



TrustEd Schools Alliance Managing Attendance (Special Leave) Policy

This Policy has been consulted on with the recognised Trade Unions set out below and through the Trust Forum Group, which includes Support Staff and Teacher's representation for all schools within our Trust.

- Association of School and College Leaders
- GMB
- National Association of Headteachers
- National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers
- National Education Union
- Unison

FREQUENCY OF REVIEW: Every two years

COMMITTEE: Personnel Committee

APPROVED: Spring 2026

AUTHOR: Shropshire HR

DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: Spring 2028 unless there is material change

Adopted by the Board of TrustEd Schools Alliance

Signed _____
Chair of Trust Board

Dated _____

Signed _____
Chief Education Officer (CEO)

Dated _____

CONTENTS

1	Introduction	3
2.	Aims of Policy	3
3.	Scope	4
4.	Managing Attendance Procedure	4
5.	Responsibilities	5
6.	Global Pandemics	5
7.	Misuse of Policy	5
8.	Dependents/Immediate Family: Definitions	6
9.	Monitor & Review	

Appendices

A.	Special Leave Guidance
B.	Request for Leave Form

TrustEd Schools Alliance Managing Attendance (Special Leave)

1. Introduction

New family friendly regulations are reflected in this policy, which is applicable to Carers Leave after 6 April 2024. The right to request Statutory leave to care for a dependent.

This procedure allows TrustEd Schools Alliance (the 'Trust') to deal with requests for Special Leave and managing unexpected time off **not** related to sickness absence. Reference to 'Headteacher' throughout this scheme includes the Executive Headteacher, Chief Executive Officer or direct line manager.

It recognises that whilst a certain level of Special Leave may be inevitable, a reasonable balance **must** be maintained between the needs of our Schools and Trust Central Team and the support of our employee requiring time off.

Headteachers have the discretion to agree to short-term informal flexible working requests in line with the Flexible Working Policy or changes to working patterns, which may allow staff to make up time by working additional hours. This is subject to operational requirements of the Trust/school and if agreed should be kept on personal files for audit purposes.

All leave in relation to sickness should be managed in accordance with the Trust's Managing Attendance Policy and Procedure (Sickness Absence).

All other requests for any other leave should be managed under this policy or other relevant policies such as:

- Maternity Leave for either Teachers or Support Staff
- Shared Parental Leave
- Adoption & Surrogacy Leave
- Parental Bereavement Leave
- Parental Leave
- Paternity Leave

Holiday During Term Time: Requests for time off during term time for purposes of an annual holiday **will not be considered**. School employees are contractually required to attend for work during term time and should arrange for their holiday to coincide with the school holiday period. A contract needs to specially waive this clause for holiday in term time to be considered.

2. Aims and Objectives of the Policy

The aim of this policy is to encourage and assist all Trust staff in following the correct process and procedure under which time off may be granted and, if appropriate, payment is made, and to achieve and maintain acceptable standards of attendance at work by:

- Providing a safe and healthy working environment and where possible, enhance the health and well-being of employees.
- Equipping all Trust leaders and Line Managers with the information required to manage leave requests consistently, fairly and in a confidentially transparent manner through the use of clear procedures and guidelines.
- Ensuring that all Trust staff understand their obligations and entitlements with regards to special leave.
- Demonstrate the value of our employees to the Trust, recognise the changing issues people face, and help them balance them fairly and consistently, whilst meeting the needs of the Trust.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all employees of TrustEd Schools Alliance

The Trust is committed to ensuring that the policy will be applied fairly and consistently in line with Trust values and priorities, in a non-discriminatory way against any employee, and will be applied fairly to full time or part time staff and to staff employed on a temporary or fixed term contract regardless of:

- Race (includes, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins)
- Gender (includes gender reassignment)
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Disability
- Religion and belief
- Age
- Marriage & civil partnerships
- Pregnancy and Maternity

This procedure does not apply in respect of staff who are working on a casual basis, including supply teachers.

4. Managing Special Leave Procedure

In cases where the need for leave is known about in advance, leave requests should be submitted to the Headteacher using the Special Leave Request form (Appendix B), allowing at least one weeks' notice of the requested leave being taken. This should include an explanation for the leave request.

Once a decision is made on a request for leave, the Headteacher must complete the Headteacher section of the Request for Leave form to notify the employee of the decision. This includes whether the request is granted and whether the leave will be with or without pay. The Headteacher's decision is final.

