

BISHOP WORDSWORTH'S SCHOOL

STAFF LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Definition: 'Is to', 'are to' and 'must' are obligatory. 'Should' is not obligatory but is good practice and is to be adhered to unless non-compliance can be justified.

STATUTORY LEAVE

1. There is a statutory entitlement for a minimum of 28 days annual leave including public holidays. Part time staff have a statutory entitlement to an amount pro rata to the proportion they work compared to a full time equivalent. Staff contracts of employment are to specify the annual leave entitlement.

2. There are also statutory entitlements under the Maternity and Parental Leave etc Regulations 1999, the Paternity & Adoption Leave Regulations 2002 and the Flexible Working (Eligibility, Complaints & Remedies) Regulations 2002 for the following:

- Maternity Leave
- Paternity Leave (also called Maternity Support Leave)
- Parental Leave
- Adoption Leave.

3. All except Parental Leave attract statutory pay for some or all of the period of entitlement.

4. The eligibility, entitlements and conditions attached are complex and therefore not reproduced in this Policy. Advice may best initially be obtained from an internet search for each entitlement, where detailed Government guidance can be found, and thereafter from Bishop Wordsworth's School's (the School's) Head of HR.

5. Applicants should be aware that in all cases applications for leave must be made in advance; for example, for Maternity Leave an application must be made 15 weeks before the birth is due.

6. All applications and leave taken are to be recorded by the School's Head of HR to determine any future entitlements.

7. New employees should inform the Bursar and Head of any statutory leave entitlements remaining and the details of leave already taken in a previous employment. Attempts to claim more than the maximum entitlement are to be dealt with under the School's Disciplinary Procedure.

8. When employees leave the School's employment they are to advise their new employer of any outstanding statutory leave entitlement. The School is also to pass on this information to a new employer.

TAKING LEAVE TO DEAL WITH FAMILY EMERGENCIES

9. Governors wish employees to be given reasonable time off, paid and/or unpaid to deal with "family emergencies".

10. **Definition of a "Family Emergency"**. A "family emergency" is a sudden or unexpected problem that requires the employee to make longer-term arrangements for dependants:

- a. If a dependant falls ill or has been involved in an accident or has been assaulted, including where they are hurt or distressed rather than physically injured.
- b. To make care arrangements for a dependant who is ill or injured.
- c. To deal with the death of a dependant; for example, to make funeral arrangements or attend a funeral.
- d. To deal with an unexpected disruption or breakdown in care arrangements for a dependant; for example, when the childminder fails to turn up.
- e. To deal with an incident involving the employee's child during school hours; for example, if the child has been hurt, or is being excluded from school.

11. **Definition of a Dependant.** A dependant is the partner, child or parent of the employee, or someone who lives with the employee as part of their family. It does not include tenants or boarders living in the family home, or someone who lives in the household as an employee. In cases of illness, injury or where care arrangements break down a dependant may also be someone who relies on the employee for assistance. This may be where the employee is the primary carer, or the only person who can help in an emergency.

12. **Notice.** A specified notice period is not appropriate for leave for emergencies but staff members are required to request authority from the Head (and notify their team leader) as soon as possible giving the reason for the request and an initial estimate of the length of absence requested.

13. **Authority.** The Head (or the Chair of the Pay and Staffing Committee where the applicant is the Head) is authorised to grant in any twelve-month period the following leave to deal with a family emergency:

- a. Up to five days paid leave.
- b. Up to twenty days unpaid leave.

14. **Further Leave.** Any further periods of unpaid or paid leave for a member of staff in the same academic year are to be jointly considered by the Head and either the Chair or the Vice Chair of the Pay & Staffing Committee.

15. **Reporting.** All grants of paid or unpaid leave are to be reported at the next Pay and Staffing Committee Meeting.

REASONABLE TIME OFF FOR OTHER REASONS

16. The Head may authorise paid or unpaid time off for any reason but normally only for a part day or a day each time. The staff member would be expected to 'make up the time' if the time off was paid and there is uncompleted work.

17. The decision as to what constitutes 'Reasonable time off' will depend on individual circumstances. These may include:

- a. Cost and degree of operational inconvenience to the School.
- b. Frequency/number of previous requests by the same staff member.

LEAVE FOR FAMILIARISATION WITH A NEW POST

18. Leave for familiarisation with a new post may be granted at the Head's discretion. Permission must be requested in writing at least 4 weeks in advance and leave days may be (but are not necessarily) invoiced at standard supply rate to the receiving school. If they are to be invoiced (which is the Head's decision) the staff member requesting the leave is to obtain written confirmation from the new employer that the invoice will be paid.

LEAVE FOR EXTERNAL INTERVIEWS

19. Paid leave of up to three days each year may be granted by the Head for a staff member to attend an interview for external employment. Such leave may only be refused for extraordinary operational reasons eg if the department where the applicant works is very short of staff due to sickness or any other reason.

TIME OFF FOR SCHOOL GOVERNANCE DUTIES

20. Staff who serve as governors at another school may be granted reasonable time off to fulfil their governance responsibilities. Where a staff member is required to leave slightly earlier than the end of the school day in order to attend a governor meeting, this may be permitted with prior authorisation from the Head. Up to three days of paid leave per academic year may be granted for governance duties, subject to approval in advance. Whole days will only be granted in special circumstances, and staff must seek confirmation beforehand. Further requests for time off will take into account the time required for governance duties, the amount of leave already taken, and the operational impact on the school.

SUPPORT STAFF WORK IN HOLIDAY PERIODS

21. Contracts which stipulate the requirement to work during the school holidays (i.e. those exceeding 39 weeks) are agreed for specific reasons; accordingly, line managers are to direct when and for what purpose staff are to work.

22. Any overtime worked during term time is to be recorded and a compensatory payment or time off in lieu agreed in accordance with the Pay Policy. Staff who work more than 39 contracted weeks are not to take time off in lieu during the holidays without their line manager's agreement.

23. Support Staff on 52-week contracts are to fill in the Holiday Planner on the G Drive (G:\School Admin\Support Staff (52 week) Holiday Planner).

24. Support staff working or visiting during School holidays are to sign in and out on arrival and departure. During school holidays a register will be available for this purpose.

CHANGES IN LEGISLATION

25. If, during the currency of this Policy, any statute or statutory instrument is enacted that adds to, modifies or is in conflict with any provisions of the Policy, then the Policy will be deemed to include any such statutory provision to the extent necessary to make the Policy compliant with that provision.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

26. This Policy is to be monitored by the Leadership Team and reviewed biennially by the Governors' Pay & Staffing Committee. It was first adopted by the Governors' Staffing Committee on 24th May 2000. The most recent 3 years' review history is below:

25 th April 2022	Minor updates
6 th June 2023	Minor updates and to be reviewed biennially
17 th June 2025	Minor updates

See also: Policy statement on Staff Sabbaticals and Exchanges.