



Homeworking Policy

Reviewed by: ACT
Trustees

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Contents

1. Purpose of this policy	3
2. Defining an occasional homeworker	3
3. Defining a frequent homeworker	3
4. Scope.....	3
5. Roles & Responsibilities	4
Line managers	Error! Bookmark not defined.
6. Standards & Practice	6
What to consider prior to a request for homeworking	6
Requesting homeworking procedure.....	6
What happens if an employee is found not to be working whilst at home (tasks set not complete)?	7
7. Health and Safety	7
8. Additional costs	7
9. IT Issues.....	7
10. Security	7
11. Relevant Legislation/Regulations.....	8
12. Related ACT Policies/Procedures	8
13. Related Guidance.....	8
14. Monitoring & Review	8
15. Equality impact assessment.....	8
16. Appendix 1: Equality impact assessment.....	9
17. Appendix 2: Health & Safety Checklist for ACT Staff who Work from Home.....	9

1. Purpose of this policy

The policy sets out ACT'S framework for homeworking and aims to:

- provide a clear and manageable procedure for homeworking;
- provide the basis for a clear understanding of the occasional and frequent homeworking arrangement for the benefit of the Trust and staff members
- make clear the responsibilities of the Trust and homeworker; and
- ensure homeworkers work safely and securely with preventative measures for hazards or risks.

This policy covers both occasional and frequent home working, each defined in turn.

2. Defining an occasional homeworker

An occasional homeworker will work from home on an ad hoc basis.

3. Defining a frequent homeworker

A frequent homeworker will work from home for the majority of their contracted hours, however expected to come into the office environment for meetings, delivering or collecting work, training as and when required etc.

In line with our cultural values, we are committed to building a Trust that is agile, accountable, ambitious and attentive. This policy will help set out a foundation for continuously improving the way we work and creating an environment which is flexible but also collaboratively working together to achieve mutually beneficial environment whilst homeworking.

4. Scope

Whilst this policy applies to all employees regardless of length of service, it is recognised that some roles will be more suitable to occasional homeworking than others.

To work effectively homeworking has to primarily meet the Schools needs as well as the individual. There is no automatic right to work at home and such working is voluntary and by agreement with the Headteacher/Trust.

Each individual request for homeworking will be considered on its merits.

Factors that Headteachers should consider as part of the approval process include:

- the objectives of the homeworking;
- the suitability of the job for homeworking;
- the performance level of the individual member of staff, including the confidence in them to work remotely and without regular supervision¹;
- the suitability of the worker's home for homeworking, e.g. agreed method of communication, access to colleagues, information, and technology;
- the outcome of a risk assessment; and
- the impact on, and inter-relationship with, other members of the team.

Taking work home occasionally, on an ad hoc basis, to concentrate on a particular project or task may be suitable where a specific task needs dedicated and focused input and/or could be dealt with more efficiently at home, e.g. as a result of saved travelling time and lack of interruptions.

Frequent home working may be suitable for the following reasons for example:

- There is no space in School for a particular role
- The employee has declared a disability which may limit their ability to travel to School

5. Roles & Responsibilities

Headteachers/Trust

Headteachers/Trust are responsible for:

- considering how homeworking can benefit that particular School, the individual and environment and being flexible in their approach to homeworking requests and opportunities, ensuring that each decision to allow homeworking is based on a sound business case.
- ensuring that the work output of staff designated as homeworkers is managed and deadlines are met;
- ensuring that staff applying to work at home have completed the checklist for occasional home/remote working and a DSE self-assessment to ensure all work will be undertaken safely and securely; and
- reinforcing the staff member's responsibility for confidentiality and securing of data in line with the Trusts data security policies.
- Monitoring and agreeing the home working arrangements.

Employees

Employees requesting **occasional** homeworking are expected to:

- agree homeworking arrangements with the Headteacher;

- be available and contactable during the agreed working hours;
- carry out the required checklist for occasional home/remote working and a DSE self-assessment
- comply with all ACT's policies and procedures that relate to both practices and professional conduct whilst working, whether this be in their home or on other premises;
- take reasonable care of any equipment supplied for homeworking
- report any accident or incident as soon as possible to their line manager/HR.

Employees requesting more **frequent** homeworking are expected to:

- be clear on why they should be classified a frequent homeworker.
- agree homeworking arrangements with the Headteacher;
- be available and contactable during the agreed working hours;
- carry out the required checklist for occasional home/remote working and a DSE self-assessment
- comply with all ACT's policies and procedures that relate to both practices and professional conduct whilst working, whether this be in their home or on other premises;
- take reasonable care of any equipment supplied for homeworking
- report any accident or incident as soon as possible to their line manager/HR.