In the event of emergency leave where prior notification is not possible, the employee is required to contact their Headteacher in accordance with the Trust and school's agreed procedures for reporting absence to their Headteacher. This should be as soon as is reasonably possible but not usually any later than one hour before their

expected start time. The Request for Leave form (Appendix B) should then be completed on return to work.

If no contact has reasonably been made, the Headteacher has the discretion to make a deduction to salary for the unauthorised leave and may refer to the Trust and Trust's HR provider for advice regarding other policies that may apply (e.g., Disciplinary Policy).

Note: On the rare occasions that 'other' leave, not listed in this policy is sought, (e.g., for Trade Union duties, representing the Country at a sporting event or time off for religious festivals) a Request for Leave form (Appendix B or amended school version) could be completed by the member of staff and passed to the Headteacher allowing two weeks' notice. This should include an explanation for the leave request. The Headteacher will consider the application and may wish to discuss the application with the Trust before reaching a decision.

When considering applications for 'other' leave not listed in this policy (or discretionary additional leave to types of special leave permissible under this policy) the Headteacher will give consideration on a case-by-case basis. Factors to be considered include:

- The purpose of the request, for example, whether it is for an unrepeatable life event,
- Detrimental effect on the school / pupils,
- Burden of additional costs,
- Consistency of approach (including across schools)
- Special Leave already taken by that employee and whether this was granted or refused,
- Inability/ inappropriate to re-organise work among existing staff
- Impact on other staff,
- Personal circumstances of the employee.

5. Responsibilities

Employee Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the member of staff to provide notice of leave by completing a Request for Leave Form prior to the leave required (Appendix B) and ensuring the Headteacher/Line Manager is made aware of a request for leave as soon as reasonably possible. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher/Line Manager to ensure leave requests are dealt with in a fair, consistent, and confidentially transparent manner. The Headteacher/Line Manager should record and monitor leave appropriately. Headteachers are responsible for ensuring that accurate records are maintained. They should also ensure that staff absences are regularly monitored and reviewed, and that appropriate confidentiality is maintained.

Headteacher Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure leave requests are dealt with in a fair, consistent, and confidentially transparent manner. The Headteacher should

record and monitor leave appropriately and may seek the advice of the Trust for a decision to grant any other leave request that is not listed in this policy.

Headteachers are responsible for ensuring that accurate records are maintained. They should also ensure that staff absences are regularly monitored and reviewed and that appropriate confidentiality is maintained.

Headteachers are responsible for identifying patterns of absence within each Trust school which may be an indicator of employee's personal or work-related issues. Where such patterns are identified, Headteachers should seek appropriate advice from the Trust and Trust's HR provider on policy and actions.

6. Global Pandemics

Where no other arrangements can be made staff should be allowed reasonable time off to care for children or other dependants suffering from the effects of a global pandemic as recognised by the World Health Organisation, in accordance with the Special Leave policy. Where practicable, other types of leave including Time off in Lieu (TOIL) and annual leave should be joined with any period of special leave. Although Headteachers should use their discretion in considering requests for paid time off beyond the 'normal' in exceptional circumstances, if ordinary and special leave cannot reasonably be used to cover extended periods of time off, it may be granted as unpaid leave.

7. Misuse of Policy

The misuse of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including actions under gross misconduct. The Headteacher has the responsibility to monitor levels of absence, if an employee unreasonably exceeds emergency leave within a school year or is deemed to be falsely requesting leave that has been agreed by the Headteacher, action will be necessary under the Trust's Disciplinary Policy.

In the event that special leave is declined and an employee proceeds to take the leave, then the Disciplinary Policy will be followed.

8. Dependents/Immediate Family: Definitions

For the purpose of this Policy: A dependant is your husband, wife, partner, child, stepchild, parent, stepparent, siblings, and parents-in-law. It also includes someone who lives with you e.g., an elderly relative but not a tenant or boarder living in your home, or someone who lives in your home as an employee.

A dependant may also be someone who reasonably relies on you for assistance. This may be where you are the primary carer, or you are the only person who can help in an emergency e.g., elderly relative living independently or in supported accommodation. As far as children are concerned it is suggested that any significant illness of a baby or very young child is serious for this purpose. Beyond that age a judgement has to be made on whether it is important for the employee to be absent or it is alternatively reasonable to expect parents to make normal childcare

arrangements. The leave entitlement does not enable staff to take time off every time their child is ill whatever the reason.

