

Finding the Flex Voices Professionals

Lucy Walker-Collins is the headteacher of Stroud Green Primary School, a community school in the London Borough of Haringey. This over-subscribed school recognises the importance of children being trusted, valued and heard and offers 'Flexi Fridays.'



One family drives in from South London each day and, although their child no longer flexischools, they love the ethos of the school. We find that even if flexischooling is not the right thing for some families, it gives a powerful message to parents that we trust them and want to work with them.

Focus on flexischooling

1

Children can't just wake up and want a "duvet day". Flexischooling must be authorised, with six-weekly reviews to check progress.

2

Each application is considered on its own merits, balancing the child's emotional, social, and educational needs.

3

Knowing flexischooling is an option appeals to families, even if they don't use it.

4

School can be very restrictive. This is our way of allowing some flex in the system.

5

We've found a designated flexischooling day is less disruptive to other pupils and helps teachers plan the curriculum and support on the days they have smaller class sizes.

The flexibility to flourish

Our flexischool offer was introduced by the previous head teacher when the school was losing children. It was a really good draw, and still is. Some parents put their children into different provisions on Fridays, like Forest School or dyslexia support. For SEND children, it's useful to have a day for sensory needs at home.

One child in Year 4 was flexischooled for six weeks when his parents were going through a separation. He needed time to come to terms with it, move into a new house and spend time with each of his parents. The boy came back after six weeks and went back into full-time schooling.

Our educational outcomes are above London, above Haringey, and above the national average. As children who remain at school on Fridays benefit from smaller class sizes and more support.

