



This policy covers all academies/schools within
Arden Multi-Academy Trust

Name of Policy	Parental Leave Policy	
Lead	Martin Murphy, CEO	
Governor Committee	Business & Personnel Committee	
Policy Status	Draft	SMBC April 2018 (V4)
	Trustee Approved	9 th December 2025
Review Frequency	1 year	
Next Review	Autumn 2026	
Version No.	2	
Amendments	October 2019	
	April 2026 – Changes in Employment Law	



1 Introduction

- 1.1 The law recognises and we respect that there will be occasions when working parents wish to take time off work to care for or spend time with their child or children.
- 1.2 This policy reflects the statutory right of employees, regardless of their length of continuous service, to take up to 18 weeks' **unpaid parental leave** in respect of each child.

2 Entitlement to parental leave

- 2.1 Employees who fulfil the criteria set out in this paragraph 2.3 (below) are entitled to take up to 18 weeks' parental leave in relation to each child for whom they are responsible. The rules on how and when parental leave can be taken are set out in paragraph 3 to paragraph 6.
- 2.2 Any parental leave that employees take in relation to a child while working for another employer counts towards their 18-week entitlement. If you have taken parental leave in relation to a child during previous or concurrent employment, you should provide details to your Associate Headteacher/Head of School.
- 2.3 To take a period of parental leave in relation to a child, you must:
 - 2.3.1 Have or expect to have responsibility for the child.
 - 2.3.2 Be taking the leave to spend time with or otherwise care for the child.
- 2.4 You have responsibility for a child if you:
 - 2.4.1 Are the child's biological mother or father (whether or not you are living with the child);
 - 2.4.2 Are the child's adoptive parent.
 - 2.4.3 Otherwise have legal parental responsibility for the child, for example, if you are the child's guardian or a stepparent who has a parental responsibility agreement or parental responsibility order.

3 Timing of parental leave

- 3.1 You can take parental leave for each child and adopted child up to their 18th birthday.
- 3.2 You are only entitled to take no more than 4 weeks' parental leave each year in relation to each child. A year for this purpose begins on the date when you became entitled to take parental leave in relation to the child in question.
- 3.3 Unless the leave is to be taken in respect of a disabled child, you can only take parental leave in blocks of a week's leave or a multiple of a week's leave.
- 3.4 For the purposes of this policy, a disabled child means a child who is entitled to a disability living allowance, armed forces independence allowance, or personal independence payment.

“Ordinary” parental leave should not be confused with shared parental leave. Shared parental leave enables mothers to commit to ending their maternity or adoption leave and pay at a future date, and to share the untaken balance of leave and pay as shared parental leave and pay with their partner, or to return to work early from maternity leave and opt in to shared parental leave and pay at a later date. the Trust provides a separate policy on shared parental leave for this purpose available from the Trust office.

Casual employees are not employed continuously so are ineligible for the scheme.

4 Notification requirements

- 4.1 You must give your Associate Headteacher/Head of School notice of your intention to take parental leave. This notice should be made in writing. The notice requirements are as follows:
- 4.1.1 If you wish to take parental leave commencing immediately on the birth of a child, you must give notice of this intention at least 21 days before the start of the expected week of childbirth (EWC). The notice must specify the EWC and the duration of the period of leave required.
- 4.1.2 If you wish to take parental leave commencing immediately on the adoption of a child, you should give notice of this intention at least 21 days before the start of the expected week of placement (EWP). Ideally, the Trust would expect at least a term's notice. If this is not possible, you must give as much notice as you can. The notice must specify the EWP and the duration of the period of leave required.
- 4.1.3 In all other circumstances, you must give notice of your intention to take parental leave at least 21 days before you intend the leave to start. The notice must specify the dates on which the period of leave is to begin and end.
- 4.2 If you wish to take a period of parental leave immediately after a period of paternity leave, it would be helpful if you could give your Associate Headteacher/Head of School notice of that intention at least 21 days before the start of the EWC (or EWP, if applicable). If this is not possible, you should give as much notice as you can. If you do not give notice at least 7 days before your period of paternity leave starts, we might not allow you to take the period of parental leave requested; however, we shall consider each case on its merits.

Employees may wish to use the Parental Leave Request Form (Appendix A).

5 Evidential requirements

- 5.1 Before you take a period of parental leave under this policy, you must provide us with evidence of:
- 5.1.1 Your responsibility or expected responsibility for the child, such as a birth certificate, adoption or matching certificate, parental responsibility agreement or court order.
- 5.1.2 The child's date of birth or date of adoption placement.
- 5.2 For details of what evidence is required in your particular circumstances or if you have difficulties obtaining the evidence, please contact Human Resources.

