




LIGHTHOUSE

SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

Ordinary Parental Leave Policy (Unpaid) Non-Statutory

This Policy applies to all schools and employees within the Lighthouse Trust Partnership.

Policy approved by Trust Executive Team	
Signed: 	Date: 24 June 2024
Name: Gary Lewis	Role: Chief Executive

Document History

Version	Author/Owner	Drafted	Comments
1.0	Amy Sutton	07.08.2018	Separated from Maternity, Paternity, Adoption, Parental & Shared Parental Leave Policy.
1.1	Amy Sutton	01.01.2020	Updated as a policy on its own.
1.2	Jackie Miles	02.08.2023	Triennial policy review. Contents page added, Pension section updated and changed "Business" to school/Trust throughout the policy where appropriate.

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ORDINARY PARENTAL LEAVE POLICY

NON-STATUTORY

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Ordinary Parental Leave (Unpaid)

1 Introduction

1.1 Unpaid Parental Leave is available for staff to look after a child or make arrangements for a child's welfare. The Trust Policy on Parental Leave complies with the Maternity and Parental Leave (Amendment) Regulations 2001, which came into force on 10 January 2002 and operates in addition to existing maternity, paternity and adoption leave schemes. This policy also reflects the provisions of The Civil Partnership Bill, which came into force on 5th December 2005, as well as the changes that came into force on 6 April 2015.

1.2 This section of the policy reflects the statutory right of employees with at least one year of continuous service to take up to 18 weeks' unpaid parental leave in respect of each child and adopted child, up to their 18th birthday.

1.3 The limit on how much parental leave each parent can take in a year is 4 weeks for each child (unless the employer agrees otherwise).

1.4 You must take parental leave as whole weeks (e.g. 1 week or 2 weeks) rather than individual days, unless the Trust/School agrees otherwise or if your child has a disability. You don't have to take all the leave at once.

1.5 A 'week' equals the length of time an employee normally works over 7 days.

2 Entitlement to Parental leave

2.1 You only qualify if all of these apply:

- You have been continuously employed by the Trust for more than a year by the time you come to take the leave
- You are named on the child's birth or adoption certificate or have or expect to have parental responsibility
- You are not self-employed or a 'worker', e.g., an agency worker or contractor
- You are not a foster parent (unless you have secured parental responsibility through the courts)
- the child is under the age of 18

2.2 You may be asked for proof (e.g. a birth certificate/ adoption certificate) as long as it's reasonable to do so, e.g. proof may be requested once for each child, but not each time the employee requests leave thereafter.

2.3 The Trust reserves the right to extend parental leave to individuals and/or groups who aren't eligible at their discretion and on a case-by-case basis. Employees can check this in their staff handbook.

3 Notification Requirements

3.1 You are required to give 21 days' notice before the intended start date. If you or your partner are having a baby or adopting, it's 21 days before the week the baby or child is expected.

3.2 You must confirm the start and end dates in the notice. It is recommended to provide this notice in writing by completing the notification form (Appendix 1). The notice requirements are as follows:

- If you wish to take parental leave commencing immediately on the birth of a child, you must give notice of this intention at least 21 days before the start of the expected week of childbirth (**EWC**). The notice must specify the EWC and the duration of the period of leave required.
- If you wish to take parental leave commencing immediately on the adoption of a child, you should give notice of this intention at least 21 days before the start of the expected week of placement (**EWP**). If this is not possible, you must give as much notice as you can.
- The notice must specify the EWP and the duration of the period of leave required.

3.3 In all other circumstances, you must give notice of your intention to take parental leave at least 21 days before you intend the leave to start. The notice must specify the dates on which the period of leave is to begin and end.

3.4 If you wish to take a period of parental leave immediately after a period of ordinary paternity leave, please inform your Headteacher/Line Manager (for the Central Team) of that intention with at least 21 days notice before the start of the EWC (or EWP, if applicable). If this is not possible, you should give as much notice as you can. If you do not give notice at least seven days before your period of ordinary paternity leave starts, we might not allow you to take the period of parental leave requested. However, the Trust/School will consider each case on its merits.

4 Evidential requirements

4.1 Before you take a period of parental leave under this policy, you must provide the Trust/School with evidence of:

- Your responsibility or expected responsibility for the child;
- The child's date of birth or date of adoption placement;

4.2 For details of what evidence is required in your particular circumstances, or if you have difficulties obtaining the evidence, please contact the Headteacher, central HR team or school office.

5 The Trust's right to postpone parental leave

5.1 Where you give notice in accordance with section 3 of your intention to take

parental leave on the birth or adoption of a child, we shall not postpone that leave.

5.2 We shall not postpone parental leave if the postponement would result in the leave being taken after the child's 18th birthday.

5.3 We might postpone a proposed period of parental leave for up to six months where the leave as planned would unduly disrupt the Trust/School We might do so, for example, where:

- You wish to take parental leave during a peak period;
- A number of employees wish to take parental leave at the same time;
- Your work is of importance to a time-critical project; or
- Cover for your work cannot be found before the date on which your parental leave is due to start.

