



FLEXIBLE RETIREMENT POLICY FOR
LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME MEMBERS
EMPLOYED IN SCHOOLS

Reviewed in October 2023

To be approved by Full Governing Body in November 2023

FLEXIBLE RETIREMENT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 An employee who is a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) and is 55 or over can make an application for Flexible Retirement on the basis of a 40% reduction in salary achieved through a reduction in hours and / or grade. Where agreed, it will not be possible to return to full time or previous working arrangements.
- 1.2 If payment is made before the normal pension age, normal practice will be that employee benefits will be reduced and waiving of any reductions will only be considered in exceptional cases.
- 1.3 If flexible retirement is agreed all benefits built up before 1st April 2008 must be taken but individuals can choose to take all, some or none of the benefits built up between 1st April 2008 and 31st March 2014 and benefits built up after 1st April 2014. Employees are advised to contact their pension scheme administrator to discuss individual circumstances.
- 1.4 Any pension benefits paid as a result of flexible retirement will not be abated (reduced) under the administering authority's (Teesside Pension Fund) abatement policy during the time that the person remains in the employment of the Authority or an associated body which participates in the Teesside Pension Fund.

2.0 SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy applies to all support staff who are members of the Local Government Pension Scheme and are aged 55 and over.

3.0 POLICY & CRITERIA

- 3.1 The Headteacher will consider all requests from support staff employed in the school.
- 3.2 The School's policy is to assess applicants against the following criteria;
 - The need to retain skilled employees who would otherwise leave or retire.
 - Personal circumstances are affecting an employee's ability to carry out his/her duties and adaptations or support cannot resolve the issue.
 - Any additional costs of agreeing the request (e.g. costs incurred in filling the remainder of the post).

- The non-financial costs in terms of efficiency and effectiveness if the application is turned down.
- Whether it is a job role that is difficult to recruit to.
- Whether the remainder of the post can be left vacant to create a saving.
- Whether the period needs to be time limited (e.g. till the end of a project).
- Whether the flexible retirement period can be used for succession planning/training a new appointment.
 - Whether approval might maximise the performance of the individual employee; and to agree to applications only where there are considered to be clear benefits to the school as well as to the individual.

3.3 Applications on compassionate grounds will be considered as above, taking into account any financial implications, the individual circumstances of the employee's request and the needs of the School.

3.4 In cases of flexible retirement the responsibility for confirming and justifying that there is a case for granting release is with the Headteacher in consultation with the appropriate Committee of the Governing Body.

4.0 DURATION

4.1 When a flexible retirement has been agreed it would be expected to continue until the employee takes full retirement. In certain circumstances a flexible retirement could be agreed for a specific period and subject to an end date. Advice should be taken from HR before this is agreed.

5.0 NEW ROLE

5.1 Flexible retirement can be agreed in the same post or in a different or reconfigured post. In some circumstances a flexible retirement would give the opportunity to redesign a job or service and this could mean that the employee could, by agreement, continue in a different role and/or on a different grade.

6.0 PROCEDURE

- a) An employee who wishes to take flexible retirement must seek approval from the Headteacher. This will usually be discussed informally before completing the 'Application for Flexible Retirement' form. This form should be forwarded to the Headteacher.
- b) The Headteacher should obtain a pension estimate from the Teesside Pension Fund (with and without actuarial reduction) before considering the request against the criteria within this policy.
- c) The employee should have sight of the pension estimate and consider the impact of reduced benefits (if appropriate) before confirming if they wish to proceed.

- d) The Headteacher considers the application against the criteria within the policy, completes the relevant part of the application form and writes to the employee confirming the outcome (draft letter (LET/Flexret1)).
- e) In cases where the application has been approved, the 'Formal Acceptance for Flexible Retirement' form must be completed by the employee and sent to the Headteacher before any contractual changes can take place.
- f) When the Headteacher receives the 'Formal Acceptance for Flexible Retirement' form they will make arrangements for the school's payroll provider to be informed of the changes and when they are to take place.