6 Our right to postpone parental leave

- 6.1 Where you give notice, in accordance with paragraph 4, of your intention to take parental leave on the birth or adoption of a child, we shall not postpone that leave.
- 6.2 We shall not postpone parental leave if the postponement would result in the leave being taken after the child's 18th birthday.
- 6.3 We might postpone a proposed period of parental leave for up to 6 months where the leave as planned would unduly disrupt our business. We might do so, for example, where:

- 6.3.1 You wish to take parental leave during a peak period.
 - 6.3.2 A number of employees wish to take parental leave at the same time.
 - 6.3.3 Your work is of importance to a time-critical project.
 - 6.3.4 Cover for your work cannot be found before the date on which your parental leave is due to start.
- 6.4 If we decide to postpone your parental leave, we shall:
- 6.4.1 Consult you about the date to which the leave might be postponed.
 - 6.4.2 No more than 7 days after you gave notice of your intention to take the leave, give you written notice stating the reason for the postponement and the new beginning and end dates of the leave which we will allow you to take.

7 Terms and conditions during parental leave

- 7.1 Parental leave under this policy is unpaid. Your contractual provisions relating to pay and benefits are suspended during parental leave.
- 7.2 However, during parental leave you are entitled to benefit from any contractual terms you have in relation to being given notice, redundancy compensation, and disciplinary and grievance procedures. Holiday entitlement will continue to accrue.
- 7.3 During parental leave, you will remain bound by your obligation of good faith towards us, as well as any contractual terms relating to the giving of notice, the disclosure of confidential information, the acceptance of gifts and benefits, and your freedom to participate in another business (for example, by working for a third party)

8 Pensions — teaching staff

During any period of unpaid parental leave, we shall not make any employer pension contributions, and the period shall not count as pensionable service. You do not have the option of paying contributions during any period of unpaid parental leave, but you can purchase additional pension on top of your normal contributions in multiples of £250 up to a maximum set by Teachers' Pensions.

9 Pensions — support staff

Under LGPS rules, the if you are absent for up to 14 days of unpaid parental leave the leave is pensionable and you will continue to pay the pension contributions that would have been paid if you were at work receiving your normal pay. If you are absent for more than 14 days the break will not automatically count for pension purposes regardless of the length of absence. In this case you can elect to buy back some or all of the pension you lost during the unpaid period by paying extra contributions. More details can be found on the LGPS website or by contacting Human Resources"

10 Returning to work

- 10.1 You are normally entitled to return to work following parental leave to the same position you held before commencing leave. Your terms of employment will be the same as they would have been had you not been absent.
- 10.2 However, it might not be possible for us to allow you to return to the same job where your period of parental leave has been longer than 4 weeks or has been combined with a period of additional maternity, paternity or adoption leave. In such circumstances, we will offer you a suitable and appropriate alternative position on no less favourable terms.
- 10.3 We will deal with any requests by employees to change their working patterns (such as working part-time) after parental leave on a case-by-case basis, in accordance with our flexible working policy. We will try to accommodate your wishes, unless there is a justifiable reason for refusal, bearing in mind the needs of our business. It is helpful if flexible working requests are made as early as possible.

11 Abuse of this policy

Where an employee takes a period of parental leave under this policy for purposes other than spending time with or otherwise caring for their child, this will be dealt with as a disciplinary issue under our disciplinary procedure.

Appendix A**ARDEN MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST - REQUEST FOR PARENTAL LEAVE**

(Please complete a separate form for each child/young person for whom parental leave is requested)

Name of employee	
Employee number	
Job title	
Academy/school	
Date commenced employment	
Amount of parental leave taken previously in respect of relevant child/young person (please include leave from all previous employment with other organisations)	
<p>I would like to apply for [] week(s)/day(s) unpaid parental leave from [<i>date</i>] to [<i>date</i>]. (Applications for parental leave in periods of a day or multiples thereof may be made only where the child/young person in question is disabled.)</p> <p>The leave requested relates to my [*baby/son/daughter] [name where applicable] [*due on [<i>date</i>] / who was born on [<i>date</i>] / who was adopted on [<i>date</i>] (*delete as appropriate).</p> <p>I attach a copy of [child/young person's name]'s [birth certificate/adoption papers][entitlement to disability living allowance} (delete if not applicable)</p>	
<p>I recognise that I may be required to provide evidence to support my request for parental leave and that the Trust is entitled to make enquiries of all or any of my previous employers in relation to any previous periods of parental leave taken.</p> <p>I also recognise that the organisation may postpone the period of leave requested by up to six months where the leave requested does not coincide with the expected week of my child's birth or adoption and the business would otherwise be unduly disrupted by my absence.</p>	
Signed	
Date	
<p>Please return this form to HR/Associate Headteacher/Head of School at least 21 days prior to the date on which your requested period of parental leave is due to commence.</p>	
<p>Associate Headteacher/Head of School authorisation: <i>Subject to eligibility, I agree to this parental leave request.</i></p>	
Signed	
Date	

**DATA PROTECTION
FAIR PROCESSING NOTICE**

All information supplied on this form may be held and used as detailed:

The form will be passed to the Human Resources department to process your parental leave and to ensure that you receive the pay and other benefits to which you are entitled. The line manager will also retain a copy of the form to manage the parental leave absence and to allow effective workforce management.

The information you provide may be shared with third parties such as other Local Authorities, the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), HMRC and pension scheme providers.

For further information about how we use your information please refer to the Trust's Data Protection Policy on the AMAT website.