



# The benefits of flexible working

## Retention of experienced teachers

- Enabling flexible working could help schools retain teachers who would otherwise leave the role, or retire early.<sup>1</sup>
- In one survey across industries, 76% of employers said that they felt that implementing flexible working has a positive impact on staff retention.<sup>2</sup>

*“The National Governance Association encourages governing boards to lead the way in the development of progressive employment practices including flexible working that contribute to a healthy working environment and thus to both attracting and retaining high-quality staff.”*

## More diverse range of staff

- Enabling flexible working could help schools access a wider pool of potential employees; or a more diverse range of skills and experience within the workforce.<sup>1</sup> This also helps schools to provide equality of opportunity.

## Progression of experienced teachers

- Flexible working may offer development opportunities for existing staff (e.g. through part-time job share in a leadership role).<sup>1</sup>
- Supporting and facilitating flexible working practice has been reported as a strategy used by some employers to try and help reduce their gender pay gap.<sup>3</sup>

## Improved well-being, work-life balance and morale

- Supporting flexible working can allow teachers to manage their work-life balance and improve their wellbeing.<sup>1</sup>
- Flexible working may help reduce ill-health absence; or enable a quicker return to work after maternity.<sup>1, 4</sup>

## Impact on pupils

- Implemented well, flexible working can provide pupils with the opportunity to learn from different teachers (e.g. through job shares).<sup>1</sup>

*“NAHT supports the adoption of flexible working for teachers and school leaders. Delivering these opportunities is a complex matter, however school leaders are committed to facilitating approaches to flexible working that deliver benefits for pupils.”*

## Workforce planning

- Enabling flexible working could help to plan ahead for workforce changes in schools, specifically in relation to succession planning.<sup>1</sup>

*“Ofsted supports every school’s right to decide the best use of their workforce, and nothing in Ofsted’s inspection framework should be considered to prevent flexible working.”*

## Ensuring teaching is an attractive profession

- An increasing proportion of teachers are working part-time, but the proportion of men in teaching doing so in 2018 was 9%, compared with an average for all UK employees of 13%, and the proportion of women doing so was 29%, compared with 41%.<sup>5, 6</sup>
- With the changing demands of workers in our 21st century economy, it is more important than ever that teaching is compatible with family life and work life balance more broadly in order to be attractive to aspiring, current and inactive teachers.

<sup>1</sup>CGR, Exploring Flexible Working Practice in Schools: Interim report (DfE), 2019. <sup>2</sup>CIPD, Flexible Working Provision and Update, 2012. A majority of the sample were CIPD members. <sup>3</sup>IPPR, The State of Pay: Demystifying the gender pay gap, 2018; EHRC Closing the gender pay gap, 2018. <sup>4</sup>DfE, Flexible working in schools: Guidance, 2017. <sup>5</sup>DfE, School Workforce in England, 2019. <sup>6</sup>ONS, Full-time, part-time and temporary workers (Oct-Dec 2018), 2019.

