

LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY (SEPTEMBER 2023)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document sets out the policy framework for leave of absence for all staff.
- 1.2 This scheme applies to staff in Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools and teaching staff in centrally managed services. It is commended to the Governing Bodies of Voluntary Aided and Foundation Schools.
- 1.3 Leave of absence is a contractual right and minimum entitlements to paid and unpaid leave within the scheme must be met. Schools may exercise discretion to award leave, paid or unpaid in excess of the minimum but should be mindful of treating staff consistently and fairly and the risk of setting a precedent for requests which fall outside of the scheme. All requests for such leave should be considered on an individual basis, with due sensitivity to the circumstances.
- 1.4 This scheme does not apply to sickness absence, maternity/adoption leave or time off for Trade Union activities for which there are separate provisions.
- 1.5 Where possible, employees will be encouraged to arrange appointments outside of the school day/term time. The Leave of Absence provisions only apply where this is not possible.
- 1.6 Leave of absence must be applied for at least one week in advance wherever possible

2. APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

- 2.1 Applications for leave of absence must, normally, be received at the point when the member of staff is first aware that leave of absence will be required or at least seven days prior to the first day of intended absence (except in the case of emergency/unforeseen circumstances when the Headteacher should be informed at the earliest opportunity). Failure to give adequate notice of the request without good reason may result in the request not being approved.
- 2.2 All applications for leave of absence shall initially be made to the Headteacher on a standard pro forma. (See sample attached at **Appendix A**).
- 2.3 For requests for Leave of Absence which clearly fall within this scheme, these should be considered by the Headteacher who will be responsible for communicating the decision (using the sample pro-forma attached at Appendix A) to the individual.
- 2.4 For requests for Leave of Absence which do not clearly fall within this scheme (or any other scheme) these should be referred by the Headteacher to the relevant Governors Committee who will take into account the following:-
 - The reason for the request
 - If the request is for paid or unpaid leave

- The impact granting such leave will have on the continuity of education, any additional burden on colleagues and the impact on the school budget
- Whether any similar requests have been approved or not approved previously
- The precedent that may be set by granting such leave
- Any advice sought from the Schools HR Team
- The impact on equality

2.5 In these circumstances the relevant Committee should communicate their decision in writing giving full reasons for approving or not approving the leave using the sample pro-forma attached at **Appendix A**.

2.6 Requests for leave submitted by the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors, who will be responsible for considering the request or referring the matter to the relevant Committee of the Governing Body (depending upon whether the request falls under the Scheme or not).

3. NOTES

3.1 Periods of leave are expressed in days. In practice, leave may be taken as days, half days or lesser periods as may be agreed.

3.2 Maximum periods of leave allowed relate to an academic year.

3.3 For teachers in Centrally Managed Services, references to the Headteacher should be taken as referring to the relevant Senior Manager. In such cases, the functions ascribed to the Governing Body will be undertaken by the relevant Head of Service. Reference to 'school' should be taken as referring to the 'service'.

3.4 For those schools who have entered into a Service Level Agreement with Lancashire County Council Payroll Service all absences granted under this scheme, whether paid or unpaid, should be entered promptly onto the Oracle system.

3.5 For those staff who work fewer than 5 days per week the amount of approved leave will be reduced pro-rata.

3.6 A summary table outlining all provisions is attached at **Appendix B**.

3.7 Guidance notes regarding certain provisions are attached at **Appendix C**.

3.8 Guidance for Time off for Trade Union Duties is attached at **Appendix D**.

3.9 Separate provisions exist for [Maternity Leave](#), [Adoption Leave](#), [Paternity Leave](#), [Maternity Support Leave](#), [Shared Parental Leave](#) and [Parental Leave](#).

3.10 The employee is prevented from entering into any other contracted/paid employment with the Council or any other employer during either the paid or unpaid leave period.