

LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY – QUICK GUIDE FOR MANAGERS

This document is intended to provide guidance to managers on interpretation of the policy, to aid consistency of treatment for all staff across the OWLS Academy Trust. The policy text for each category of leave is quoted in italics.

Where the policy indicates a maximum amount of paid Leave of Absence in any category (highlighted in red in this document), this will normally be granted on the basis of a 12 month period:

- **Support Staff** - rolling 12-month period
- **Teachers** - 1st April to 31st March (as specified in Terms and Conditions)

Emergency & Compassionate Leave

Employees are entitled by law to take reasonable unpaid time off work to deal with unexpected or sudden emergencies involving dependents, arising in circumstances such as death, sudden illness, injury or assault of a dependent, or the sudden disruption of dependents care arrangements.

Leave to deal with the immediate demands of the emergency will be granted. This will normally be 1, and no more than 2 days. Situations that qualify for additional leave will be considered as compassionate leave.

The Head Teacher may grant up to a further 3 days as compassionate leave (making a maximum of 5 days leave in total). Such additional leave will normally be confined to cases of bereavement or extreme dependent care situations that require the employee's personal attention.

A maximum of 5 day(s) emergency and compassionate leave may be paid leave. Leave granted in excess of 5 days will be unpaid.

| Reason | Authorised | Paid | Notes |
|--|------------|-------------------|---|
| Emergency care of a sick child | Yes | Yes – up to 1 day | It is expected that the employee will make other arrangements for the care of children who are ill at home after the first day. |
| Hospitalisation of a child for an operation or life-threatening illness | Yes | Yes – up to 1 day | (Up to 5 days if employee needs to remain in hospital with the child) |
| Planned hospital / other medical appointment for a child: | | | It is expected that such appointments will be arranged outside of working hours where practicable. |
| - flexibility to influence date/ time | No | N/A | |
| - unable to influence date/time (or insufficient flexibility to avoid working hours) | Yes | Yes. | Employees may be asked to evidence that the appointment could not reasonably be scheduled / re-scheduled outside of working hours |
| Planned hospital appointment for a relative other than a child | No | N/A | |

| Reason | Authorised | Paid | Notes |
|---|---------------------------------|---|--|
| Sudden illness, injury or assault of a dependent relative, including emergency admission to hospital | Yes | Yes – up to 1 day | |
| Bereavement (including funeral) – close relative (child, partner, spouse, parent, grandparent, parent-in-law) | Yes | Yes - up to 5 days, depending on circumstances ¹ | If further time is required, it will be deemed as sickness |
| Bereavement (including funeral) - other | Yes – normally for funeral only | No | |

In exceptional circumstances paid leave in addition to the amounts specified may be granted at the discretion of the Head Teacher.

Domestic Leave

*Employees should normally make arrangements for domestic matters outside normal working days. **Where this is not practicable paid leave of absence of up to 1 day may be granted for domestic reasons (urgent or otherwise).** Examples of leave under this provision may include moving house and special events to attend a close relative's wedding or civil partnership, or graduation.*

Other requests for leave of absence (for example for holidays) during term times will not normally be granted, but may be considered in exceptional circumstances. The leave request form must be submitted and agreement received before the employee makes arrangements to take the leave. Any leave granted will be unpaid.

| Reason | Authorised | Paid | Notes |
|---|------------|-------------|---|
| Urgent domestic emergency (e.g. water/gas leak, break-in, boiler break-down) | Yes | Yes | Employees must return to work as soon as reasonably practicable, but it is recognised that further time-off may be needed to enable access for relevant contractors (e.g. if a boiler engineer cannot attend until the afternoon). Where practicable employees will be expected to work from home if waiting for a contractor |
| Moving house | Yes | Yes – 1 day | Where possible employees should try to schedule house moves for school holiday periods or non-working days. |
| Special events (e.g. wedding of close relative, child's graduation ceremony, etc) | Yes | Yes | Normally for the day of the event only. |

¹ It should not be assumed that all employees will need 5 days for a bereavement – the specific circumstances will be taken into consideration on a case by case basis.

Training and Study Leave

Where an employee undertakes study which directly relates to their role in the Academy, furthers their professional development, and/or is funded by the Academy, paid leave may be granted for examination attendance.

Medical and Welfare Appointments

It is expected that medical appointments will be arranged outside of working hours where practicable. For example, visits to a doctor, dentist, optician, clinic and hospital. Where it is not possible to obtain appointments outside of working hours, paid leave of absence may be granted. Proof of the appointment will be required.

| Reason | Authorised | Paid | Notes |
|--|-----------------------|------|--|
| Welfare counselling (NHS) | Yes – if G.P referral | Yes | |
| Welfare counselling (Private) | No | N/A | If it is private, it is expected that the employee will arrange it in his/her own time |
| Welfare counselling – LCC Welfare Service | Yes | Yes | |
| Elective surgery / medical treatment | Discretionary | No | |
| GP / Hospital Appointments | Yes | Yes | |
| Dentist appointments – routine check-ups / non-emergency minor treatment | No | N/A | |
| Emergency dentist appointments / major treatments | Yes | Yes | |

Statutory Leave

This section identifies circumstances where there is a requirement to grant leave to an employee. Unless otherwise stated, whether the leave is paid or unpaid is at the discretion of the Governing Body.

| Reason | Authorised | Paid | Notes |
|---|------------|------|---|
| Redundancy – support for job seeking | Yes | Yes | Reasonable time off during notice period - see Org Change Policy for details. |
| Jury service / formal attendance at a court hearing or tribunal as a witness on behalf of the Crown, policy or defence, or for either side in a civil case. | Yes | Yes | Employees must claim the attendance allowance / loss of earnings paid by the Court – the amount received will be deducted from the employee's full pay. |

| Reason | Authorised | Paid | Notes |
|---|--|-------------------------|--|
| Public service duties | Discretionary – up to 10 days Refer to policy. | Discretionary | If paid leave is granted any financial loss allowance must be claimed – the amount received will be deducted from the employee’s full pay. |
| Magisterial duties (Justice of the Peace) | Yes – up to 13 days or 26 half days per year | No | Employees may claim the financial loss allowance directly. |
| Reserve forces | Subject to LCC guidance | Subject to LCC guidance | |
| Religious observance | Yes, unless exceptional circumstances make it impossible | No | Consideration will be given to requests to make up the working hours at another time, depending on the nature of the role. |

Other Leave

Other requests for leave should be referred to the Head Teacher in the first instance. Where applicable these will be considered with reference to the relevant conditions of service for teaching or support staff.