Employees requesting frequent home working?

In cases where employees wish to work from home on a frequent basis then this will need to be discussed with the Headteacher and Trust. The Headteacher is to liaise with the Trust and the HR team, who will need to assess if there will be any contractual changes or implications in respect of the request.

Hours of work

Employees are expected to work their contracted hours per week as per their contract of employment.

Adequate breaks

All workers working more than six hours per day are entitled to take an interrupted XXXXX break during the working day to ensure that they take adequate rest breaks as stipulated by the Working Time Regulations 1998. We encourage all staff to take a minimum of 30 minutes break when working a 7-hour day.

IT Equipment

Employees working from home are responsible for ensuring proper care is taken care of equipment and materials provided by ACT.

Stationery

Stationery is often provided in the office, however where stationery is purchased it needs to be claimed via expenses.

6. Standards & Practice

What to consider prior to a request for homeworking

Headteachers and Trust to consider these elements before granting approval to work from home:

1. Is the employee eligible by nature of their job? (e.g. role requirements or are they an agency worker) *note: only agency staff with 13 weeks service are to be considered for homeworking.*
2. Are there any cybersecurity and data privacy concerns?
3. Will collaboration with the employee's team become difficult?
4. The outcomes of the checklist for occasional home working and DSE self-assessment.
5. Do employees have the necessary equipment or software installed at home?
6. What are the conditions of employees' home or alternative place of work (noise, internet connection).

Requesting homeworking procedure

When **employees** wish to work from home, this procedure must be followed:

- a) Employees must request via email to the Headteacher **at least two days** before planning to work from home. It must be approved by the Headteacher and the following must be discussed and agreed:
 - Being clear on the tasks/ targets/goals set for the day
 - Achievable deadlines
 - Ensuring that they are contactable via email and telephone
 - Ensuring their outlook calendar reflects that they are working from home and
 - Hours to be completed (usual contracted hours apply)

What happens if an employee is found not to be working whilst at home (tasks set not complete)?

Firstly the Headteacher is to discuss with the member of staff, the tasks which were not achieved and why. There may be valid reasons why the tasks were not achievable. If the reasons given by the member of staff are not sufficient from the Headteacher's perspective, then this is to be discussed with the Trust CEO for an extra opinion or how to move the situation forward.

Please note that the Headteacher reserves the right to restrict working from home.

7. Health and Safety

Employees have a responsibility for their own health and safety whilst working from home.

Employees working from home should ensure that they have completed the remote working checklist and completed their Display Screen Equipment Assessment.

8. Additional costs

ACT will not reimburse any of the following incurred whilst working from home.

- Home Insurance
- Lighting
- Heating and
- Broadband

9. IT Issues

Whilst working from home and encountering any IT issues such as not being able to log into the School's IT system please contact a member of the **IT helpdesk**.

10. Security

Work should be conducted in an environment that is as interruption-free as is practicable. The home worker must not allow members of their family or third parties who are not employed by ACT to access or use ACT equipment.

Employees who work from home are responsible for keeping all documents and information associated with the School secure at all times. Specifically, homeworkers are under a duty to:

- Keep filing cabinets and drawers locked when they are not being used;
- Set up and use a unique password for the computer and any other digital devices.

Further, the laptop provided must only for work-related purposes and must only be used by the member of staff.

Under the General Data Protection Regulation 2018, ACT needs to ensure all staff are aware of how to store, maintain, retain and keep confidential information safe whilst working away from School. **Please refer to the Data Protection policy**, which provides more detail.

11. Relevant Legislation/Regulations

- General Data Protection Regulation 2018
- Health & Safety at Work etc Act, 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, 1999
- Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations, 1992
- Employees Rights Act 1996
- Working Time Regulations 1998
- Flexible Working Regulations 2015

12. Related Policies/Procedures

- General Data Protection Policy 2018
- Lone Working Policy & Procedure
- *Computer Network and DSE policy*
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure

13. Related Guidance

- Risk Assessment Guidance
- Using Display Screen Equipment Guidance
- Managing the H&S of Lone and Remote Workers Guidance

14. Monitoring & Review

This policy will be monitored and reviewed at least every 3 years by the Trust Board with line manager input or earlier if required to comply with legislative or regulatory changes.

