

## Paternity Leave Policy

Policy Code:	HR14
Policy Start Date:	February 2024
Policy Review Date:	July 2026

Please read this policy in conjunction with the policies listed below:

- HR8 Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy
- HR10 Redundancy Policy
- HR11 Teachers Pay Policy
- HR13 Special Leave Policy
- HR15 Time Off for Dependants Policy
- HR18 Staff Sickness and Absence Policy
- HR19 Maternity Leave Policy
- HR20 Parental Leave Policy
- HR21 Adoption Leave Policy
- HR25 Flexible Working Policy
- HR31 Shared Parental Leave Policy

## **1 Policy Statement**

- 1.1 This policy outlines member of staffs' entitlement to paternity leave and sets out the arrangements for taking it.
- 1.2 No-one who takes time off in accordance with this policy will be subjected to any detriment.
- 1.3 This policy does not form part of any member of staff's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.
- 1.4 This policy does not apply to agency workers, consultants or self-employed contractors.
- 1.5 References to the Trust or Academy within this policy specifically include all primary, secondary and special academies within the Trust, as well as the Early Years setting at the Priory Witham Academy, Priory Apprenticeships and Lincolnshire SCITT.

## **2 Roles, Responsibilities and Implementation**

- 2.1 The Pay, Performance and HR Committee has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework. The Pay, Performance and HR Committee delegates' day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its maintenance and review to the Human Resources Lead.
- 2.2 Leaders and Managers have a specific responsibility to ensure the fair application of this policy and all members of staff are responsible for supporting colleagues and ensuring its success.

## **3 Aims**

- 3.1 This policy aims to ensure a fair and equal process for all members of staff Seeking Paternity Leave.

## **4 Definitions**

- 4.1 The following definitions apply in this policy.
  - **Partner:** someone (whether of a different sex or the same sex) with whom the member of staff lives in an enduring family relationship, but who is not their parent, grandparent, sister, brother, aunt or uncle.
  - **Expected Week of Childbirth:** the week, beginning on a Sunday, in which their doctor or midwife expects the child to be born.

- **Expected Placement Date:** the date on which an adoption agency expects that it will place a child into the member of staff's care with a view to adoption.

## **5 Entitlement to Paternity Leave**

- 5.1 Paternity leave is available to members of staff who have responsibility for the child's upbringing, or care of their partner. They must be one or both of the following:
- a) On the birth of a child, where either:
    - the member of staff is the biological father and expects to have some responsibility for the child's upbringing; or
    - the member of staff is married to, the civil partner or partner of the mother or birth parent (this includes same-sex partner) and expects to have main responsibility with the mother for the child's upbringing.
  - b) On the birth of a child to a surrogate mother where the member of staff is, or their partner is, one of the child's biological parents, and the member of staff expects to obtain a parental order giving them and their Partner responsibility for the child.
  - c) Where an adoption agency places a child with the member of staff and/or their Partner for adoption and the member of staff expects to have main responsibility (with their Partner) for the child's upbringing.
  - d) Where a local authority places a child with the member of staff and/or their Partner under a fostering for adoption arrangement and the member of staff expects to have main responsibility (with their Partner) for the child's upbringing.
- 5.2 To qualify for paternity leave the member of staff must have been continuously employed by the Trust for at least 26 weeks ending with the 15th week before the Expected Week of Childbirth or the week in which the member of staff or their Partner are notified by the adoption agency or local authority that the member of staff/they have been matched with a child.
- 5.3 In adoption, fostering for adoption, and surrogacy cases, the member of staff may wish to consider adoption leave instead (see the HR21 Adoption Leave Policy). Only one parent can take adoption leave so the member of staff should discuss this with their Partner. The member of staff cannot take both paternity leave and adoption leave.
- 5.4 A member of staff cannot take paternity leave if they have already taken shared parental leave in respect of the same child. The member of staff may

be eligible to take shared parental leave after paternity leave (see the Shared Parental Leave Policy).

## **6 Entitlement to Paternity Leave**

- 6.1 Paternity leave must be taken as a period of either two consecutive weeks or separate one week blocks.
- 6.2 Paternity leave can be taken any time in the 52 weeks after the birth or adoption of their child.

