

Author	Sandra Peacock	Target group	All employees and consultants
Owner	CfBT Schools Trust	Consultation outcome	Agreed with all recognised trade unions
Consultation period	February to March 2019	Next review due	April 2021
Issued	April 2019		

This policy applies to the whole of CfBT Schools Trust (CST), including all schools.

Policy: Family Friendly & Leave of Absence Policy 5: Unpaid Parental Leave of Absence

Introduction and purpose

Parental leave enables employees to take time off work to look after their child’s welfare. It should not be confused with Shared Parental Leave which is provided for under Family Friendly Policy 4.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff employed by CST, including directly employed central team staff, the Education Executive team (EET) (this term includes the CEO and Education Directors), Headteachers, teachers, NQTs and school support staff.

For the purposes of this policy the term ‘Headteachers’ includes Headteachers and Principals. In this policy, the term ‘teacher’ refers to classroom teachers, middle and senior leaders.

Accessibility

A copy of this policy and a copy of all relevant documents will be made available for all staff. The policy is also available in hard-copy on request and can be made available in large print or other accessible formats if required.

Eligibility for Parental Leave

You will qualify for parental leave if you meet all of the criteria below:

- You have completed at least one years’ continuous service with the Trust.
- You are named on the child’s birth certificate or adoption certificate or you expect to have legal parental responsibility
- The child is aged under 18
- You are taking the time to look after your child’s welfare e.g. spend more time with the child, settle the child into new childcare arrangements.

Entitlement to Parental Leave

Parental leave is unpaid.

You are entitled to 18 weeks’ leave for each child and adopted child, up to their 18th birthday. Each parent may take a maximum of four weeks leave for each child in a calendar year.

Parental leave must be taken in whole weeks (e.g. one week or two weeks) and not in individual days, unless the child is disabled. A week is your normal working week. If your child is disabled and entitled to Disability Living Allowance, the leave may be taken in week blocks or single days. When a part time employee with a disabled child chooses to take their leave in single days, the leave entitlement will be proportionate to the hours they work.

The leave does not have to be taken all at once.

The leave can start once the child is born or placed for adoption, or as soon as you have completed one years' service, whichever is later.

Carrying over Parental Leave from a previous employer

Parental leave applies to each child, not to your job. We will ask for details of parental leave taken with a previous employer when we request employment references.

Notification of Parental Leave

You must give us at least 21 days' notice of the intended start date of your parental leave. If you wish the leave to take place when you or your partner are having a baby, you must give at least 21 days' notice before the week that the baby is due. If this is not possible, for example if the baby is born early, you must give us as much notice as possible.

The notification must be in writing using form FFUPL and include the start and end date.

As long as you meet the eligibility requirements and provide the required notice, we will not refuse the request.

Contract

All terms and conditions of employment will be maintained throughout parental leave, with the exception of pay. You have the right not to be dismissed or subjected to any detriment by reason of taking the leave.

Performance management

Subject to the timing and length of parental leave, it may be appropriate and beneficial to hold a performance management review prior to the start of your parental leave. Such review will be based on the evidence of performance to date in that performance review period. It may also be appropriate and beneficial for the reviewer to consider the previous performance management period.

Pay progression

You will not be denied pay progression as a result of absence due to parental leave. On your return to work from parental leave, you will be given any pay increase that you would have received, following your performance review appraisal, had you not been on parental leave.

Postponing Parental Leave

We may require you to delay your parental leave if we have a significant reason such as your absence causing serious disruption to our operation. If we postpone your parental leave, we will:

- Give a written explanation why we can't agree the leave, within 7 days of you making your request
- Suggest an alternative start date which will be within six months of your requested start date

- Not change the amount of leave being requested.

We cannot delay your parental leave if:

- You are taking the leave immediately after the birth or adoption of a child
- It would mean that you would no longer qualify for parental leave e.g. postponing until after the child's 18th birthday.

Pensions

Some pension schemes permit contributions by the member to cover periods of unpaid leave. You are advised to contact the scheme administrators for further details.