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Staff Leave of Absence Policy



1. Statement of intent

The Governors of Charlwood Village Infant School recognise the importance of consistency, openness and equality in responding to requests from staff for special leave of absence for family and personal reasons.

This policy recognises:

- the statutory entitlement to unpaid time off to attend to urgent matters related to dependants
- national and local agreements
- best practice which seeks to maintain good working relationships between staff and management
- the operational needs of the school

It is intended that this policy will provide a clear and workable framework to enable requests for leave of absence for staff working in schools to be reasonably and fairly handled. This policy recognises that the operational needs of the school are a priority and there may be times when the Headteacher has to refuse a request for leave.

It should be noted that there might be occasions when circumstances arise not identified in this policy. In such circumstances the decision regarding leave of absence remains within the discretion of the Headteacher or Chair of Governors.

2. Time off for dependants

The Employment Relations Act 1999 provides all employees with the right to take reasonable unpaid time off to deal with certain unexpected or sudden emergencies relating to dependants.

Staff taking time off under this right are requested to notify the Headteacher of their absence on the day they take time off and if possible to give notification in advance.

Circumstances when an employee may take time off are:

- If a dependant falls ill, or has been injured or assaulted
- When a dependant is having a baby
- To make longer term care arrangements for a dependant who is ill or injured

- To deal with a death of a dependant
- To deal with unexpected disruption or breakdown of care arrangements for a dependant
- To deal with an incident involving the employee's child during school hours

3. Compassionate leave

Paid compassionate leave is granted in the following circumstances:

- Sudden, serious illness of near relative, spouse, partner or child – up to 5 days paid leave.
- Death of a near relative, spouse, partner or child – up to 3 days paid leave
- Funeral of a near relative, spouse, partner or child – 1 day of paid leave
- Employees wishing to attend the funeral of other relatives, friends or colleagues may take unpaid leave.

NB

Exceptional circumstances will be referred to the Governing Body (Chair, Headteacher and a member of the Resources Committee, or Staff Governor) on an individual basis.

4. Sick children

It is recognised that it can be difficult for working parents to respond to the need to care for sick children.

Staff have a statutory right to unpaid time off to make arrangements for the care of a dependant child.

If it is impossible to make appropriate arrangements for the care of sick children, the staff in this school may, after discussion with the Headteacher take reasonable unpaid leave to care for sick children. This arrangement applies to all staff with dependant children.

5. Leave to attend significant events

The Governors recognise that from time to time staff may have the opportunity to attend a significant social event during term time. For example, the graduation ceremony for a son or daughter or the wedding of a close family member.

Teachers and term time only staff do not have a leave allowance, which can be taken during term time. This policy enables staff to take one day of unpaid leave in order to

attend a significant social event. Staff must seek the express permission of the Headteacher for unpaid 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 a request for leave.

Religious festivals

Staff who wish to attend significant religious festivals which fall during school term time may take unpaid leave to attend the festival. Requests for such unpaid leave must be made to the Headteacher in advance of the event.

6. Interviews

All staff may take reasonable paid leave to attend selection interviews for jobs. Requests to take leave to attend an interview must be made to the Headteacher in advance of the event.

7. Other leave

7.1 Examination duties

Teaching staff undertaking professional duties in connection with external examinations may take paid leave under the arrangements contained in Appendix 2 of the Conditions of Service for School Teachers in England and Wales.

7.2 Jury service

Employees may take leave to undertake jury service. They are required to claim the allowance for loss of earnings from the Court and an equivalent amount will be deducted from the employee's salary.

7.3 Moving house

Staff are encouraged if at all possible to make arrangements to move house during school closures. However, if this proves impossible, staff are granted one day of paid leave in order to move house. The Headteacher is permitted to ask for documentary evidence relating to why the move could not take place during school closures.

7.4 Medical and dental Appointments

Employees are encouraged to make appointments outside normal working hours wherever possible. However if necessary paid time off to attend appointments will be granted. Staff attending such appointments must seek the permission of their line

manager or Headteacher before attending. The Headteacher and Line Manager have the right to request to see appointment cards.

7.5 Time off to attend ante-natal appointments

The Maternity Regulations provide the right for all women to take paid time off to attend antenatal care. Women staff must produce evidence of appointments if requested to do so by their line manager or Headteacher.

7.6 Candidate in Parliamentary and local elections

Employees are granted time off in accordance with local conditions of service.

7.7 Trade union and professional association duties

Staff undertaking recognised Trade Union or Professional Association duties are provided paid time off as defined in the LEA facilities agreement.

7.8 National sporting fixtures

Staff are granted paid time off in accordance with local conditions of service.

7.9 To attend training camp as a member of the non regular forces

In the interests of the effective operation of the school staff are encouraged, as far as is possible, to attend training camps during school closures. The maximum entitlement to leave for such purposes is 10 days paid leave.

7.10 Holidays

No staff will be expected to take holidays during school term time. Only in **very exceptional** circumstances would leave of absence be granted and this would be unpaid at the discretion of the Headteacher and/or Resources Committee.

Policy/Staff leave of absence policy
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