The legal definition for Time off for dependants is “**reasonable amount of time**”. For the purposes of this policy the term ‘reasonable’ should be at the discretion of the Headteacher, usually up to 2 days.

Note: In the most exceptional of circumstances, it must be never more than 18 days.

9. Monitoring and Review

The Trust Board will monitor the outcomes and impact of this policy/procedure on a bi-annual basis in conjunction with school representatives and will discuss revisions with their HR provider.

Appendices

Appendix A: Leave Guidance

Appendix B: Special Leave Request Form

All leave will be pro-rated for part time workers but rounded up to full days

LEAVE	DEFINITION OF LEAVE	CONDITIONS OF LEAVE	PAID	UNPAID
Death and Funerals and /or Inquests of close relatives	Close/Immediate Relative: See 7. Dependents / Immediate family definition. The list of relatives detailed also applies to step or half relatives. Death of a child under the age of 18, please refer to the Parental Bereavement Leave Policy.	Time allowed is per relative. If the death results in an inquest reasonable time off will be allowed. Time off may also be granted in the case of a mother-in-law or father-in-law but in these cases particularly, the time off would depend on whether there were any other direct relatives to handle funeral arrangements and would be restricted to the amount of time required to attend the funeral and make appropriate arrangements.	Up to 5 working days, including the day of funeral.	Additional leave up to 1 month may be granted by the Headteacher.
Funeral of friend or colleague	One days leave with pay may also be granted for the funeral of a close friend	If colleagues wish to attend any other funerals, they should discuss the situation with the Headteacher who may grant leave with or without pay according to the circumstances	Up to 1 day (Can be made up of several part days)	Additional unpaid leave up to 1 day
Serious illness/accident or incident involving a dependent or close relative	Serious Illness is defined as a sudden injury, impairment or diagnosed condition that has significant impact on the individual affected. (i.e. hospitalisation due to a car accident, stroke, meningitis, or heart attack) See 7. Dependents / Immediate family definition. The list of relatives detailed also applies to step or half relatives.	Time allowed is per school year. Due to the nature of the leave, it is expected that up to 5 days could be taken and is most likely to be consecutive days. This leave is not to be used for ad hoc minor illnesses for a dependent. (Please see Emergency leave)	Up to 5 working days. (pro-rated for part time staff but rounded up to full days)	Additional unpaid compassionate leave up to 1 month may be granted. Requests for unpaid leave beyond 1 month should be referred to the Trust
Emergency Leave	To cover unexpected minor illnesses of a dependent that prevents the dependent from attending their normal activity. (Cold, flu, chickenpox, and viruses (not an exhaustive list)). To cover in the event a dependents normal activity is closed unexpectedly. (i.e., snow closure).	Time allowed is per school year. This leave is to be used in the event a child is ill and unable to attend nursery or school and in the event of any other emergency such as a car breakdown or burst pipe at home. There is an expectation that the employee will do their utmost to find alternative arrangements in relation to care of dependents in the event of an emergency and/or unexpected illness.	Up to 3 days in a school year with pay	

Appendix A

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	To cover in the event of a genuine emergency such as a car breakdown or house flood. Accompanying a dependent to a medical appointment.			
Investiture with an honor of Decoration	To attend an honors ceremony	If a colleague is included in the honors list and wishes to attend the investiture, they may have a day's paid leave. This will be without pay for a close relative.	1 day	1 day (close relative)
Attendance for medical appointments/medical screening	Hospital, Doctor, Dentist, Supporting an appointment with dependent relative. *Note: Reasonable Ante Natal appointments are with pay and not restricted to a specified number of days. Partners may request to attend Ante-Natal appointments without pay.	Time allowed is per school year In all circumstances every effort should be made to make appointments outside normal working hours. Proof of appointment should be produced on all occasions. Any period of rest required after a hospital appointment should be taken unpaid. Where a member of staff is required to rest after a hospital appointment they will be required to either self-certify up to the first 7 days (including a weekend) or for absence for 8 days or more provide a fit note. For employee absence please refer to the Trust's Managing Attendance (Sickness) Policy.	Up to 3 days (Can be made up of several part days)	Additional time may be granted at school's discretion.

