KALEIDOSCOPE
Multi Academy Trust

GUIDANCE ON UNPAID PARENTAL LEAVE

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GUIDANCE ON UNPAID PARENTAL LEAVE

Introduction

If you are eligible you can take unpaid parental leave to look after your child's welfare

Eligibility and Entitlement

If you:

- have or expect to have parental responsibility for one or more children under 18 years of age
- are named on the child's birth or adoption certificate
- are an employee (not self-employed or a 'worker', e.g. an agency worker or contractor) and
- have at least one year's continuous service

you are entitled to a total of 18 weeks' unpaid parental leave in respect of each child.

This right also applies to you if you have acquired formal responsibility for a child, e.g. if you are a guardian.

If you are a foster parent you are not eligible for unpaid parental leave unless you have secured 'parental responsibility' through the courts.

This leave may be taken at any time up to the child's eighteenth birthday.

Parental leave applies to each child not to your job. Therefore, for example, if you have used up 10 of your 18 weeks' leave with a previous employer, you have up to 8 weeks left to use with your new employer.

If you work part-time you will receive a pro-rata amount of unpaid parental leave.

Criteria

- You may not take parental leave in blocks of less than one week (unless your School agrees otherwise or the child is disabled, in which case parental leave can be taken in blocks of a single day or more).
- You may not take more than four weeks' parental leave per year per child unless your School agrees otherwise.
- When applying for parental leave you must provide a copy of the child's birth certificate or adoption papers when these are reasonably requested.
- You must give at least 21 days' notice to your line manager of an intention to take unpaid parental leave and should specify the dates you wish the period of leave to begin and end. Once your line manager has given authorisation, you should inform the School's Payroll provider.
- If you are a male employee you may take unpaid parental leave immediately after the birth of your child provided you give 21 days' notice of the expected week of the child's birth

- If you are adopting you may take unpaid parental leave immediately after an adoption provided you give 21 days' notice of the expected week of the adoption.
- Where you and your partner are both employed by the School, each of you will be entitled to unpaid parental leave in respect of each eligible child, however, parental leave is an individual right and you cannot transfer the leave to your partner (for example you cannot decide to take only ten weeks in order that your partner can take 26 weeks or vice versa).

Postponing Unpaid Parental Leave

The School may require you to postpone a requested period of unpaid parental leave for up to six months unless the leave is requested for the period immediately after a child is born or adopted or postponing the leave would mean that you would no longer qualify to take it (for example, if postponement involved delaying the leave until after the child's 18th birthday).

Postponement may be required where your School has a 'significant reason' (i.e. where your School determines that the School's service needs could not be met if you took the unpaid parental leave at the time you originally requested to do so).

Postponement will be confirmed to you in writing no later than seven days after the School has received your notice to take unpaid parental leave. This confirmation will state the reason for the postponement and set out suggested new dates for the parental leave. You will be entitled to take the amount of leave you originally requested.

Returning from Unpaid Parental Leave

If you return from unpaid parental leave of four weeks or less you will be reinstated in your previous job. If you return from continuous unpaid parental leave of more than four weeks you will be reinstated in your previous job wherever reasonably practicable. If it is not reasonably practicable for you to return to your previous job, you will be offered a similar job which has the same or better terms and conditions.

Pension Information

Support Staff

When you are on authorised unpaid leave, pension deductions are not made for the period of your leave. You can choose whether to 'cover' the period or not. If you choose to do so, you will pay an Additional Pension Contribution (APC) to cover the amount of pension 'lost' during your unpaid absence.

If you elect to pay an APC within 30 days of returning from unpaid leave, the contribution is shared between you as the employee (1/3) and the School (2/3). If you elect to pay an APC more than 30 days after returning from unpaid leave, then you will pay the whole contribution.

Teachers

Unpaid absences are not pensionable and buy-back is not possible under the Teachers' Pensions scheme.

All our policies and guidance can be found at http://ww.supportservicesforeducation.co.uk

Trustee Board Chair 3/5/2023