## **7 Notification (Birth)**

- 7.1 To take paternity leave the member of staff must give the Trust written notice 4 weeks before they intend to take leave or no more than seven days after they and/or their Partner were notified of having been matched with the child, or as soon as you reasonably can, stating:
- a) the Expected Week of Childbirth, the Date of Childbirth, or the Expected Placement Date;
  - b) the date the member of staff would like the leave to start and
  - c) whether the member of staff intends to take separate one week blocks or two consecutive weeks' leave.
- 7.2 The Trust require a signed declaration from the member of staff that they are taking paternity leave to care for the child or to support the child's other parent in caring for the child. This form can be obtained from the HR Department.

## **8 Changing the Dates or Cancelling Leave**

- 8.1 The member of staff may vary the start date of their paternity leave if they give notice as follows:
- a) Employees are required to provide the Trust with at least 4 weeks notice before the first intended day of their paternity leave.
- 8.2 If the member of staff wishes to start their leave on a specific date that is different to the original start date they advised the Trust, they are required to inform the Trust at least 28 days before that date.
- 8.3 If the member of staff is unable to give 28 days' written notice of their wish to vary the start of their leave as set out above, they should do so as soon as possible.

## **9 Paternity Pay**

9.1 In this paragraph, Relevant Period means:

- a) in birth cases, the 4 weeks before the Intended start of Paternity Leave.
- b) in adoption cases, the eight-week period ending with the week in which the member of staff or their spouse, civil partner or partner were notified of being matched with the child.

9.2 If a member of staff takes paternity leave in accordance with this policy, they will be entitled to statutory paternity pay (SPP) if, during the Relevant Period, their average weekly earnings are not less than the lower earnings limit set by the government. The Trust policy is that member of staffs will be paid at the rate of their normal basic salary for the first week (inclusive of any SPP that may be due for that period) and statutory paternity pay for the second week.

9.3 SPP is paid at a prescribed rate which is set by the government for the relevant tax year, or at 90% of the member of staff's average weekly earnings calculated over the Relevant Period if this is lower. For details of the current prescribed rate, please contact the HR Department.

9.4 SPP is treated as pay and will be subject to the required deduction e.g. tax and National Insurance.

9.5 Staff will be eligible for SPP if the member of staff has:

- a) been continuously employed by the Trust for at least 26 weeks by the end of the 15th week before the baby is due;
- b) average weekly earnings of over the lower limit for National Insurance contributions.

## **10 Terms and Conditions During Paternity Leave**

10.1 All the terms and conditions of a member of staff's contract of employment remain in force during paternity leave, except for the terms relating to pay. In particular:

- a) if applicable, annual leave entitlement under their contract of employment shall continue to accrue; and
- b) pension benefits shall continue (see Section 12).

## **11 Annual leave**

11.1 Where applicable (depending on the member of staff's contract of employment), during paternity leave, annual leave will accrue at the rate provided under the member of staff's contract of employment.

## **12 Pensions**

- 12.1 The period of paternity leave and any further period of paid parental leave counts towards the Trust's final-salary pension scheme as pensionable service, provided the member of staff makes the necessary minimum contributions based on the pay they are receiving.

## **13 Returning to Work**

- 13.1 A member of staff is normally entitled to return to work following paternity leave to the same position they held before commencing leave. Their terms of their contract of employment will be the same as they would have been had they not been absent.
- 13.2 However, if the member of staff has combined their paternity leave with a period of parental leave of more than four weeks and it is not reasonably practicable for them to return to the same job, they may be offered a suitable and appropriate alternative position on terms and conditions that are not less favourable.
- 13.3 Requests by members of staff to change their working patterns, such as working part-time, after paternity leave will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, in accordance with the Trust's Flexible Working Policy. Unless there is a justifiable reason for refusal, bearing in mind the needs of the organisation, the Trust will try to accommodate a member of staff's wishes. Requests must be made as early as possible.
- 13.4 If a member of staff does not intend to return to work or is unsure, they should discuss this with their line manager as early as possible. If a member of staff decides not to return, they should submit their resignation in accordance with their contract of employment. Once they have done so, the member of staff will be unable to change their mind without the agreement of the Trust. This does not affect the member of staff's right to receive SPP.

## **14 Policy Change**

- 14.1 This policy may only be amended or withdrawn by The Priory Federation of Academies Trust.



## **The Priory Federation of Academies Trust Paternity Leave Policy**

This Policy has been approved by the Pay, Performance and HR Committee:

Signed..... Name..... Date:

Trustee

Signed..... Name..... Date:

Chief Executive Officer

Signed..... Name..... Date:

Designated Member of Staff

Please note that a signed copy of this agreement is available via Human Resources.