and conditions of Kingsway Primary School Home-Working Policy.

*At this time of review – May 2020 - The current situation with Covid-19 Pandemic means the likelihood of agile and home working is in place for a large number of teaching and non-teaching staff. It is important therefore to read and understand the contents of this document. Any queries or questions can be directed to your School's DPO – Jane Corrin who's contact details are:-*

[Schooldpo@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:Schooldpo@wirral.gov.uk)

Call: 0151 691 8645

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## **2. Scope**

This policy applies to all staff that may be classed as agile/mobile workers (see definition – Section 5).

## **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

The head teacher or nominated person has a responsibility to:

- Identify whether there is scope for jobs to be delivered more effectively and efficiently through use of technology and agile/mobile working.
- Manage all health, safety and welfare concerns and ensure that appropriate risk assessments are undertaken so that there is trust and confidence amongst all those involved in the agile/mobile working arrangement.
- Manage workload, performance and maintain communication with staff.
- Ensure that appropriate equipment is provided.
- Ensure that training is provided.
- Ensure that accommodation is available as required when mobile staff return to school.

School staff have a responsibility to:

- Comply with the working practices and arrangements put in place.
- Maintain communication with the schools SLT.
- Comply with data protection and information security requirements.
- Comply with health and safety requirements and guidelines.
- Utilise equipment in accordance with the terms of this policy and the Schools ICT Security policy.

## **4. The Business Case for Agile/Mobile Working**

Agile/Mobile Working provides a range of benefits to the school and its staff:

- Making the most efficient usage of office space and IT equipment and reducing associated costs.
- Reduction of travel and associated costs.
- Job roles can be undertaken more efficiently with the potential for increased productivity with less ‘downtime’ during the school day.
- Potential to reduce travelling time and improve work-life balance for school staff.
- Increased autonomy and flexibility for staff.

## **5. Definition**

Agile/mobile workers are those staff who spend time working outside the traditional school environment, this may be because they are visiting a variety of locations to deliver services or attend meetings; they may require a desk or touch down space at school/home, at times through the day or week or certain times during the academic year. Some agile/mobile workers may have a formal documented agreement with school regarding fixed days based away from school; other workers may have more informal agreed arrangements.

## **6. Information and Communication Technology**

The school will supply the member of staff with the equipment required to enable them to undertake their role away from the school.

It is recognised that the head teacher may not always be aware of the technical possibilities and options that are open to them when considering the introduction of mobile working. Consultation with your technical support provider is recommended. The schools ICT equipment must not be used by anyone other than the member of staff that will be using it outside of the school (e.g. colleagues, partner organisations, friends and family members). All policies of the school apply to all staff regardless of their work style. Agile/mobile workers should particularly familiarise themselves with the following school policies:-

ICT Security Policy  
Data Protection Policy  
Clear Desk Policy and check list.

## **7. Managing Mobile Members of Staff**

It is important that the head teacher is able to monitor the performance of staff so that the effectiveness of the agile/mobile working arrangement can be evaluated. The key principle is that there must continue to be a clear benefit to the school.

When staff spend significant amounts of time away from the school, some of the usual indicators for performance – a re-assuring presence and visible activity - are not there.

- ***Performance Management***

For agile/mobile working arrangements both the head teacher and staff must have a clear understanding and agreement of how the working arrangements should work and what the responsibilities and expectations of all involved are, ensuring the new arrangements are carried out.

The task of performance management may be more challenging as it has to focus on outcomes rather than time. The head teacher will need to consider establishing specific indicators to enable measurement of productivity; quality of work; service standards and timeliness.

It is practical and effective to have – where necessary – agreed timeframes for working days which are away from the traditional desk based school location. Employees must understand exactly what is expected of them in relation to availability etc. See Hours of work/Availability below.

Whilst the degree of specification may vary with role, it is vital to get detailed agreement on objectives and how performance is to be assessed. This will also ensure that the member of staff has a manageable workload and that they know what is expected from them in terms of performance.

