



Flexible Retirement Policy

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“Learning together; to be the best we can be”

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The principle underpinning this Flexible Retirement Policy is that employees who are over the age of 55 years will ease towards retirement by reducing their weekly working hours, or grade and responsibilities for a period of time up to their actual permanent retirement date. Any reductions in hours or grade should be significant and permanent.
- 1.2. The Trust will operate this Scheme only on the basis that applications are made on a voluntary basis through individual application to the Trust
- 1.3. Every endeavour will be made to try and maintain consistency of practice and of application of this scheme to each and every individual concerned. The Trust will consider the circumstances of each individual case referred to them and their decision will be final.

2. Eligibility

- 2.1. Applications will be considered from individual employees who are:
 - aged over 55 years of age;
 - in permanent employment at the date of request; and
 - members of the South Yorkshire Pensions Scheme or the Teacher's Pension Scheme.
- 2.2. Flexible retirement applications must contain a request to permanently reduce either the grade and /or hours worked by the employee concerned.

3. Conditions for Flexible Retirement

- 3.1. The request to apply for Flexible Retirement must be made by the employee who should initially put the request and proposed reduction in grade and/or pay in writing to their Headteacher or line manager.

- 3.2. The request will be considered by the Local Governing Body with a recommendation made to the Trust Board (or subcommittee).
- 3.3. The Trust will not normally approve any requests that lead to additional costs or operational difficulties to the Trust.
- 3.4. Headteachers need to take account of higher potential employment costs or recruitment costs/difficulties associated with alternative options for service delivery in approving a request for flexible retirement.
- 3.5. Applications will only be considered for 'significant' permanent contractual reductions to either grade or weekly contractual hours.
- 3.6. Applications from employees aged below 60 years could result in costs to the Trust.
- 3.7. 'Significant' reductions are defined as those by which budget savings, or 'vacated' hours/position would enable the recruitment of a suitable replacement to maintain service delivery. It would be anticipated such reductions would be in the region of at least 40% of hours so that alternative resourcing options can be explored.
- 3.8. Any subsequent request to revert to original hours or grade would be at the Trust's discretion.
- 3.9. Any new post identified for redeployment at a lower grade must be one that has been evaluated in accordance with the Trust's Job Evaluation Scheme to ensure the correct grade for the post is applied.

4. Timescales

- 4.1. Applications will normally be considered and a response provided within 28 days of receipt of the request.
- 4.2. Any appeals against a decision not to agree to a request would be considered in accordance with the Trust's Grievance Procedure.

5. Employee Considerations

- 5.1. Employees considering an application for Flexible Retirement are advised to seek individual personal information from South Yorkshire Pensions Authority and/or the Teacher's Pension Scheme.
- 5.2. A statement of benefits will outline the level of reduction to the employee's superannuation benefits where these are taken earlier than anticipated in accordance with actuarial assessment tables.
- 5.3. Conditions of service in the new post will be those applicable to the level appropriate to the new post. Previous entitlements earned through length of service such as leave entitlements and eligibility to full sick pay conditions will be protected as if no break in service following Flexible Retirement but pro-rated based on the hours worked or the grade of the post.