

Staff Absence Policy

Author	PW	
Date Approved	April 2021	Chairman: MH
Date Approved	April 2021	Headmaster: PW
Date for Next Review	April 2023	

Audience

This policy is intended to be followed by all members of staff employed by Bickley Park School.

Aims

The aim of the policy is to optimise staff attendance. It is intended that staff will be present at school during term time unless absolutely necessary in order to minimise the impact on children's learning and the smooth operation of the school.

Procedure

This policy refers to all absence during term time. The governors recognise all of the legal entitlements that staff have. In all circumstances, the Headmaster is the person responsible for decisions (unless the Headmaster is the person requiring leave, in which case the Chair of Governors is responsible). If a request is denied, a member of staff may choose to submit an appeal to the Chair of Governors.

Every circumstance cannot be covered in this policy, so it should be considered as a guide. The Headmaster's advice should be sought, in the first instance, by any member of staff who may be considering requesting leave of absence for any reason.

Absence for personal reasons in term time should be avoided unless in exceptional circumstances. Requests for absence for personal reasons should be made, with as much notice as possible, via the Personal Absence Request Form (PARF) which can be downloaded from Common/Staff/Absence. The form should be submitted, via email, to the Headmaster, or by paper copy via the Pre-Prep secretary, or the Head's P.A. If permission is given for absence, it may be unpaid. The member of staff will be informed by the Headmaster if the absence is agreed and if it will be unpaid.

PARFs should also be filled in when staff are attending training courses. Staff attending courses should arrange duty swaps with other staff.

Once permission is granted, a Request for Cover slip should be completed and submitted to the Absence Request Coordinator (Jonathan Dean: jdean@bickleyparkschool.co.uk) in Prep from Tuesday to Friday and Assistant Head (Achievement) in Prep, Robert Cobb, on Mondays: recobb@bickleyparkschool.co.uk) and the Assistant Head (Achievement) in Pre-Prep (Anita Wenham: awenham@bickleyparkschool.co.uk) and the Assistant Head (Personal Development) in Pre-Prep (Jon Poole: jpoole@bickleyparkschool.co.uk).

Medical / Dental Routine Appointments:

Time off for routine appointments should be avoided during contracted hours. Exceptionally, where this is not possible, an official appointment slip showing date/time of the appointment should be given to the Headmaster, as far in advance as possible, before the day of the appointment.

Medical Emergencies:

It is recognised that hospital consultant appointments sometimes cannot be made outside school hours and, in such cases, permission needs to be granted from the Headteacher.

Bereavement/Family Crisis/Sudden Hospital Admission/Family Split etc:

At such times, some paid, and/or unpaid leave, will usually be allowed at the Headmaster's discretion for matters involving a parent, partner, sibling or a child. Other near relatives, or close friends, may also be considered, although this is likely to be granted as unpaid leave. The amount of paid/unpaid leave will be at the discretion of the Headmaster.

Court Attendance:

You should inform the Headmaster at the earliest possible time if you are required, as a juror, witness, or otherwise, to attend any court proceedings. This time may be paid or unpaid, depending on circumstances.

Moving House:

Request for a day's leave will be considered by the Headmaster.

Job Interviews:

All reasonable requests made, as early as possible, will be allowed. Time off for viewing other establishments, which are recruiting, will be considered by the Headteacher and may be paid, or unpaid. Usually, one day will be granted, with pay, in any school year; any further days will be at the Headmaster's discretion.

A PARF should be completed, in the normal manner, for all of the above situations.

Sickness Leave:

Notification of illness should be made as early as possible. If a member of staff is unexpectedly unwell, and needs to contact the school, to let it be known that they are unable to attend, they should, either in person, or by proxy, communicate as follows: email staffabsence@bickleyparkschool.co.uk between 7.00 and 8.00am which will inform the Head, Assistant Heads, Bursar and secretaries of the absence.

Further notice of continued absence should be confirmed by emailing Staff Absence the school daily before 7.30am.

ALL absences, whether it be a day/days/a few hours/half a day should be recorded by the members of staff via self-certification form and given to the Pre-Prep Secretary on return to work.

Absences of more than 5 days must be accompanied by a Doctor's Certificate (this includes weekends).

The self-certification form can be downloaded from Common/Staff/Absence.

A 'Return to Work' interview will be held for all members of staff who have been absent for five days or more and for any reason. This interview will be with a senior leader and staff should bring their self-certificate or Doctor's note with them. The interview will usually take

place *on the day of return to work*. The Headmaster may speak to any member of staff about patterns of absence that are beyond the norm. Long term absence: arrangements for long term absence, for instance for maternity leave, or illness, will be discussed with the Headmaster

Time off for Dependants:

All employees have a statutory right to take reasonable time off in the case of emergencies relating to a dependant. The right to time off for dependants does not include a right to be paid. Circumstances will vary, so the Headmaster will use his discretion when granting paid/unpaid leave following the completion of a PARF. Only reasonable time off can be taken and it is expected that one or two days should be long enough to deal with most problems, or sort out longer-term arrangements. Up to two paid days (or working sessions) may be granted during a school year, at the discretion of the Headmaster. It is expected that this is not the usual pattern of absence, as all staff are ideally expected to have child care arrangements made for all eventualities.

Dependants are considered to be a parent, husband, wife, partner, civil partner, child or grandchild.

The governors and Headteacher recognise that the positions staff hold do not have any automatic right to discretionary leave, but that staff have a life outside school. When dealing with requests for leave of absence, the Headteacher and governors will be sympathetic to individual cases, but will consider requests in the context of:

- The effective running of the school
- The effect of the absence on the children in school
- The personal position of the staff member
- The equitable treatment of all staff

This policy also applies to the Early Years Department.

Appendix



BICKLEY PARK SCHOOL

Personal Absence Request

Employee Name:

Department:

Line Managers
Name:

Type of Absence Requested:

Holiday Personal Day Sick Jury Duty Bereavement*

(family member)

Dates of Absence:

From:

To:

Further
information _____
—

Please submit requests for personal absences a minimum of seven days prior to the first day you will be absent.

Employee Signature *Date*

- Approved
- Rejected

Comments:

Date