



Authorised Special Leave Policy

Our vision is to enable all to flourish.

Status and review cycle: Statutory and two-yearly review

Responsible group: The Trust/CEO

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1.0 Purpose and scope

- 1.1 The Trust is an organisation with a Christian foundation. The ethos, values and relationships of the Trust, and its schools, are central to witnessing to the value of the foundation. The Trust is committed to supporting employees who may need to take time off work for a variety of reasons not covered by the normal annual leave provisions. It needs to be understood however, that although requests will be considered sympathetically requests are subject to individual circumstances, the needs of the organisation and the ability to meet any financial implications that approval may incur.
- 1.2 Entitlements to certain types of leave are covered by statute, whilst other forms of leave are discretionary and may be granted by headteachers/line managers subject to individual circumstances and the needs of the organisation.
- 1.3 This policy applies to support staff (Green Book), teachers (Burgundy Book) and the central team.

2.0 Defining a dependant

- 2.1 Any person living in the household with a Trust employee who is directly dependent on them. This could be a spouse/civil partner, child or parent.
- 2.2 Any near relative, for example parent, son or daughter who lives separately from the employee but requires their support as a result of an emergency.

3.0 Family Care Leave

- 3.1 All employees are entitled to take a reasonable amount of unpaid time off work to deal with unexpected or emergency situations involving a dependant.
- 3.2 This policy enables you to take up to five days' paid Family Care Leave per leave year (pro-rata if you are part time) for genuine emergency family care situations. You must have a caring responsibility as follows:
 - Any person living in the household with you who is directly dependent on you. This could be a spouse, civil partner, child or parent.
 - Any near relative, for example parent, son or daughter who lives separately from you but requires your support as a result of an emergency.
- 3.3 Normal care arrangements must have broken down or be suddenly disturbed. Examples are:
 - Accidents or injuries to a dependent or near relative.
 - Sudden, urgent closure of a school or day care provision.

4.0 Unpaid leave

- 4.1 Where Family Care Leave entitlement has been exhausted, headteachers in schools or for the central team, the CEO or Head of Governance and People can approve unpaid leave to deal with unexpected or emergency situations involving a dependent.
- 4.2 Unexpected or emergency situations include illness, injury, break-down of care arrangements or dealing with an unexpected accident involving a child or dependant.
- 4.3 In exceptional situations the employee may not be able to seek permission prior to the absence but they will be expected to inform their headteacher or for the central team , as soon as is practicable, of the reason for their absence and how long they expect to be absent. Time off work is expected to be no more than one or two days in these circumstances.
- 4.4 For leave to deal with unexpected of emergency situations involving a dependant, normal care arrangements must have broken down or be suddenly disturbed. Examples are, but not limited to:
- Accidents or injuries to a dependant or near relative.
 - Sudden, urgent closure of a school or day care provision.
 - Start of sickness of a dependant or near relative where immediate medical treatment is necessary.

5.0 Compassionate leave

- 5.1 This type of leave is available in certain circumstances and employees may request this from the headteacher or for the central team, the CEO or Head of Governance and People who have the discretion to grant this.
- 5.2 The following table shows examples of circumstances, and the number of days paid leave available:

Death or critical illness of immediate family member or near relative	Number of discretionary paid compassionate leave days per leave year (N.B not per occasion)
Immediate family member i.e. spouse, civil partner, partner, parent, child, sibling or grandparent	Up to five days per leave year
Near relative i.e. aunt, uncle, parent in law, cousin or dependant where the employee is responsible for funeral arrangements	Up to five days per leave year
Near relative or dependant where the employee is not responsible for funeral arrangements	Up to three days per leave year

- 5.3 In exceptional circumstances the headteacher in schools and the CEO or Head of Governance and People in the central team can grant special paid leave and/or unpaid leave to allow an employee to care for their spouse/partner and/or dependant during a prolonged illness. This is discretionary and subject to the needs of the organisation.

6.0 Parental bereavement leave (PBL)

- 6.1 Bereaved parents have a statutory right to two weeks PBL regardless of length of service, in the event of the death of a child (under the age of 18) they have parental responsibility for. This includes adoptive parents, parents who suffer a still birth after 24 weeks of pregnancy and the partner of a child's parent.
- 6.2 The leave can be taken at a time of the employee's choosing within 56 weeks after the bereavement. . In the event that more than one child dies, a separate entitlement to bereavement leave for each child is available.
- 6.3 PBL can be taken as:
- A single block of two weeks; or
 - Two separate blocks of one week at different times
- 6.4 This right applies to employees who come under the following categories: the biological parent; adoptive parent if the child was living with them; person who lived with and had responsibility for them (for at least 4 weeks before they died); the intended parent (due to become legal parent via surrogacy); or the partner of the child's parent if they live with the child and the child's parent in a family relationship.
- 6.5 All employees are entitled to up to one week's compassionate leave on full pay (see section on compassionate leave); this will constitute the first week of the statutory PBL entitlement. The second week of PBL will be paid at full pay. In addition, the headteacher or for the central team the CEO or Head of Governance and People have the discretion to grant a further week's paid leave, for advice please seek HR guidance.

7.0 Carer's Leave

- 7.1 All employees have a statutory right to take up to one week of unpaid carer's leave [pro-rata for part time employees] in any 12-month rolling period to provide or arrange care for a dependent if they have a long-term care need. Employees do not need to meet a minimum length of service requirement to be eligible for carer's leave.
- 7.2 The leave can be taken in one continuous block, as individual days, or half days.
- 7.3 The employee is not required to provide evidence of how the leave will be used or who it will be used for.
- 7.4 Employees are asked to give as much advance notice as possible when requesting carer's leave. We request notice of twice the number of working days that the employees wishes to take as carer's leave, or three days, whichever is earlier.

