# Operational Policy: Working from Home and Staff Children in the Workplace (NAG 3)

## Blind & Low Vision Education Network NZ

## Statement of Intent:

The Blind & Low Vision Education Network NZ (BLENNZ) Board of Trustees has an obligation to be a good employer and recognises that there may, on occasion, be circumstances when it would be more appropriate for some staff to work at home or have their child/children in the workplace for short periods of time.

All BLENNZ policies continue to apply whilst working at home.

Nothing in this policy overrides any Government, Ministry of Education or Civil Defence directive in terms of school closures or the need for staff to work from home during emergency situations.

## Policy Requirements:

1. Prior permission is required before an employee can work at home. The employee must make the request to their line manager for one off occasions. If circumstances warrant an employee working from home more regularly, approval must be sought from the respective Senior Manager in consultation with the Principal. Occasions when permission to work from home could be agreed are:

i) attendance at an off-site appointment at a time when it is not logistically

practical to travel from home to the respective base first

ii) intensive planning and/or report writing when it is deemed outcomes will be

more achievable if working off base due to office space being used for alternative activities.

2. Approval for working at home will not be given if dependent care responsibilities will conflict with the requirement to work. It is not considered appropriate to combine home based working with dependent care, nor is it appropriate for staff to bring their child to work with them if the child is sick. This does not preclude employees being granted leave on pay as a charge against their sick leave entitlement when they are required to be absent from work to attend to a person dependent upon their care. This leave will be granted in accordance with the terms of the respective collective employment agreements.

3. Whilst approval to bring a child to work who is not sick would not normally be given, it is accepted that there may be occasions when, for reasons beyond a staff member’s control, it is necessary for their child to be at work with them for a short period of time. Should this occur, approval must be sought from the respective line manager. If there is any doubt as to what is acceptable, the situation must be discussed with either the appropriate Senior Manager or Principal. If approval is received, at all times the child must be in a safe, supervised environment, with full responsibility for the safety of the child remaining with the staff member.

4. Except as otherwise approved, BLENNZ would typically expect employees to work from their base site during ākonga non contact hours for the full period they are employed each day. Approval to do otherwise must be sought in advance. Normal hours of work for employees are as defined by their respective collective agreements.

6. It is accepted that roles and responsibilities may require employees to work with ākonga, or meet with families before or after school hours. This will be done in accordance with the individual staff member’s job requirements.

7. If approval is granted for a staff member to work from home they must be available to be contacted during the agreed times.

8. Staff are advised not to release their home address and personal telephone number to non members of staff.

9. Staff are not to use their home as a meeting place for staff, or with ākonga and whānau, unless prior approval has been granted.

10. If approval is granted for an employee to work at home, BLENNZ equipment should only be accessible to the employee and safeguarded from access by other members of the household and visitors. Electronic files are able to be accessed. Other documentation requires permission from in line managers.

11. The employer reserves the right to withdraw their approval for working at home if they believe its use is being abused.

12. If there is any doubt as to what is acceptable the matter should be discussed with the appropriate Senior Manager or Principal.

13. This policy is subject to review and does not override employment contracts.

## Supporting Documents:

[Link to Ministry of Education: Collective Employment Agreements](http://www.education.govt.nz/school/people-and-employment/employment-agreements/collective-agreements/)



Approved: (Principal)

Date: 17 May 2021

Next Review: 2024