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		In the event of fertility treatment there is an allowance for additional paid time off where required. To attend appointments/checks in relation to this treatment (proof of appointment confirmation should be presented to the Headteacher). Any period of rest required after treatment should either be covered by annual leave, credit hours or sick leave if medical certification is provided. Once fertility is confirmed as a positive pregnancy, please refer to the Trust's Maternity Scheme policies for both Teachers and Support Staff, and for any pregnancy-related sickness absence, please refer to the Trust's Managing Attendance (Sickness) policy.		
Public Duties* <i>This must be discussed with Headteacher/Line Manager BEFORE application to these duties.</i>	Magistrate, Justice of the Peace, School Governor. Member of a: Local Authority, Health Authority or Trust, Statutory Tribunal. Retained Firefighter or Special Constable.	Time allowed is per school year The 18 days could be taken across 36 half days i.e., morning or afternoon sessions. Armed forces reservists, please refer to Trust for the Reservists and Mobilisation Policy.	Up to a maximum of 18 days	
Anti-natal, domestic abuse, maternity, parental, Adoption leave: See separate policies.	*Note – as above Appointment Attendance: Reasonable Ante Natal appointments are with pay and not restricted to a specified number of days. Partners may request to attend Ante-Natal appointments without pay			

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Moving House	When a Trust employee changes home residence and maintains employment with the Trust.	Where a colleague is selling a property in which they live and legal completion takes place on a working day in term time, they will need to vacate the property that day. Colleagues vacating rented accommodation are expected to move on a non-working day since tenancies can be agreed to start and end on days other than Monday to Friday. In exceptional cases leave of absence, which may be unpaid, may be agreed by the Headteacher.	1 day	
Election Duties	Presiding Officer, Poll Clerk, Counting Assistant, in either Council, Parliamentary, European or Police Commissioner Elections.	The Trust/ Schools may choose to refuse employees requesting time off to attend election duties if this will be detrimental to service delivery.	Up to 1 working day.	
Campaigning for Election to Public Office		No paid time off is allowed for employees to campaign for election, either for themselves or when acting as an agent for someone else. One day without pay may be granted for the actual polling day.		Unpaid
Examinations	Examinations related to the employee's professional development required by the Trust school. Other examinations undertaken at the request of the Trust school.	Any travel over and above normal travel should be claimed in accordance with the Trust's Travel & Subsistence policy.	Reasonable time off to cover actual examinations	

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	This does not apply to any other examinations the employee may take unrelated to their Trust school post.			
Examining Groups* <i>This must be discussed with Headteacher/Line Manager BEFORE application to these duties.</i>	Employees involved in: • External Examiner/Markers and Awarders • External Moderator • Setters or revisers of question papers • The groups instructors or presenters of INSET course • Membership of Committees • Membership of subject panels • Representation on regional or national organisations	The amount of release time required will vary depending on role and subject. Time off to cover duties in accordance with appendix ii of the Burgundy Book will be granted.		Reasonable time off
Graduation	Time off with pay will be granted for attendance at a graduation (of self, partner or children) up to one day .	Time off without pay may be granted for another family member.	1 day (self-partner or child)	1 day (may be granted for other family member)
Jury Service	Summons to serve on a jury.	Please refer to the link below gives advice around how to claim for expenses and what employees required to attend jury service will be paid. https://www.gov.uk/jury-service/what-you-can-claim The employee will receive an expenses claim form from the court in their jury pack. The employee will need to send the expense claim form to the payroll team. Six weeks prior to when the employee is to serve, the payroll team will calculate the net pay for the court and will provisionally deduct 10 days' pay with the proviso that the Trust' payroll provider will refund any excess deductions the following month		

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		if the employee does not serve for the full 10 days. The court will only pay the employee for any earnings they have already lost. Leave is allowed for staff called for Jury Service. Staff are able to make a claim to the Court for 'loss of earnings'. The individual member of staff should notify the Trust's payroll provider of the sum received in order that it can be offset against their salary payable for the period in question. Details of staff absent on Jury Service should also be notified to the Trust's payroll provider to alert them that a salary adjustment is required.		
Wedding	To attend a wedding of a close relative or a member of staff within the same Trust school.	See 8. Dependents/Immediate Family: Definitions	1 day	
Interviews	To attend an interview. *Note: up to one day paid leave for induction into a new job.	Paid leave is only offered to staff with more than one whole school years' service, and only with advanced notice. Employees on fixed term contracts will also be eligible for paid leave. Where there are restructuring / redeployment / redundancies then additional days may be granted at Headteacher's discretion.	3 interviews	
Domestic Abuse	Where a case has been identified by the authorities, the Trust will fully support the employee where possible	To allow for attendance of appointments with support agencies, solicitors, re-housing, court appearances etc... See Trust's Domestic Abuse Policy for further details	Up to 5 working days	

