

Policy Title:	Career Break Policy	
Date of Issue:	Autumn Term 2020	
Date of Review:	Autumn Term 2022	
Author & Role	County Model Procedure Adopted	
Ratified by:	Governors Policy Committee	
Date:	19.11.2020	
Policy Committee:	Chair W Blundell	Vice Chair H McCann
Outcome:	This Procedure: The scheme is designed to enable school employees to take periods away from regular employment whilst retaining and updating their professional skills.	
Cross Reference:		

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT

Astley Park School is committed to the fair treatment of all in line with the Equality Act 2010. An equality impact assessment has been completed on this policy to ensure that it can be implemented consistently regardless of any protected characteristics and all will be treated with dignity and respect.

POLICY REVIEW

To ensure that this policy is relevant and up to date, comments and suggestions for additions or amendments are sought from users of this document. To contribute towards the process of review, please contact the author of the policy.

Astley Park School

LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CAREER BREAK SCHEME (REVISED DECEMBER 2019)

1. Introduction

The scheme is designed to enable school employees to take periods away from regular employment whilst retaining and updating their professional skills.

2. Eligibility

This Scheme applies to teachers and support staff employed in permanent posts who have a minimum of two years' continuous service in schools, units and services maintained by Lancashire County Council. The reason for applying for a career break must be related to childbirth, domestic or family responsibilities, work/lifestyle, education/academic reasons, ill health or disability.

An employee can request a career break and the Headteacher will decide whether or not the request can be agreed. The outcome will depend on the Headteacher's view of the mutuality of benefit both to the applicant and the service

3. Employee commitments

The scheme requires the employee to enter into an agreement with the school as follows:

- (a) participants undertake to be available for return to regular employment (on a full or part-time basis) no later than five years from the date of resignation.
- (b) during the period of the break, participants agree to undertake:
 - (i) appropriate INSET/Training
 - (ii) a minimum of 10 days of teaching per annum for teachers, which could include supply teaching or, for support staff, work in the school as applicable. The appropriate salary will be paid.

These commitments may be flexibly applied in the first year of a career break.

Note: Requests for breaks of less than six months in duration should be made under the special leave arrangements.

An employee will resign their employment in order to enter into a career break agreement and consequently there will be no contractual relationship and no continual accrual of service-related benefits and entitlements, including redundancy entitlement, during a career break. The career break participant is also prevented from entering into any other contracted employment with the Council or any other employer during the period of their career break.

The position regarding re-employment is complex and subject to the provision of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. No guarantee of re-employment can therefore be given within the Career Break Scheme, but the school and the Authority will use its best endeavours to locate teachers and support staff returning from career break in an appropriate post, taking into account the position of governing bodies. However, full information regarding the scheme has been given to governing bodies and it is also expected that the provision of the scheme itself will enable returners to compete more effectively for posts.

Career break participants will have 12 weeks upon providing the school with notice of their career break end date, to search for suitable re-employment.

On returning after a career break, an employee's previous continuous service will be taken into account when calculating entitlement to non-statutory provisions (i.e. annual leave, sickness entitlements and maternity provisions) on the same basis as specified in the appropriate National Conditions of Service for re-entry following a break for maternity reasons. Previous service would, however, not count for statutory employment rights (e.g. redundancy purposes).

4. Terms of the scheme

Prior to commencing a career break, an employee must be allocated with a contact officer in the school. The contact officer should be the line manager, or another named manager within the senior leadership team. The contact officer role must be delegated to another named person if the original contact officer leaves the school.

Participants on the scheme need to inform their contact officer of their career break end date and are required to maintain contact with this individual, on an annual basis, to reaffirm their wishes to be on the scheme and to advise of any changes to their personal details.

5. Search for re-employment

The participant should discuss their possible return with their contact officer. They should:

- agree a date on which their 12-week search for re-employment will commence and;
- be notified of any changes that have taken place during their absence, by their contact officer, and advised on the likelihood of any vacant posts arising within the search period that are the same as or equivalent to the one that they held immediately prior to their resignation.

6. Terminating the agreement

If a career break participant does not manage to secure an offer of re-employment during their 12-week search period, the career break agreement will come to an end.

The career break agreement will also be terminated if the participant:

- enters into any other contracted/paid employment with the Council or any other employer.
- fails to maintain annual contact with their contact officer.
- fails to provide their contact officer with at least three months' notice of the date they want their career break to end; or
- notifies the Council in writing of their intention to withdraw from the agreement.