- **Communication**

One of the biggest challenges for the head teacher and staff is maintaining effective communication in a working arrangement where, depending on the particular arrangement in place, they may not see each other as regularly as they would when the member of staff is working within the school as normal.

Keeping in touch through regular reports and meetings should assist in overcoming any fears the head teacher may have of loss of control, and reduce any ambiguity about the role and performance of agile/mobile workers. Keeping in touch will also benefit the staff by ensuring they understand how the working arrangements will be managed and the expectations and responsibilities of the role.

- **Hours of Work/Availability**

There must be clarity about the times during which a member of staff must be available for contact and about any requirement for the member of staff to make regular contact with the head teacher or the designated person. At the same time, there should be rules about acceptable and unacceptable contact, remembering that the member of staff has the right to privacy out of school hours. Variation of the agreed working pattern must be agreed with the head teacher in advance. Requests from staff to change their hours of work i.e. to part time, job share or full time will be treated in the same way as school based employees.

- **Health, Safety and Welfare**

The head teacher has a duty of care for the health, safety and welfare of school staff regardless of the working arrangements in place and even where contact with staff may be less frequent than regular or more traditional working arrangements.

The head teacher must be aware that "out of sight, out of mind" can put staff at risk if hazards are not properly considered and assessed. The head teacher needs to discuss potential hazards and agree what risk controls are in place to avoid potential harm. The main issues to consider and assess will be working with display screen equipment, lone working situations, the working environments they will encounter, manual handling, stress, travelling/driving and personal security.

## **8. Security**

Staff are responsible for taking adequate steps to ensure the security of school equipment and school information whilst mobile working. Agile working staff will be responsible for making sure they comply with the following school policies:-

Data Protection

Bring Your Own Device Policy (if working on personal PC's at home)

Clear Desk Policy and Check List

The schools Clear Desk Policy applies to all employees including temporary and agency workers, and holds all employees accountable for ensuring the data they come into contact with is kept safe and secure at all times. No other person must use the schools ICT equipment when the member of staff is working outside of the school.

## 9. Training and Development

It is important that school agile workers do not miss out on regular training and development opportunities, due to their working arrangements. It is the responsibility of the head teacher to ensure that staff are informed of any learning and development opportunities. There are also fewer opportunities to learn from others and to engage in networking and social activities that give access to information, opportunities, innovative ideas and senior staff etc. The head teacher must therefore ensure that mobile staff are kept informed of any changes in school which may have an impact on them. It is recognised that there may be training and development requirements for both the head teacher and staff arising from the introduction of agile/mobile working arrangements. This may be around the increased use of IT and technology which are a requirement of agile/mobile working and both the head teacher and staff will need to develop basic competences in those areas if there are any skills gaps.

Agile/mobile staff may also raise issues of time management, communication skills and, for the head teacher, potential development areas around management styles and methods as managing agile/remote staff may require the head teacher to develop new skills and styles which are more appropriate to the circumstances.

In particular, as set out above, the head teacher is likely to need to develop skills around setting performance standards and objectives, developing output based performance measures for staff and managing by objectives. The head teacher and school staff must discuss their training and development requirements at the outset of any agile/mobile working arrangement and ensure that this is also discussed regularly.

## 10. Agile/mobile working arrangements evaluation and review

The head teacher must ensure that agile/mobile working arrangements are reviewed and evaluated on a regular basis to ensure the arrangements continue to realise the benefits to the school that were envisaged at the outset. Review and evaluation processes must include staff input on the suitability and success of the arrangements for them. *The current Covid-19 pandemic has raised the profile of agile/mobile working and technologies have been quickly deployed to ensure staff can follow government guidelines and be available for work.*

## Policy Monitoring and Review

The table below sets out the ownership and review schedule for this policy.

|                              | Document Ownership                   |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Policy owned by:             | Kingsway Primary School              |
| Policy written by:           | Jane Corrin – June 2018              |
| Policy due for first review: | June 2021                            |
| Policy Reviewed:             | May 2020 Reviewed by Jane Corrin DPO |