



Exeter College

Parental leave policy

1. Introduction

We understand that employees may find it difficult to fulfil their domestic, family and working commitments outside work. We recognise the anxiety that this may cause, and the following document sets out our policy on parental leave. This policy is not contractual but sets out the way in which we plan to manage this. If you have any questions about this policy or about any other aspects of parental leave you should contact the HR Officer.

2. Scope of this policy

This policy applies to all employees, including those on fixed-term contracts.

3. Aims of this policy

This policy aims to explain the statutory rights to parental leave and the process that should be followed by employees who wish to take such leave.

4. Legal considerations

The following pieces of legislation apply to this policy:

- the Employment Rights Act 1996
- the Maternity and Parental Leave etc. Regulations 1999
- the Parental Leave (EU Directive) Regulations 2013
- the Maternity and Parental Leave, etc, (Amendment) Regulations 2014

5. Definitions

Parental leave is time off work to look after a child or to make arrangements for the good of the child.

6. Eligibility to take parental leave

Employees have the right to parental leave if they have one year's continuous employment AND are:

- the parent of a child who is under 18 years old and are either named as a parent of the child on the birth certificate or have formal parental responsibility for the child although separated in marriage and/or not living with the child; OR
- have adopted a child who is under the age of 18; OR
- have acquired formal parental responsibility for a child who is under 18 years old.

Both parents may take parental leave, including those in same-sex relationships.

This policy is non-contractual – it does not form part of your terms and conditions of employment.

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Note that foster parents are not entitled to parental leave.

7. Taking parental leave

If the above criteria are satisfied, then employees will be able to claim a maximum of 18 weeks' parental leave for each eligible child (no more than 4 weeks per child in any calendar year), to be taken at any time before the respective child's 18th birthday.

Note: a year is calculated as a twelve-month period commencing at the anniversary of starting employment with us (if the employee already has a child under the age of 18) or commencing with the child's date of birth/ adoption if the employee already has twelve months' service.

Part-time employees are entitled to parental leave on a pro-rata basis.

Parental leave is unpaid.

Parental leave should be taken in blocks of one week. If taken in blocks of less than a week, a full week will be deducted from the employee's entitlement (unless the child is disabled, in which case leave may be taken in multiples of a day).

8. Giving notice to take parental leave

Planned parental leave:

Employees must give at least 21 days' notice before a period of parental leave begins, of both the start and end dates of the leave period the employee wishes to take.

Parental leave may be postponed by the College for up to six months due to the requirements of the business (except for prospective parents and adoptive parents for time off requested immediately after the time the child is born or is placed with the family for adoption.) The reason for any such postponement will be explained, but if an employee feels that a request for leave has been unreasonably refused or postponed, he she may raise a grievance using our grievance procedure.

Employees should provide their Head of Department or line manager with a copy of the child's birth certificate or adoption certificate (only required for the first period of parental leave for each child).

Unplanned parental leave:

Employees who wish to take parental leave immediately after a baby is born or a child is placed with them for adoption, should give at least 21 days' written notice before the beginning of the week in which the birth or adoption is expected.

Once the timing of the leave is agreed, a copy of the child's birth certificate or adoption certificate should be provided to the employee's Head of Department or line manager (only required for the first period of parental leave for each child and in the case of new born babies to be provided as soon as possible).

9. Terms and conditions of employment

During any parental leave employees will remain bound by their duty of good faith to Exeter College and their duty not to disclose confidential information.

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They remain employed during parental leave, and their normal terms and conditions of employment apply (with the exception of remuneration). Continuity of service is unbroken, and employees also continue to accrue statutory holiday entitlement as normal.

Parental leave is unpaid.

10. Returning to work

Upon returning from parental leave of four weeks or less employees are entitled to return to their same job, on the same terms and conditions.

If the employee takes more than four weeks parental leave - for example, where leave spans across an anniversary of employment (or the birth of the child) and the employee decides to take both years' entitlements, or leave is taken for more than one child, or if the parental leave (of whatever duration) follows on immediately after a period of additional maternity or adoption leave - the employee is entitled to return to the same job unless this is not reasonably practicable, in which case he/she must return to a job which is suitable and appropriate. The right to return is on terms and conditions not less favourable.

11. Monitoring and review of this policy

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis, and additionally whenever there are relevant changes in statutory requirements.

Any queries or comments about this policy should be addressed to the HR Officer.

12. Related policies

We also have the following related policies:

- Maternity, adoption, paternity, and shared parental leave
- Flexible working
- Time off to care for dependents

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