5.4 If we decide to postpone your parental leave, we shall:

Consult you about the date to which the leave might be postponed; and no more than seven days after you gave notice of your intention to take the leave, give you written notice stating the reason for the postponement and the new beginning and end dates of the leave which we will allow you to take.

6 Terms and conditions during parental leave

6.1 Parental leave under this policy is unpaid. Your contractual provisions relating to pay and benefits are suspended during parental leave.

6.2 However, during parental leave you are entitled to benefit from any contractual terms you have in relation to being given notice, redundancy compensation and disciplinary and grievance procedures.

6.3 During parental leave you will remain bound by your obligation of good faith towards us, as well as any contractual terms relating to the giving of notice, the disclosure of confidential information, the acceptance of gifts and benefits, and your freedom to participate in another business (for example, by working for a third party).

7 Pensions - Teaching staff

7.1 Any unpaid parental leave period will not be pensionable/reckonable.

7.2 Employees who are members of the Teachers' Pensions have the option of paying contributions during any period of unpaid parental leave, and they can purchase additional pension on top of their normal contributions in multiples of £250 up to a maximum set by Teachers' Pensions.

7.3 Further details are available on the Teachers' Pensions website at <https://www.teacherspensions.co.uk/>

8 Pensions - Support staff

8.1 During any period of unpaid parental leave, pension will not accrue for employees who are members of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), unless the employee elects to pay Additional Pension Contributions (APC) by buying the 'lost' pension.

8.2 If an employee elects to buy the 'lost' pension by paying an APC within 30 days of returning to work, the cost of the APC is split between the employee and the Trust. The Trust must pay 2/3rds of the total cost with the remaining 1/3rd being paid by the employee. This is known as a Shared Cost Additional Pension Contributions (SCAPC). If the election is not made within the 30-day period, then the employee will pay the full cost.

8.3 If the employee wishes to buy the 'lost' pension it is recommended that they read the employee factsheet entitled "Buying extra or lost pension (APCs)" which is available on the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) website at www.lgpsmember.org.

8.4 LGPS Members can obtain a quote and print off an application form to buy lost pension via the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) website.

9 Returning to Work

9.1 You are normally entitled to return to work following parental leave to the same position you held before commencing leave. Your terms of employment will be the same as they would have been had you not been absent.

9.2 However, it might not be possible for us to allow you to return to the same job where your period of parental leave has been longer than four weeks, or has been combined with a period of additional maternity, paternity or adoption leave. In such circumstances, we will offer you a suitable and appropriate alternative position.

9.3 We will deal with any requests by employees to change their working patterns (such as working part-time) after parental leave on a case-by-case basis, in accordance with the Trust's Flexible Working Policy. We will try to accommodate your wishes unless there is a justifiable reason for refusal, bearing in mind the needs of the Trust/School. It is helpful if flexible working requests are made as early as possible.

10 Abuse of this policy

Where an employee takes a period of parental leave under this policy for purposes other than spending time with or otherwise caring for their child, this will be dealt with as a disciplinary issue under the Trust's Disciplinary Procedure.

Appendix 1

Ordinary Parental Leave Request Form

Details of employee
Employee name:
School:
Start date:
Details of employee's child
Name of child:
Date of Birth:
Age at time leave will be taken (<i>must be under 18</i>):
If child is not yet born, expected week of birth:
Is your child in receipt of Disability Living Allowance? Yes/No
Details of leave
Intended start date of leave:
Intended end date of leave:
Intended length of leave:
How much parental leave have you taken before in relation to this child?
I have attached all relevant documentation <i>e.g. copy of birth certificate/evidence of Disability Living Allowance (where appropriate)</i> Yes/No

Employee Declaration

I confirm that I am taking parental leave in order to care for my child. I understand, and agree, that:

- I must have at least one year's continuous service at the date that parental leave is to begin
- I must give 21 days' notice of my request to take parental leave
- Parental leave is taken in blocks of one week except where the child is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance, in which case it can be taken in blocks of one day
- Except in the case of a disabled child, where a day's parental leave is requested, a full week will be deducted from my entitlement
- The company may postpone a period of parental leave requested for up to 6 months except where the request falls during the expected week of birth/placement for adoption or immediately following the birth or adoption
- The Company may contact my former employer to ascertain the length of parental leave previously taken (if any)
- Parental leave is unpaid.

Employee signature:
Date:

For completion by manager

Date request received:	
Request accepted?	
Request postponed?	
Date employee informed (letter attached):	
If postponed, new start date of leave is:	
Amount of parental leave remaining in relation to this child <i>(up to 18 weeks unpaid parental leave in respect of each child, up to their 18th birthday):</i>	

To learn more about Ordinary Parental Leave please access the relevant LSP policy via iTrent ESS or visit, [Taking parental leave - Ordinary parental leave - Acas](#)