15. Equality impact assessment

Attached as Appendix 1

16. Appendix 1: Equality impact assessment

	Could the service / document have different impact on this group? If Yes detail how.	Response to potential adverse impacts	How will this be monitored?
Disability	Yes under the Equality Act 2010 disability is a protected characteristic. Under Health and Safety Act 1974 we are also required to make reasonable adjustments if needed.	Reasonable adjustments may need to be made if needed.	This will be monitored by the Headteacher and discussed with the the Trust Board if needed.
Race	No impact identified	No impact identified	No impact identified
Age	No impact identified	No impact identified	No impact identified
Gender	No impact identified	No impact identified	No impact identified
Gender re-assignment	If an individual is undergoing treatment then reasonable adjustments may be required	Reasonable adjustments may be required	This will be monitored by the Headteacher and discussed with the Trust Board if needed.
Sexual Orientation	No impact identified	No impact identified	No impact identified
Marriage & Civil Partnership	No impact identified	No impact identified	No impact identified
Pregnancy and Maternity	Yes under the equality Act 2010 pregnancy and maternity is a protected characteristic.	Reasonable adjustments may need to be made if needed on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity.	This will be monitored by the Headteacher and discussed with the Trust Board if needed.
Religion / Belief	No impact identified	No impact identified	No impact identified

17. Appendix 2: Health & Safety Checklist for Staff who Work from Home

It is the policy of ACT to ensure that each homeworker has a safe environment from which to work and that the equipment provided by ACT should not cause health and safety concerns for the member of staff.

All staff who work from home should use this Checklist. You should complete the checklist and flag up in the 'employee comments' section any areas where there may be potential problems and what you intend to do about them. Your Headteacher will need to be happy that your home environment is suitable, and therefore it is likely that a visit to your home will be necessary to verify this.

Name of employee	
Home address	
Date:	

Please comment/ tick as appropriate (attach comments on supplementary sheet if desired)

Work Environment		
Hazard	Guidance Notes	Employee Comments
1. Temperature	<p><i>The minimum temperature in a workplace should be at least 16C but a temperature of around 21-24C is normally considered comfortable for sedentary work. Are you able to provide and maintain this level of heating when required?</i></p> <p><i>In hot weather a fan plus increased ventilation may be necessary to achieve a comfortable working temperature. Are you able to achieve a comfortable working temperature during periods of hot weather?</i></p>	
2. Lighting	<p><i>It may be necessary to use task lighting (a portable desk lamp or similar) to provide a suitable level of lighting. This will improve the light level where required without causing glare on your screen from ambient light. Do you have a desk lamp or similar?</i></p>	
3. Ventilation	<p><i>Is there adequate ventilation – for example if you have converted an area of your home into a study / office is there a means of providing ventilation?</i></p>	
4. Fire	<p><i>The equipment you use for work and the configuration of your working area should not obstruct your means of escape or the means of escape for others. It is a general recommendation that smoke detectors are installed and maintained in your home. Paper is combustible and electrical equipment can be a source of ignition. Good</i></p>	

	<p>housekeeping should be practiced to reduce the risk of fire starting or developing in your home.</p> <p>For advice on fire safety at home refer to www.firekills.gov.uk/</p>	
5. Space	<p>Is there sufficient space available? Can you move about freely without bumping, twisting, stepping over or climbing on things?</p> <p>Is there suitable storage space available for the work and are the floor and walls designed to take any additional loading caused by the work and equipment?</p>	
6. Electrical installations	<p>ACT is responsible for the equipment it supplies. Electrical sockets and other parts of the homeworker's electrical system are the homeworker's responsibility.</p> <p>Does your home electrical installation provide sufficient protection: fuses/ circuit breakers, and are there enough sockets available?</p>	
7. Work equipment provided by ACT	<p>ACT has a duty to ensure that any equipment provided for the purpose of work is: safe, correct for the job, adequately maintained and proper information, instruction and training in its use is provided.</p> <p>You will be required to bring equipment into the School for testing, inspection and maintenance as and when requested. Are you able to comply with this requirement?</p>	
8. Work equipment not provided by ACT	<p>It is advisable that the employee ensures any equipment used, which is not supplied by the School, is safe and fit for purpose. This requires it to be used and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.</p> <p>List the equipment used for work activity but not supplied by ACT and indicate if it is safe and "fit for purpose".</p> <p>Please also outline your access to a stable broadband connection. What average download speeds are you able to achieve?</p>	

