What are the different flexible working practices in your workplace?

Co-Headship

Name: **Sally Pearce and Jacqui Newton**

Organisation Name: **Seely Primary and Nursery School**

Organisation type: **Nursery Primary**

Location: Nottingham

Email: Headteacher@seely.nottingham.sch.uk).

Summary of practice

We began job-sharing 24 years ago, starting as a Key Stage co-ordinator, before becoming co-deputies and then co-heads. We each do half the week, crossing over on a Wednesday for our dedicated headship time. Staff meetings are held at alternating ends of the week to fit in with different job-share arrangements and once a month we have a safeguarding meeting on Wednesdays, when everyone attends. We both attend full governors' meetings and CPD sessions and meetings with other local headteachers as necessary. We do not divide the work up; one just takes on where the other leaves, and we have joint appraisal targets. There is a comprehensive diary in school where everyone's appointments are noted, a file where all communication with parents is recorded as well as a personal diary in which we note day-to-day events and messages.

Benefits of flexible working practice

Individual: For both of us, the trigger for job-sharing was having children; we even alternated our maternity leaves! We find the benefits of dividing the workload and preserving time for our families even more pronounced now that we are leading a school. It's enabled us to have a work-life balance (before the term was even invented!) and allowed us to explore other opportunities outside of our headship.

Organisation: We believe that ours is a model that could relieve pressure on leaders in many different fields. Part of the reason for our success is that we are meticulously organised and great at communicating; now we don't think staff can tell which of us took a

staff meeting or dealt with a situation because we work seamlessly between us. Job-sharing at a leadership level is so positive, not only for our own work-life balance, it also gives added value to the school and the option of succession planning.

Pupils: As co-headteachers we are equally responsible, equally fascinated and equally absorbed by the school. We bring more energy than one person could, with lots of ideas because we spark off each other and we can give each other support. Our governing body is fully supportive of our arrangement and I would say the school gets 75 per cent from each of us.