



FRIETH LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY

FOR

SCHOOL STAFF

1. INTRODUCTION	2
2. SCOPE	2
3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	2
4. PRINCIPLES	2
5. ENTITLEMENT	3
6. ENTITLEMENT: WITHOUT PAY	7
7. DISCRETIONARY	9
8. APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE	11

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Employees have certain entitlements to leave of absence, in particular circumstances, under their conditions of service and Government legislation. This document outlines the policy for the Governing Body to grant leave of absence for employees.

SCOPE

- 2.1 The policy set out in this document applies to all Schools based staff employed under School Teachers Pay & Conditions or Bucks Pay Employment Conditions.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 The Governing Body has responsibility for establishing the School's Leave of Absence Policy, for ensuring that the Leave of Absence Policy is followed and for monitoring staff absence rates.
- 3.2 The Headteacher is responsible for implementing this policy within their School. The authority to take decisions under this Procedure rests in the Headteacher or (Chair of Governors in the case of applications for leave of absence from the Headteacher).

PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 The Policy and Procedure contained within this document is founded on the following principles:
 - a. All employees are treated equally and consistently when applying for leave of absence, in accordance with the School's Equal Opportunities Policy and taking account of differing national and local conditions of employment.
 - b. Where an employee wishes to make representations against a decision made by the Headteacher or Chairman of Governors, as applicable, they may write to the Governing Body or its appropriately designated Committee giving full details of the request. The decision of the Governing Body or its Committee is final.
 - c. Unauthorised absence will be dealt with under the School's Conduct and Discipline Policy and Procedure.

- d. Not to discriminate against any individual in the application of this policy and procedure on the protected characteristics of age, sex, race, caste, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, maternity and pregnancy, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or other grounds protected in law e.g. part time worker status, trade union membership/activities or HIV positive status

ENTITLEMENT

- 5.1 The Governing Body will grant leave of absence in accordance with national or local conditions of service and also in accordance with Government legislation in the following circumstances:

ENTITLEMENT: WITH PAY

5.2 Examiners and Moderators for Examining Bodies

Chief Examiners and Chief Moderators will be given up to 10 school days' leave with pay in any one financial year. Examiners and Assistant Moderators will be given up to 5 school days' leave with pay in any one financial year.

Employees shall not be required to pay the Council or their school any fees or expenses received for examining and moderating duties.

5.3 Jury Service and Other Public Service

An employee receiving a summons to serve on a jury must report this to their Headteacher who will grant them leave of absence unless exemption from jury service is secured. An employee serving as a juror will receive their normal pay for the duration of the jury service, therefore there is no requirement to complete the Certificate of Loss of Earnings from the court. If a casual worker or supply teacher receives a summons the school should contact their HR payroll provider for advice.

5.4 Witness Summons

An employee who is subpoenaed as a witness to appear before the court should report this immediately to the Headteacher, who will grant them leave of absence with pay for such time as is necessary to discharge the duty as witness.

5.5 Service in Non-Regular Forces

Employees must obtain the Governing Body's consent before joining the Non-Regular Forces

(e.g. Territorial Army, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve). The Governing Body will grant two weeks' additional paid leave to volunteer members of the Non-Regular Forces who are required by the Forces to attend summer camp.

- * [Such employees are required to show the Headteacher a copy of their Forces' payslip for the period of the summer camp, so that the Headteacher can arrange for a deduction to be made from the employee's Council salary of an amount equal to the pay received from the Forces for each normal working day of the absence (i.e. without making any deductions for days when the employee would not normally be working). The Headteacher should also arrange for this sum to be credited to the school's budget.]

Any such employees who are called-out by the Secretary of State for service with the armed forces will be granted leave of absence without pay for the duration of that service (unless the Governing Body applies for and gains exemption, deferral or discharge on the grounds that their absence would cause serious harm to the school in which they are employed.)

5.6 Community Fire Fighters

Paid leave will be granted for Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Community Fire Fighters to undergo the necessary training.

5.7 Special Constables

The Council supports special constables in their duties to increase public safety and confidence and staff will be released, with pay, for agreed training and in times of significant emergency.

5.8 Magistrates and Members of Public Bodies

Employees who are appointed as magistrates or who undertake duties connected with the work of district councils or other public bodies, including governing bodies, will be granted leave of absence with pay for the equivalent of up to 208 hours per year in the case of staff on Bucks Pay conditions of service, and 10 school days a year for other staff, unless special approval is given by the Governing Body in exceptional circumstances.

* This symbol denotes an area of discretion which the Governing Body may wish to consider exercising. If the Governing Body has determined a policy of making a deduction from the employee's Council salary, the bracketed text should be included.

In the case of employees who have been appointed to service on the Education Committee of the Council or any of its sub-committees, the question of leave of absence does not arise since the employees concerned are regarded as undertaking special duties at the Council's request.

5.9 Union Duties

See the Authority's Facilities Agreement.

5.10 Job Interviews

Leave with pay will be granted as necessary.

