

Schools Parental Bereavement Leave Policy

Guidance for Managers and Employees

Version FV2.0 – September 2023



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1.0 Introduction

At **[Insert name of School]** we recognise that, while dealing with any bereavement is difficult, the death of a child is among the most devastating events that an employee can ever face.

This policy sets out our commitment to supporting bereaved parents through their grief by ensuring they can take parental bereavement leave.

We have widened the scope of our policy beyond the statutory requirements. Therefore, this policy applies to employees who suffer the loss of a child, regardless of the age of the child, and includes parents who suffer a stillbirth after 24 weeks of pregnancy or those who experience miscarriage (i.e. the loss of a child before the 24th week of pregnancy). In addition, it will also apply to those who undergo a termination for medical reasons (i.e. as a result of foetal anomaly or increased risk to the expectant parent).

These rights are effective from 6 April 2020 onwards.

2.0 Who can take parental bereavement leave

Whatever your length of service, you can take this type of leave if you are the parent of the child who has passed away, or the partner of the child's parent. In general, you can take this type of leave if you have parental responsibility for the child. This includes adoptive parents.

If you have suffered a bereavement but are unsure if you are entitled to parental bereavement leave, please contact our HR Provider for clarification.

3.0 What leave can a bereaved parent take

You can take two weeks of parental bereavement leave. You can take the leave as:

- a single block of two weeks; or
- two separate blocks of one week at different times.

You cannot take the leave as individual days.

You can take the leave at the time(s) you choose within the 56 weeks after your bereavement. You might choose, for example, to take it at a particularly difficult time such as your child's birthday.

If you have lost more than one child, you have a separate entitlement to bereavement leave for each child who has passed away.

4.0 Notice to take parental bereavement leave

If you need to take parental bereavement leave within the first 8 weeks (56 days) after your bereavement, you can take the leave straight away. You do not have to provide any notice.

Please let your line manager know by your normal starting time on the first day on which you wish to take leave or, if that is not feasible, as soon as you can.

When you return you will need to retrospectively apply for the leave by completing the form at Appendix A and submitting it to your payroll provider.

To take leave more than 8 weeks (56 days) after your bereavement, please give your line manager at least one week's notice and apply as detailed above.

5.0 Changing your mind about taking parental bereavement leave

You can cancel your planned leave and take it at a different time (within the 56 weeks after your bereavement). Where your planned leave was due to begin during the first 8 weeks (56 days) after your bereavement, please let your line manager know you no longer wish to take it before your normal start time on the first day of the planned leave.

Where your leave was due to begin more than 8 weeks (56 days) after your bereavement, please let your line manager know at least one week in advance that you wish to cancel it.

You cannot cancel any week of parental bereavement leave that has already begun

6.0 Pay during parental bereavement leave

We recognise the need to provide bereaved parents with as much support as possible, and we will continue to pay normal pay during your leave.

7.0 Rights during parental bereavement leave

During your leave, all the terms and conditions of your contract will continue.

This means that benefits will remain in place. For example, (where applicable) holiday entitlement continues to accrue, and pension contributions will continue to be paid

8.0 Returning to work after parental bereavement leave

When you return to work after some time on parental bereavement leave, you have the right to return to the same job.

However, a slightly different rule applies if you return from time on bereavement leave that follows on immediately from some maternity, adoption, paternity leave or shared parental leave (taken in relation to the child who has passed away), and your total time on leave is more than 26 weeks.

In these circumstances, you have the right to return to the same job, unless this is not reasonably practical - in which case you have the right to return to a suitable and appropriate job on the same terms and conditions.

This rule also applies if your leave includes more than four weeks of ordinary parental leave (taken in relation to any child), regardless of the total length of the leave. We have separate arrangements outlining your right to unpaid ordinary parental leave which is detailed in the schools Leave of Absence Policy.

If you are taking parental bereavement leave, but are unsure where you stand on your return, please contact our HR Provider for clarification.

9.0 Additional support available

Employees wishing to avail themselves of professional help in coming to terms with a significant loss have access to [Guides, articles and videos on grief for teachers and education staff \(educationsupport.org.uk\)](https://www.educationsupport.org.uk). Employees should speak to their Headteacher to enquire if there is any additional support available.

The following organisation can also provide support. Please visit the website for further details:

<https://www.childbereavementuk.org/>

10.0 Data Protection

Any data collected and processed as part of employing and managing employees is held securely. It is accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of completing that specific procedure, process, or activity.

Records are retained and destroyed in accordance with the organisation's Retention Schedule.

Appendix 1

Parental Bereavement Leave – Notification Form

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Surname | |
| Forenames | |
| Payroll Number | |
| Job Title | |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|--|-----|--|-----|--|------|--|-----|--|
| Working Pattern | | | | | | | | | |
| Mon | | Tue | | Wed | | Thur | | Fri | |

Date of bereavement

| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

Complete this section if you are taking one week **only** or two consecutive weeks.

Leave Start Date

| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

Leave End Date

| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

Only complete this section if you are taking **two non-consecutive** weeks of leave

Leave Start Date

| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

Leave End Date

| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

Declaration

| | Tick one |
|---|----------|
| I am the biological (or foster) parent, or their partner | |
| I am the adoptive parent, or their partner | |
| I am a surrogate parent, or their partner | |
| I am a parent, or the partner of a parent, who has used a surrogate | |
| I am the natural parent, or their partner, of a child who has since been adopted by someone else, and there is a court order allowing me or my partner to have contact with the child | |
| I or my partner provided day to day care to the child, other than as a paid carer, for the 4 weeks before their death | |

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Approval

Head Teacher signature: _____ Date: _____

Head Teacher Name: _____

Version Control

| Version | Date | Updated by | Comments |
|---------|----------|--------------|--|
| FV1.0 | 01/09/22 | Declan Leith | Transferred on to new MKCC template to ensure accessibility requirements are met |
| FV 2.0 | 13/09/23 | MKCC HR | Cover image updated and amended to refer to School's HR Provider for advice. |
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