<p>9. Work related stress</p>	<p><i>Are there any factors about homeworking that could contribute to work related stress?</i></p> <p><i>This could include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Domestic distractions</i> <i>Level of, or, access to supervision / guidance</i> <i>Control over workload (over or under loading)</i> <i>Not being able to make contact with colleagues</i> <i>Poor phone / broadband reception</i> <i>Not being able to resolve problems in a reasonable and timely manner</i> <i>Concerns about your role</i> <i>Concerns about working relationships</i> <i>Control over working hours – separating home life from home working</i> <i>Lone working and/or feelings of isolation.</i> 	
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Workstation Assessment		
Hazard	Guidance Notes	Employee Comments
1. Display Screen	<p>Are the characters clear and readable?</p> <p>Is the text size comfortable to read?</p> <p>Is the image stable i.e. free from flicker?</p> <p>Is the screen's specification suitable for its intended use? (for example graphic work may require large display screens)</p> <p>Are the brightness and/or contrast controls adjustable to prevent eyestrain?</p> <p>Is the screen free from glare and reflections?</p> <p>Does the screen swivel and tilt?</p> <p>Do you have adjustable window blinds?</p> <p>It is recommended that if using a laptop for any prolonged period of work an external monitor should be used.</p>	
2. Keyboard	<p>Is the keyboard separate from the screen (unless it is a laptop)?</p> <p>Are the characters on the keys easily readable?</p> <p>Are you able you look at the screen with your keyboard directly in front of you when seated at your computer chair, and find a comfortable keying position?</p> <p>Does the keyboard tilt?</p> <p>It is recommended that if using a laptop for any prolonged period of work an external keyboard should be used.</p>	
3. Mouse, Trackball etc.	<p>Is the device suitable for the task it is used for?</p> <p>Is the device positioned close to the user?</p> <p>Is there support for the user's wrist and forearm?</p> <p>Does the mouse work smoothly at a speed that suits the user?</p> <p>Can the user easily adjust the software settings for speed and accuracy of the pointer?</p> <p>It is recommended that if using a laptop for any prolonged period of work an external mouse should be used.</p>	
4. Software	<p>You must only use software supplied by the School for work purposes. Is the supplied software suitable for the task?</p>	

5. Furniture	<p>Is the work surface large enough for all the necessary equipment, papers etc?</p> <p>Is it at a comfortable height so that you can achieve and maintain an anatomically correct posture? If you do not know what this means you should seek guidance.</p> <p>Can the user comfortably reach all the equipment and papers they need to use?</p> <p>Are surfaces free from glare and reflection?</p> <p>Is the chair stable?</p> <p>It is recommended that the chair has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seat back height and tilt adjustment • Seat height adjustment • Swivel mechanism • Five star swivel base <p>Does the chair allow the user to have his/ her feet placed flat on the floor?</p> <p>If your feet cannot be placed flat on the floor do you have use of a footrest?</p> <p>Is the small of the back supported by the chairs backrest?</p> <p>Are the forearms horizontal and eyes at roughly the same height as the top of the display screen?</p> <p>Are your feet placed flat on the floor, without too much pressure from the seat on the backs of the legs?</p> <p>Do you need to use a document holder to avoid neck and shoulder strain?</p>	
6. Electrical supply	<p>It is recommended that you turn off the electrical supply to the computer after use, can you do this?</p> <p>Is the plug for the computer in safe working order and free from discoloration or any visible damage?</p> <p>Is the outer covering of the computer cable and wiring intact?</p> <p>Is the outer covering of the cable securely covered at the point where it enters the plug?</p> <p>Are there burn marks or staining on or around the plug/ socket where the computer is used?</p> <p>Are there any trailing cables?</p>	

Lap tops / tablets	Like using desktop equipment people should be trained on how to minimise the risk and follow the principles outlined above. This includes achieving an anatomically correct position, angling the screen so it can be seen clearly with minimal reflections, and taking frequent breaks if work is prolonged. Laptops should be placed on a firm surface at the right height for use.	
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WHAT TO DO NEXT?

The completed form should be submitted to your Headteacher.

A home visit may be necessary to verify the comments made on this form. Following that a decision will be made as to whether the environment and / or equipment identified is adequate to allow you to work from home.

To be completed by the Headteacher:

On the basis of the information above I agree / do not agree to
..... working from home.

Signed:

Date:

Comments