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Department  
for Education

Many teachers tell us that they want to work flexibly but often can't because the school system isn't set up to offer the kind of flexibility today's professionals need.

School leaders can't always offer flexible roles due to:

- perceived increase in costs and management time
- difficulty of managing timetables
- parental expectations

We are working with school leaders, education experts, industry specialists and unions to change these perceptions and increase the number of part-time or job-sharing posts at all levels within the school system, and expand the range of flexible opportunities in schools.

## Gender equality

We believe flexible working can help achieve gender equality in schools by:

- allowing women to return to teaching on a flexible basis (for example after having children)
- improving the career progressions of women by offering more flexible opportunities at senior levels within the school system

## Recruiting teachers

Offering a wider range of flexible and part-time posts could help schools solve some recruitment challenges by giving them access to a higher number of qualified teachers, including those who:

- can't consider working full-time hours at present
- are looking for a working pattern that suits their personal circumstances

## What we mean by flexible working

- part-time working - working less than full-time hours
- job sharing - 2 or more people do one job and split the hours
- compressed hours - working full-time hours but over fewer days
- staggered hours - where the employee has different start, finish and break times from other workers (dependent on individual situations)
- home working

We issued guidance on [flexible working in schools](#) in February 2017, to help school leaders, staff and governing bodies put in place arrangements for their staff.

## Flexible Working Summit

In March 2017 the Secretary of State for Education announced that she wanted flexible working practices to become the norm in schools across the country, as part of her [vision for the teaching profession speech to the ASCL conference](#).

She also confirmed that we'd hold a Flexible Working Summit for national education sector stakeholders in October 2017.

## Contact us

Email us if you'd like to get in touch about flexible working or tell us what your school is doing to help you work flexibly.

### Flexible working in schools

Email

[Schools.FLEXIBLEWORKING@education.gov.uk](mailto:Schools.FLEXIBLEWORKING@education.gov.uk)

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