



"Bringing out the Best in Everyone"

**Buckinghamshire Council /
Pebble Brook School
Leave of Absence Policy for School Staff**

Signed _____ dated _____

Chair of Governors

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| Date Approved /Ratified | Spring 2024 |
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1. Introduction

Employees have certain entitlements to leave of absence, in particular circumstances, under their conditions of service. This document outlines the policy for the Governing Board to grant leave of absence for employees.

2. Scope

The policy set out in this document applies to all schools based staff under Teachers Pay and Pension Conditions and those staff under the terms of Bucks Pay Employment Conditions.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Board 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.

The Headteacher is responsible for implementing this policy within their school. The authority to take decisions under this procedure rests with the Headteacher or Chair of Governors in the case of applications for leave of absence from the Headteacher.

4. Principles

The policy and procedure contained within this document is founded on the following principles:

- 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.
- Where an employee wishes to make representations against a decision made by the Headteacher or Chair or Governors, as applicable, he / she may write to the Governing Board or its appropriately designated committee giving full details of the request. The decision of the Governing Board or its Committee is final.
- Unauthorised absence will be dealt with under the school's Conduct and Discipline Policy and Procedure.

- 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.

5. Entitlement

The Governing Board will grant leave of absence in accordance with national or local conditions of service in the following circumstances.

5.1 Entitlement with Pay

5.1.1 Examiners and Moderators for Examining Bodies

Chief Examiners and Chief Moderators will be given up to 10 school day's leave with pay in any 1 financial year. Examiners and Assistant Moderators will be given up to 5 school day's leave with pay in any 1 financial year.

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

5.1.2 Jury Service and Other Public Service

An employee receiving a summons to serve on a jury must report this to his / her Headteacher who will grant him / her leave of absence, unless exemption from jury service is secured. Headteachers should report the dates of jury service to the Senior Advisory Officer so that the necessary financial adjustments can be made. An employee serving as a juror is required to claim the allowance for loss of earnings to which he / she is entitled under the Juror Allowance Regulations currently in force. The Authority will deduct from the employee's full pay an amount equal to the allowance received for loss of earnings, and this sum will then be credited to the school's budget.

5.1.3 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 him / her leave of absence with pay for such time as is necessary to discharge the duty as witness.

5.1.4 Service in Non-Regular Forces

Employees must obtain the Governing Board's consent before joining the Non-Regular Forces, e.g. Territorial Army and Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. The Governing Board will grant 2 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 Force's payslip for the period of the summer camp so that the Headteacher can arrange for a deduction to be made from the employee's Buckinghamshire 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). ***This is an area of discretion which the Governing Board may wish to consider exercising. If the Governing Board has determined a policy of making a deduction from the employee's Council salary the bracketed text should be included.***

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 Board 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.

5.1.5 Community Firefighters

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

5.1.6 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.

5.1.7 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 Board in exceptional circumstances.

In the case of employees who have been appointed to service on the Education Committee of Buckinghamshire 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.

5.1.8 Union Duties

See the Authority's Facilities Agreement.

5.1.9 Job Interviews

Leave with pay will be granted as necessary.

5.1.10 Revision / Study Leave

The Governing Board 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 teacher is still in post.

5.1.11 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.

5.1.12 Paternity Leave

Partners or legal / special guardians of new mothers / adoptive parents are entitled to 2 weeks paternity leave to support the mother and / or carer of the baby / child. This leave is paid. To qualify 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 1 or 2 consecutive (full) weeks' paternity leave but cannot take odd days.

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

5.1.13 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.

5.1.14 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.

5.1.15 Medical Screening

Paid time off will be given to employees who participate in the Council's health screening programme and for the purpose of breast and cervical cancer screening.

5.1.16 Parental Bereavement Leave

Parental bereavement leave is available to all employees 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 2 weeks or 2 separate blocks of 1 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.

5.2 Entitlement without Pay

5.2.1 Parental Leave

Employee's with 1 year's continuous service will be entitled to take up to 18 weeks' parental leave 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 2 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.

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

6. Discretionary

The Governing Board 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.

The Governing Board 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:

6.1 Discretionary with Pay

6.1.1 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.
- Other occasions when care of dependants is necessary.

6.1.2 Election Dues

Time off with pay will be granted to staff appointed as Presiding Officers, Poll Clerks, or Counting Assistants at district, county, European or general elections, subject to adequate cover being maintained.

6.2 Discretionary Without Pay

6.2.1 Carers' Leave

A carer is someone who, without payment, looks after or provides regular help to family members, neighbours or friends who are sick or disabled, vulnerable or frail. A carer may be the parent or guardian of a child or children. The support given by a carer may be with personal tasks such as dressing or practical tasks such as shopping and cooking, it may be emotional or supervisory. A carer may not necessarily live with the person they care for.

Employees with 26 weeks' continuous service may request up to 13 weeks' unpaid Carers' Leave, to be agreed by the Headteacher, at their discretion, and recorded as Carers' Leave. For more information refer to the Carers' Policy.

6.2.2 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.

6.2.3 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.

6.2.4 Secondment for Other Paid Employment

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

6.3 Discretionary With or Without Pay

6.3.1 Participation in National Sporting, Cultural and Similar Events

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

6.3.2 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. 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 in Appendix 1.

Application for Leave of Absence

| | |
|--|--|
| SECTION 1 to be completed by the Applicant | |
| Name | |
| Post Held | |
| I hereby request leave of absence on the following dates: | |
| <p>For the following reason:</p> (if there is insufficient room, continue overleaf) | |
| Signed | |
| Date | |
| When this section has been completed the form should be given to the Headteacher, or to the Chair of Governors where the Applicant is the Headteacher | |
| | |
| SECTION 2 to be completed by the Headteacher / Chair of Governors | |
| Tick 1 option | |
| The Governing Board agrees this application for leave of absence with pay | |
| The Governing Board agrees this application for leave of absence without pay | |
| The Governing Board does not agree this application for the following reason: | |
| Signed | |
| Date | |
| A copy of the completed form should be returned to the Applicant | |