



the
beckmead
trust

The Sabbatical Policy

- nurture
- sustain
- grow

Policy Level	Trust
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Comments:

This policy which sets out the Trust's offer to consider a period of sabbatical leave for staff with more than 5 years' service. The draft policy was reviewed by Trust Leaders and additional consideration was given to the minimum length of service required, checks needed upon return to work and staff who have been through capability/disciplinary procedures.

1. POLICY OVERVIEW

1.1 Long-serving employees with five or more years' continuous service at The Beckmead Trust ('the Trust') will be eligible to apply for a period of unpaid sabbatical leave to undertake, for example, research, further education or travel. This policy does not apply to agency workers, consultants, volunteers, or casual workers.

1.2 Both full-time and part-time employees with the relevant service are eligible to apply. The purpose of sabbatical leave will normally be linked to personal development outside the usual confines of the job, allowing the employee to return to work with new ideas and enhanced skills. Unless exceptional circumstances apply, sabbatical leave will only be granted once during the course of an employee's employment.

1.3 Employees will not be eligible to apply if capability/disciplinary proceedings have been upheld in the 24 months prior to their application for sabbatical leave.

1.4 A sabbatical period must be for a minimum period of one month and a maximum of one Academic year. This maximum period is deemed to be inclusive of any accrued holiday taken immediately before or after the sabbatical itself (see below at paragraph 4). A sabbatical period cannot bridge two academic years.

1.5 Sabbaticals are granted at the absolute discretion of the Trust, and the Trust's decision is final.

1.6 This policy does not form part of any contract of employment and the Trust may amend it at any time.

2. PROCEDURE

2.1 Any eligible employee wishing to make an application for sabbatical leave should do so in writing to their Headteacher/CEO at least 6 months prior to the employee's intended sabbatical commencement date, stating the proposed objectives and duration of the sabbatical and the perceived benefits for the Trust and the employee. Any such request will be referred to the Executive Team who will seek approval from the People and Pay Committee. An employee should not make any plans or bookings until they have received confirmation that their sabbatical request has been granted.

2.2 The Trust will endeavour to confirm its decision on an employee's sabbatical application within 28 days of the request. If it is likely to take longer than this for any reason, then they will be informed of the delay.

2.3 There is no right of appeal against a refused application for sabbatical leave although applicants have the right to reapply after a period of 6 months has elapsed from the date that the decision was communicated.

3. RELEVANT FACTORS IN APPLICATION

CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 Where sabbatical applications are granted, this will be entirely at the Trust's discretion and with such qualifications and conditions as the Trust sees fit. There is no statutory right for an employee to be granted sabbatical leave and requests will usually only be granted when they are at no additional cost to the Trust.

3.2 Other factors that the Trust may take into account in deciding whether a sabbatical can be granted and, if so, for how long, include:

- the operational needs of the school and the department in which the employee works, including the need to retain their particular skills, knowledge and experience;
- the ability to manage the employee's workload in their absence, including whether it can be managed by their colleagues or whether additional temporary staff will need to be employed;
- the length of the leave the employee has requested;
- whether any other staff are expected to be absent on a sabbatical or otherwise at the time the employee wishes to take their leave;
- the employee's length of service;
- the length of the employee's remaining term of employment, if applicable (for example, if they currently work on a fixed term contract or have already informed the Trust of their intention to retire at a particular date); and
- the likelihood that their job (or a similar post) will be available on the date they would like to return; and
- the purpose of their sabbatical and any benefits for the Trust that may arise as a result.

This list is non-exhaustive and other considerations may be taken into account depending on the circumstances.

3.3 Employees who wish to take a prolonged absence from work in order to care for a child may also have an entitlement to unpaid leave in accordance with the Parental Leave Policy.

4. IMPACT ON TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

4.1 Subject to the remainder of this paragraph 4, during a sabbatical, an employee's terms and conditions of employment will continue to subsist and the employee shall continue to be subject to the same; including, but not limited to, provisions regarding confidential information and the giving of notice.