8.0 Other special paid leave

8.1 The following can be considered by headteachers or line managers

- Removal of household effects – one day at a time
- Approved vocational exams – period of exam
- Approved vocational courses – duration of course

8.2 Headteachers and line managers may also authorise leave of absence with pay, up to a maximum of two days per year, for exceptional circumstances, not covered above.

8.3 Requests for special leave not covered above must be made to the headteacher or for the central team, the CEO or Head of Governance and People and if granted, will be unpaid unless stated.

9.0 Medical or dental appointments

9.1 Where possible, the employee should make every effort to make appointments outside their usual working hours. Where this is not possible the employee should ensure that the time is minimal and the employee gains approval from their headteacher or line manager before the appointment.

9.2 In addition, paid time off should be made available for cancer screening.

9.3 For pregnancy related medical appointments, you should refer to the Trust's Maternity Policy. Paid time off may be granted at the school's discretion for conditions that fall under the disability provision of the Equality Act.

10.0 Parliamentary or district council election nominees

10.1 Employees taking part in pre-election campaigns will need to request unpaid leave or annual leave if they work all year round.

11.0 Elected members of the district/parish council and/or appointed JP

11.1 Employees need to give their headteachers or line manager as much notice as possible of their intention to be absent on a particular day, or part thereof, to attend to their public duties. It is recognised that the majority of parish council meetings take place outside normal office hours.

11.2 In considering requests for such time off, the headteacher or for the central team the CEO or Head of Governance and People will consider the needs of the school as well as the needs of the employee. The maximum amount of time off with pay for full time employees undertaking these duties shall not exceed 208 working hours per financial year (1 April to 31st March) for each duty.

- 11.3 Where employees can demonstrate to their the headteacher or for the central team the CEO or Head of Governance and People their public office requires them to spend more than 208 hours working on such duties, their request for additional leave should not be unreasonably refused, although it will be unpaid. For part time employees, this should be calculated on a pro rata basis.
- 11.4 On days where paid leave of absence is approved for being appointed as a Justice of the Peace, the school will not make any deductions from pay and therefore such employees will not need to claim a financial loss allowance.
- 11.5 Where employees are elected council_members and claim member allowances on those days where paid leave is approved, an amount equivalent to the allowances claimed will be deducted from their pay. (These employees will need to notify the payroll provider of the amount of allowance claimed to ensure monthly salary payments are processed correctly).

12.0 Other paid activities undertaken by the employee

- 12.1 Employees who volunteer to participate in paid activities, e.g. census; election etc., should request annual leave or unpaid leave.

13.0 Army/navy/air cadet/reservist annual camps

- 13.1 Employees who are instructors in the Army, Navy or Air Cadet Forces or a reservist, can take special paid leave to attend annual camps. However, this does not apply to voluntary organisations such as the Boys Brigade, Scouts, Guides etc.
- 13.2 If an employee is a reservist and is mobilised, or their partner is a reservist who is mobilised, please seek HR guidance.

14.0 School Governors

- 14.1 As it is regarded as a public duty, unpaid leave of absence can be given to employees who are governors of other schools (i.e. not the one whom they are employed by).

15.0 Religious Festivals

- 15.1 An employee wishing to observe a religious festival, for which there is no current public holiday, should apply in the normal way to their headteacher or or for the central team the CEO or Head of Governance and People

15.2 Term time only employees, who are not normally allowed to take leave during the school term, may apply for time off to observe a religious festival on the clear understanding that the time off will have to be made up either during the term time or during the school holiday periods. This time off facility will be limited to two days in any 12-month period.

16.0 Jury Service

16.1 Leave should be provided unless the employee gets an exemption from serving on the jury.

16.2 The employee will receive, with their jury summons, a Certificate of Loss of Earnings or Benefit, which the employee should complete, with a copy provided to the line manager, to recover the wages that would otherwise be lost in respect of the period of jury service. This should be submitted to HM Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) to receive reimbursement, up to a limit, for loss of earnings incurred due to being absent from work due for jury service.

16.3 The employee will be paid as normal until reimbursement has been processed by HMCTS. The employee should present their manager with the receipt for the reimbursement. The appropriate deduction will then be made to the employee's pay.

16.4 If an employee is on a casual contract and there has been a pre-arranged commitment to work for the Trust during the period of jury service then the employee will receive payment as outlined above. If there is no pre-arranged work for the period of jury service, there will be no 'loss of earnings' and therefore no payment will be due or recoverable in respect of this period.

16.5 If an individual is on a permanent zero hours contract and are required to attend jury service, their earnings will be calculated on an average earnings basis in the same way they receive payment for other leave within the school and the employee should follow the above process to claim reimbursement for loss of earnings.

17.0 Trade union representatives

17.1 Accredited representatives of recognised trade unions have a statutory right to request reasonable paid time off to carry out union duties, or to undertake approved union training. Requests should be discussed with the headteacher or line manager as soon as possible.

18.0 Head teachers

18.1 Headteachers may take leave under the above provisions with the agreement of the CEO.

19.0 Absence requiring the closure of a school

19.1 Where the absence of any teacher would require the closure of a school, no such closure should be made without reference to the CEO.