

Compassionate Leave Policy

All employees have the right to take a reasonable amount of time off work to deal with an emergency involving a dependant or for unforeseen circumstances relating to the employee.

Where the headteacher is the employee concerned, any reference to the headteacher in this policy should be replaced with the chair of governors.

1 Eligibility

All employees of the school, whether employed on a full-time or part-time basis, are entitled to apply for compassionate leave. There is no qualifying period of service for eligibility.

2 Entitlement

Employees can request paid compassionate leave from **half a day up to a maximum of 5 working days** to deal with an emergency. This could include emergency domestic situations at home, serious illness of a family member or unexpected childcare problems. It will also apply in the case of a miscarriage.

Where the employee has advance notice of the problem, the employee should make alternative arrangements rather than requesting compassionate leave.

Where a child's school is closed due to adverse weather conditions, the [Adverse Weather Guidance](#) should be followed. Where the time off is due to the death of a family member, the employee should refer to the [Bereavement Leave Policy](#).

There is no limit on the number of times an employee can utilise compassionate leave, however, headteachers should keep a record of compassionate leave taken and consider whether other arrangements might be more appropriate if frequent applications are made by an employee.

3 Applying for compassionate leave

The employee should notify their headteacher of their request for compassionate leave as soon as it is practical. They should explain the reason why they wish to apply for the leave and give an indication of the anticipated length of time off required.

The Compassionate Leave Application Form should be used, although it is accepted that this form may not be completed until the employee has returned to work.

Headteachers should be sensitive, consistent and fair when dealing with requests for compassionate leave. Each request for leave will need to be judged on the circumstances of the individual case and the amount of time off granted will be at the headteacher's discretion.

4 Recording compassionate leave

The headteacher should notify Payroll and Employee Services (PES) of the agreed dates via MyView. A copy of the application should be retained on the personal file within school.

5 Returning to work

The headteacher should arrange an informal meeting with the employee on their return to work to discuss the request and any subsequent issues resulting from the period of compassionate leave.



This policy has been developed by the HR Advice and Support team, based on current legislation and best practice. If you would like any advice on the application of this policy, please do not hesitate to contact the team:

Telephone	03000 266688
Email	hradvice@durham.gov.uk

Further support can be accessed by contacting (subject to SLA buy in):

Payroll and Employee Services	pesschools@durham.gov.uk
Occupational Health	occhealthadmin@durham.gov.uk
Health and Safety	hsteam@durham.gov.uk
Employee Assistance Programme	www.healthassuredeap.com Username: durham Password: council 0800 716017

Author	Version	Last review	Next review
LK	v 1.4	September 2021	January 2023

The school complies with all relevant statutory obligations. The school privacy notice provides more specific information on data collected and how it is handled, a copy of which can be accessed from the school. For more information please contact the school directly.

If you have any concerns about how your data is handled, please contact either the school Data Protection Officer (details available from the school office), or the Information Commissioner's Office.