4.2 Any accrued but unused annual leave entitlement must be taken prior to the start of the employee's sabbatical leave.

4.3 During the sabbatical period, the employee:

- will not be entitled to receive their salary;
- will not be entitled to any Trust benefits such as the accrual of additional contractual holiday as set out in their contract of employment;
- will not be entitled to Trust or statutory sick pay for any illness occurring during this time;
- may be entitled to statutory maternity, paternity, adoption, shared parental and parental leave in accordance with the relevant statutory provisions, however, their entitlement to pay in relation to those forms of leave may be affected by the sabbatical;
- will be entitled to any pay increment awarded during their absence on their return to work provided that performance before commencing sabbatical leave has been satisfactory. This increment will not however, be backdated.; and
- if a redundancy or reorganisation situation arises, will be treated in the same way as if they were at work, including being invited to attend any group or individual consultation meetings.

4.4 In addition, the following benefits will cease to apply during the unpaid sabbatical period, but will resume when the employee returns to work:

- Child Care Vouchers: Entitlement to Child Care Vouchers will cease during unpaid sabbatical leave. The employee may not be eligible to re-join the scheme when they return to work. Please contact the child care voucher provider for further information.
- Other Allowances: If the employee is in receipt of a payment for first aider, fire warden, emergency planning duties or standby, these will cease to be paid during unpaid sabbatical leave. Where applicable, the allowances will be paid on a pro rata basis for complete months worked when the employee returns to work.
- Deductions from salary: During unpaid sabbatical leave, employees will need to make alternative arrangements for any deductions which are usually made from their salary, e.g. UNISON subscriptions.

5. CONTINUOUS EMPLOYMENT

5.1 As indicated above, the employee continues to be employed during their sabbatical leave period and such period will count towards their period of continuous employment for the purposes of entitlement to other statutory employment rights (for example, the right to a redundancy payment).

6. RIGHT TO RETURN TO WORK

6.1 Subject to paragraphs 4.3 and 7.2, provided that the employee has complied with the terms of this policy and their contract of employment, at the end of the sabbatical, the employee has the right to return to the same job in which they were employed under their original contract of employment and on terms and conditions not less favourable than those which would have been applicable had they not been absent.

6.2 In exceptional circumstances (other than redundancy), where it is not possible for the employee to return to the same role, suitable alternative employment will be offered. For example, a reorganisation may occur during the sabbatical period, where the title and responsibilities of the employee's existing role may be changed. Any new position offered to the employee must be suitable to and appropriate to the circumstances, and the terms and conditions should not be less favourable.

6.3 If the period of sabbatical leave is longer than three months, the employee will be subject to a new DBS check on their return and, if applicable, right to work checks will also be undertaken as necessary. The applicant's return to employment will be conditional on these checks being satisfactory.

6.4 If the employee decides not to return to work following a period of sabbatical leave, they must give notice of their resignation as soon as possible and in accordance with the terms and conditions of their contract of employment.

6.5 If the employee wishes to end their sabbatical leave early, they must make a written request to their Headteacher/CEO to do so, giving at least eight weeks' notice. If the employee wishes to return to work earlier than the eight-week notice period, it is at the Trust's discretion to consider such requests and decide whether or not it can be approved subject to business needs.

7. KEEPING IN TOUCH

7.1 The employee will be required to keep in contact with their line manager whilst on

sabbatical leave, usually on a monthly basis, to be agreed with the line manager before sabbatical leave begins. This contact should ideally be by telephone or e-mail, but could alternatively be by post, depending on the employee's access to communications technology whilst they are away on sabbatical leave.

7.2 The employee must provide up to date contact details to their manager before they leave and notify their manager of any changes during the sabbatical.

8. WORKING WHILST ON SABBATICAL LEAVE

8.1 The employee will not, without the prior written permission of their Headteacher / CEO, be permitted to take up alternative employment (whether paid or unpaid) during sabbatical leave. Any such request should be included in the employee's written application for sabbatical leave.

9. CONDUCT

9.1 During any period of sabbatical leave, employees will continue to be employed by the Trust, and will be subject to their existing terms and conditions. They must therefore maintain conduct of the highest standard, such that public confidence in their integrity is sustained.

10. FURTHER INFORMATION

10.1 Employees and line managers can seek guidance or further information about the Sabbatical Leave Policy by contacting the HR department.