5.11 Revision/Study Leave

The Governing Body will approve up to a maximum of 5 days' revision/study leave with pay to employees undertaking work-related qualifications within an agreed timeframe. Leave will also be granted for completion of CPD courses, as agreed at the start of the appraisal cycle, and while the employee is still in post.

5.12 Examination Leave

Staff on Bucks Pay conditions of service will be granted a maximum of 5 days' leave with pay to sit approved examinations: this is normally half a day per examination subject. Other staff will be granted 1 day's leave with pay to sit each approved examination.

5.13 Paternity Leave

Partners of new mothers/adoptive parents are entitled to two weeks Paternity Leave, to support the mother and/or carer of the baby/child from the first day of their employment. This leave is paid if you meet the eligibility criteria. To qualify for pay, the employee needs to have been continuously employed by the school for 26 weeks leading into the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth, or into the week in which they are notified of being matched with a child for adoption. They are entitled to either two consecutive (full) weeks paternity leave, or a single period of either one- or two-weeks' paternity leave - employees cannot take odd days.

Leave must be taken within 52 weeks of the birth or placement (where the child is adopted); or if the child is born early, within the period from the actual date of birth up to 52 weeks after the expected week of childbirth.

An employee may cancel a period of paternity leave or change their mind about the date on

which they intend to start a period of paternity leave, so long as they inform their line manager of the cancellation or revised start date at least 28 days before the earlier of the original or revised date (or as soon as is reasonably practicable, if not in a position to do so within the prescribed period, e.g. if the child is born prematurely).

If the employee intends to take both paternity leave and shared parental leave, paternity leave can still be taken after the shared parental leave has ended.

To be able to request paternity leave the employee should submit the notice of intention form to their line manager/headteacher by the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth. The school should then submit the form to HR and retain a copy. If the employee is a new starter, they should submit the form as soon as possible.

To request paternity leave the employee should complete and submit to their line manager/head teacher the paternity leave notice form no later than 28 days before the date they wish the leave to start. If the request is for the leave to be taken in one week blocks two forms should be submitted. The form can be found on the schools' web, paternity leave page and should be submitted to HR by the school no later than 28 days before the paternity leave start date. If the employee is a new starter, the form should be submitted as soon as possible along with the notice of intention form.

Staff on Bucks Pay conditions of service are entitled to full pay for this period of leave. Employees on Teachers Terms and Conditions should seek guidance from their Headteacher to confirm the policy for Paternity Leave and Pay adopted by the school. As a minimum Teachers are entitled to Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP).

5.14 Bereaved Partner Paternity Leave

With effect from 6th April 2026, in the tragic event that the mother or primary adopter passes away before the child's 1st birthday, the child's father, or the mother's spouse or partner, may take up to 52 weeks of unpaid Bereaved Partner Paternity Leave. This leave must be taken within 52 weeks of the child's birth.

To be eligible, the employee must be the child's father or the mother's spouse or partner, must have main responsibility for the child's upbringing, and must be taking this leave for the purpose of caring for the child. Please refer to the Maternity and Adoption Guidance for further details.

5.15 Shared Parental Leave

Shared Parental Leave enables eligible parents to choose how to share the care of their child during the first year of birth or adoption. It is designed to give parents more flexibility in considering how to best care for, and bond with, their child. All eligible employees have a statutory right to take Shared Parental Leave. Statutory shared parental pay is available for eligible parents to share between them while on shared parental leave. Full details are available in the Maternity, Adoption and Parental Leave guide on Schoolsweb.

5.16 Appointments with Dentist, Doctor etc.

These appointments should be made outside normal working time except in emergencies or where consultants etc. are inflexible over timing.

5.17 Medical Screening

Paid time off will be given to employees for the purpose of breast and cervical cancer screening.

5.18 Parental Bereavement Leave

With effect from 6th April 2026, Parental Bereavement Leave is available to all employees from the first day of their employment who experience the loss of a child under 18 or a stillbirth from the 24th week of pregnancy. Employees may request up to 2 weeks' leave with pay, either as a single block of two weeks or two separate blocks of one week. Parental Bereavement Leave must be taken within 56 weeks of their child's death. Employees taking Parental Bereavement Leave may request additional leave if required as Compassionate Leave.

For further information, please refer to the Maternity and Adoption Guide.

ENTITLEMENT: WITHOUT PAY

6.1 Parental Leave

From 6th April 2026 employees are entitled to take unpaid parental leave from the first day of their employment. Up to eighteen weeks' can be used for the purposes of caring for their child up to the age of 18. Parental leave arises in respect of each child e.g. if the employee has two

children they would be entitled to a maximum of 36 weeks. This applies also to employees who acquire formal parental responsibility for a child aged under 18. This is in addition to other arrangements within these conditions of service for maternity leave, paternity leave, adoption leave, compassionate leave, carers' leave and sabbaticals. Leave must be taken in week blocks, subject to a maximum of four weeks' parental leave in any one leave year.

Parental leave will be unpaid and must be taken by the 18th birthday of the child.

