

## **Policy and Procedure for Staff requesting Leave of Absence**

### **Approval and Effective Date:**

This policy was approved by the Headteacher Andrew Dean on 02/09/2025 and is effective immediately.

**Review Date:** 01/09/2026

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### **1. Policy Overview**

Balance Alternative Provision recognises the importance of a work-life balance for all employees and aims to provide a supportive framework for staff who need to take time off. This policy outlines the entitlements, procedures, and guidelines for staff requesting leave of absence, in line with UK employment law, including statutory and non-statutory leave types as recommended by the Burgundy Book Scheme.

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### **2. Types of Leave**

Employees are entitled to take statutory leave during their employment, these fall under UK employment law. Types of leave include but are not restricted to:

#### **2.1 Statutory Leave:**

- Maternity/Paternity/Shared Parental Leave
- Emergency dependents leave
- Job Interviews
- Jury Service and public duties
- Study, qualification and CPD (when and if necessary)
- Sick Leave

#### **2.2 Compassionate Leave:**

- Bereavement
- Serious Illness of a close relative
- Carer's Leave

#### **2.4 Personal Leave:**

Will be considered but may be granted without pay.

- Weddings
  - Graduations
  - House moves
  - Emergency Leave (for urgent, unforeseen events)
  - Medical appointments
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### **3. Leave Entitlement**

#### **3.1 Annual Leave**

It is the responsibility of staff to ensure that their absence does not adversely affect the Provision's operations, particularly in terms of student support and safeguarding. Leave will only be granted in

exceptional circumstances and at the Headteachers discretion. Requests for leave during term time will be declined unless a compelling reason can be demonstrated.

- Staff working full-time are entitled to statutory paid annual leave of **25 working days** (including public and bank holidays). **Annual leave** must be taken during school holidays without exception.
- Staff are encouraged to plan any other term-time leave in writing to the Headteacher a **minimum of 10 working days** to avoid disruption to school operations.

### **3.2 Sick Leave**

All teaching staff (with QTS) follow the Burgundy Book for Teachers with regards to sick leave. The details of the Burgundy Book are outlined here:

<https://neu.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-06/Burgundy%20Book%202023.pdf>

All non teaching staff (staff without QTS) are:

- Entitled to 11 sick leave days.
- Entitled to statutory sick pay (SSP) which is formed from the 4<sup>th</sup> day of absence for a maximum of 28 weeks in any spell of sickness absence.
- Sick leave entitlement is calculated from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March. Staff will be notified and issued an SSP1 when sick pay comes to an end (See 4).
- Staff have been supplied details of sick pay entitlements alongside contracts and roles and responsibilities.

### **3.2 Planned Leave (e.g., holiday, appointments, carer's leave):**

- Requests should be submitted at least 4 weeks in advance to allow time for approval and planning.
- For term-time leave, holiday requests must be made no later than 6 weeks before the holiday period.
- Evidence of medical appointments may be requested prior to approval.
- Requests should be submitted in writing, detailing the dates and reason for absence.

### **3.2 Unpaid Leave**

Unpaid leave can be requested for personal reasons beyond the statutory leave entitlements. The decision will be based on operational needs and will not exceed 2 working days per academic year unless otherwise agreed upon by management.

### **3.3 Unauthorised Absence**

- Any absence without prior approval will be treated as unauthorised and may result in disciplinary action.

### **3.4 Emergency Leave:**

- In the case of emergencies (e.g., family bereavement, urgent care duties), notify line manager as soon as possible.

### **3.5 Jury Service and Public Duties:**

- Staff required to attend jury service or public duties should provide notice at the earliest opportunity.
  - The school will support staff in these circumstances, and any absences will be treated in accordance with statutory provisions. These will not be part of the sick leave entitlement.
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#### **4. Procedure for Applying for Leave**

All leave requests must be submitted in advance using the online *Leave of Absence* google form to the Headteacher, with the following guidelines:

##### **4.1 Reporting Sick Leave**

- Staff must notify the Headteacher via email [info@balanceap.co.uk](mailto:info@balanceap.co.uk) as soon as possible if they are unable to attend work due to sickness. This should be completed no later than 7:30am on the first day of absence.
  - Cover work and instructions must be left for staff following the Provision's cover work procedure.
  - Absences lasting more than 7 calendar days will require a doctor's certificate.
  - The school will support staff in these circumstances, and any absences will be treated in accordance with statutory provisions. These will not be part of the sick leave entitlement.
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#### **5. When Leave Cannot Be Approved**

While the provision aims to accommodate reasonable requests for leave, there are certain periods when leave cannot be granted due to operational requirements, especially in term time:

##### **5.1 Holidays During Term Time:**

- These are not permitted and any holiday planned during term time will result in disciplinary measures.

##### **5.2 Inadequate Notice:**

- Leave requests submitted with insufficient notice (less than 2 weeks in advance) may be denied, particularly during critical school periods.
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#### **6. Record-Keeping and Monitoring**

The Headteacher will keep accurate records of all leave taken, including any unpaid leave, for auditing and reporting purposes. All staff should ensure they accurately record their leave in the Provision's leave management system.

- Managers will monitor staff leave to ensure that it aligns with the Provision's operational needs and to identify patterns and fair treatment of all staff.
  - Employees should regularly review their leave balance to ensure they are within their entitlement.
  - The provision reserves the right to request an occupational health assessment if absences are prolonged or frequent.
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#### **7. Return to Work**

- Staff who take **extended leave** (more than 5 consecutive working days) will be required to provide a return-to-work interview with their line manager.
- Line managers will discuss any ongoing concerns and determine reasonable adjustments if and where necessary.

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## **8. Review of Policy**

This Leave of Absence Policy will be reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team and the Headteacher to ensure it remains compliant with legal requirements and meets the needs of the school and its staff.

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### **Notes:**

This policy aligns with current UK employment law, including the Employment Rights Act 1996, Equality Act 2010, The Burgundy Book, NEU working teacher rights and the Working Time Regulations 1998.