



Leave of Absence Policy (Discretionary)

Version: 3

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Document Control

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Version History

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Version	Date	Amendments	Author	Status
0.1 to 0.4	Oct 2021 to Oct 2022	Initial Draft – Reviewed by the HR Team & the Trust Board. Consultation Process – Draft shared with the working group consisting of Senior Leaders, HR, and the Trade Unions.	Lisa-Marie McGrath	Consulted & reviewed, and implemented agreed points
1.0	01/12/2022	Final Draft – Approved by the CEO and The Trust Board	Lisa-Marie McGrath	Approved
2.0	01/02/2024	N/A	Lisa-Marie Flynn	Approved
3.0	01/02/2025	N/A	Lisa-Marie Flynn	Approved

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1. ABOUT THIS POLICY

- 1.1 The Trust recognises that there are times in the school working day and calendar when employees need time off to fulfil personal and/or professional commitments. The Trust is committed to promoting flexibility in the context of providing a high-quality teaching and learning environment for pupils and developing working practices and policies that support work-life balance for employees. The Trust recognises that working flexibly can raise staff morale, reduce absenteeism and improve productivity and retention of experienced and skilled employees.
- 1.2 This policy applies to all employees. However, it does not apply to agency workers, consultants, or self-employed contractors.

2. PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS POLICY

- 2.1 Our board of directors (the board) has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy but has delegated day-to-day responsibility for overseeing its implementation to the HR Manager.
- 2.2 Line Managers/SLT have a specific responsibility to ensure this policy's fair application and all staff members are responsible for supporting colleagues and ensuring its success.

3. TIME OFF FOR SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

- 3.1 The Trust recognises that from time to time, employees may wish to attend a significant event during term time, such as a graduation ceremony for a son or daughter or the wedding of a close family member. The Headteacher may grant one day of paid leave to attend a significant event in a school year. Employees must seek the express permission of the Headteacher for paid leave in advance of the event. The operational needs of the school will be considered before granting leave, and there may be times when the Headteacher will need to refuse such a request

4. TIME OFF FOR DENTAL AND MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

- 4.1 All school employees, where possible, are expected to make appointments outside of school time. However, in exceptional emergency circumstances, reasonable paid time off may be allowed at the discretion of the Headteacher.

5. TIME OFF FOR FERTILITY TREATMENT

- 5.1 Employees have no statutory right to paid time off for fertility treatment appointments. However, the Headteacher will deal with sensitivity and reasonably with requests for paid time off. Up to five days per annum will be granted for females undergoing treatment and one day for partners to attend an

appointment. Medical appointments related to the above will be treated the same as other medical appointments.

6. TIME OFF FOR RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

- 6.1 A maximum of three days of paid leave will normally be granted to observe the days of obligation for the main religious festivals, e.g. Eid, Diwali and Passover, where these fall in term times.
- 6.2 Employees must submit their requests in writing and give as much notice as possible. The Headteacher will be sympathetic and give serious consideration to requests. However, where reasonable notice is not given or if the request makes the service delivery impossible, the Headteacher has the right to refuse the time off.
- 6.3 Extended leave of absence for religious observance may be requested; for example, individuals may request a period of time off for Haji. Individuals should submit their request in writing with plenty of advance notice with the reason, duration and return to work date to the Headteacher, who will seriously consider their request. Such extended leave will be without pay.

7. MOVING HOUSE

- 7.1 Where possible, arrangements should be made for the move to occur outside normal school days. Where this is not possible, an employee may be granted one day of paid leave. The Headteacher's agreement must be sought beforehand.

8. INTERVIEWS

- 8.1 An employee may take up to one day's paid leave for an interview, subject to a reasonable total within any one term. The Headteacher's agreement must be sought beforehand.

9. SUSPECTED ABUSE OF LEAVE OF ABSENCE PROVISIONS

- 9.1 Employees are expected only to request and take leave specifically for the purpose stated.
- 9.2 Where it is suspected that a fraudulent request had been made or leave not used for the stated purpose, the Trust may, after appropriate investigation, address the matter through the disciplinary procedure.

10. RECORD KEEPING

- 10.1 Notes may be taken of all discussions and formal/informal meetings with Employees
- 10.2 relating to a request to take special leave. A copy will be made available to the Employee where notes are taken.

- 10.3 The Employee may be asked to complete a leave request form when applying for leave under the provisions of this document. Records will be kept of leave taken for monitoring purposes.

11. MONITORING OF SPECIAL LEAVE

- 11.1 To manage special leave effectively, the Trust will record, monitor and review requests and leave granted on an individual and whole Trust basis.