6.2 Carers Leave

From day one of employment with the school an employee has a statutory right to unpaid carers leave. It does not apply to workers, contractors or any self-employed individuals. A carer is anyone with caring responsibilities who provides care, assistance and support to any other individual who may be seriously ill or unable to care for themselves. A carer may be the parent or guardian of a child or children, where they meet the definition of a dependant with a long-term care need.

In the context of statutory carer's leave, a dependent means:

- spouse, civil partner, child or parent;
- any person who lives in the same household as the employee (other than as a lodger, tenant, boarder or employee); or
- any other person who would reasonably rely on the employee to provide or arrange care.

A dependent has a long-term care need if they:

- have an illness or injury (whether physical or mental) that requires, or is likely to require, care for more than three months;
- have a condition that amounts to a disability under the Equality Act 2010; or
- require care for a reason connected to their old age.

The amount of carer's leave that can be taken is up to one week in any 12-month rolling period.

A week of carer's leave is the same duration as the employees normal working week, meaning that a full-time employee is entitled to five days' carer's leave in any 12-month rolling period. An employee contracted to work four days per week, will be entitled to four days of carer's leave in any 12-month rolling period, and so on.

The leave can be taken in one continuous block, as individual days, or as half days.

If the employee is caring for more than one dependant, there is no separate entitlement to carer's leave for each dependant.

To request to take carers leave the employee should discuss with your line manager/headteacher the time required giving as much notice as is reasonably possible, the statutory requirement is twice the number of days requested or three days in advance whichever is the greater. The council encourages managers/headteachers to support these requests in a positive and supportive manner. Following the discussion the carers' leave request should be submitted using the application for leave of absence request form. If the request cannot be agreed to due to business critical needs or similar it may be postponed to a mutually agreed time within one month of the original date/s requested.

Carers leave is unpaid. All other terms and conditions are unaffected and continue as normal.

Carers Emergency Leave

In addition to Carers Leave unpaid a maximum of two days paid leave in a 12-month rolling period (pro rata for part time employees) may be granted to a carer who has a caring

emergency which affects a dependant with a long-term care need as defined in the section above. This recognises the need for an employee to deal with unforeseen, unplanned circumstances such as the breakdown of a caring arrangement or an emergency medical appointment where their presence is critical.

This leave with pay to deal with the emergency is at the discretion of the Headteacher. Following discussion with their line manager/headteacher the employee should submit the leave request using the leave of absence application form on schools web.

Employees also have the option to request a flexible working arrangement in order to care for someone, please refer to the Right to apply for Flexible Working Guidance on schools web for information.

DISCRETIONARY

7.1 The Governing Body will normally apply a limit of 5 days' discretionary leave with pay per annum, although additional time (either with or without pay) may be granted in exceptional circumstances.

7.2 The Governing Body may grant leave (either with or without pay) for a period of time in excess of the limits quoted in paragraph 5 above, and for any other good reason. These could include any of the circumstances listed below:

DISCRETIONARY: WITH PAY

7.3 Compassionate Leave

Each request will be judged on its individual merits but the following circumstances may be used as guidelines:

- Absence necessary as a result of the death or serious illness/injury of a close member of the family, close friend or partner.
- Breakdown of normal childcare arrangements.
- Maternity support leave. This recognises the need for employees to have leave associated with their spouse's/partner's maternity at short notice to deal with unforeseen circumstances.
- A domestic emergency affecting the home, where an employee's presence is critical to deal with unforeseen circumstances.
- Other occasions when care of dependants is necessary.

7.4 Election Dues

Time off with pay will be granted to staff appointed as Presiding Officers/Poll Clerks/Counting Assistants at District, County, European or General Elections subject to adequate cover being maintained.

DISCRETIONARY: WITHOUT PAY

7.5 Parliamentary Candidates

Leave will be granted, but without pay, from the date when the candidate's nomination is accepted until the date of the election.

7.6 Religious Festivals

Leave will be granted, but without pay. A limit of 5 days' unpaid leave is normally applied although additional time may be granted in exceptional circumstances.

7.7 Secondment for Other Paid Employment

Leave may be granted without pay for an agreed period of time.

DISCRETIONARY: WITH OR WITHOUT PAY

7.8 Participation in National Sporting, Cultural and Similar Events

Leave will be granted (either with or without pay) for the necessary period of absence.

7.9 Moving House

For employees whose contractual arrangements do not allow them to take annual leave during term-time and where the move cannot be affected in a school closure period, 1 day's leave will be granted (either with or without pay).

7.10 IVF

For employees who wish to have time off work in order to receive fertility treatment, in the initial stages appointments will be treated in the same way as other appointments with a doctor or dentist, etc.

For full days, or blocks of days, off work in order to receive treatment, time off will be granted using a combination of sick leave, compassionate leave, annual leave, flexible working or unpaid leave at the discretion of the manager. Managers are expected to take a supportive view of the situation.

APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Requests for leave of absence (either with or without pay) should be made on the "Application for Leave of Absence" form, there are specific forms for requests for Paternity and maternity/adoption and neonatal care and Paternity Bereavement leave.