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LEAVE	DEFINITION OF LEAVE	CONDITIONS OF LEAVE	PAID	UNPAID
Adverse Weather Conditions	In the event adverse weather conditions have an impact on travel and/or Trust School Closure.	The expectation is that an employee will make all reasonable efforts to attend work. If they are unable to attend but a decision is taken by the Trust/Headteacher to keep the school open this will be unpaid, unless the Headteacher makes an exception due to specific circumstances. If the Trust/ Headteacher makes a decision to close the school, then the employee will be paid whether they attempt to attend work or not.	The period of the school closure (If the Trust Office/school the employee works in is closed)	The Period of leave (if the Trust Office/school the employee works in remains open)
Strike Action	In the event an employee agreed to take industrial action or refuses to break a picket line and does not attend work.	If the Trust/Headteacher makes a decision to keep the school open then all employees, taking strike action will have pay deducted on daily rate for the period of strike action. If the Trust/Headteacher makes a decision to close the school, then the employee will be paid whether or not they take strike action unless they opt to take the pay reduction in the spirit of strike action. If other schools/nurseries in the area are closed and this impacts a dependents normal activity, please refer to Emergency Leave.	The period of the strike action (if the school the employee works in is closed)	The period of the strike action (if the school the employee works in remains open)
Global Pandemics		Where no other arrangements can be made staff will be allowed up to 5 days per academic year to care for dependents suffering from the effects of a global pandemic, or where there is enforced isolation (World Health Authority definition needs to be applied).	Up to five days per academic year.	

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LEAVE	DEFINITION OF LEAVE	CONDITIONS OF LEAVE	PAID	UNPAID
Carers Leave	Statutory leave to care for a dependent. Dependents are defined as: - the spouse, civil partner, child, or parent of an employee; - someone who lives in the same household as the employee (other than as boarder, employee, lodger, or tenant) - someone who reasonably relies on the employee to provide or arrange care Carers Leave is a statutory right which entitles carers to apply for up to one week of unpaid leave per rolling 12-month period to provide or arrange care for a dependent with a long-term care need. The first two days are paid in our Trust. A long-term care need is defined as: - an illness or injury that requires, or is likely to require care for more than 3 months - a disability (as defined in the Equality Act 2010) - care for a reason connected with old age.	Employees are entitled to carer's leave from their first day of work. Employment rights are protected during carer's leave. The carer must be arranging the care on an unpaid basis to qualify for the leave (evidence is not required). Subject to agreement, leave can be taken from half day up to and including one whole week of leave (pro rata for part-time employees) provided that appropriate notice is provided; this is either twice as many days as the period of leave required, or three days, whichever is the greater. In rare circumstances where an employee absence would cause serious disruption to Trust/school, employees may be asked to postpone carers leave. The Trust/school should consult the employee about rescheduling the leave and agree another date within 1 month of the requested date for the leave. The reason for the delay and new date must be in writing to the employee within 7 days of the original request and before the requested start date of the leave.	2 days	3 days in each rolling year. The rolling 12-month period runs from the date that the employee last took the leave.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE

By completion of this 'Special Leave Request Form' it should be submitted to the Trust's Payroll Provider

EMPLOYEE TO COMPLETE				
Name				
Trust School/Site				
Employee Number				
Post Title				
First Date of Absence				
Date of Return				
Number of Days/Hours to be taken				
Reason				
Details				
Appointment card available				
Request made before leave starts date	Yes		No	
Signature				
HEADTEACHER/CEO AUTHORISATION (please tick and sign as appropriate)				
Number of Days/Hours granted with pay				
Number of Days/Hours granted unpaid				
Additional comments: (If Jury Service, a part time working pattern will be required and form needs to be submitted to the Trust's Payroll provider.)				
Signature				
Print Name				
Date				

- MAKE DEDUCTION VIA THE TRUST'S PAYROLL SYSTEM
- COPY TO EMPLOYEE CONFIRMING DECISION