



St. Gregory's Catholic High School

Kinship Carers Leave Policy

Monitoring

The implementation of the policy will be monitored by the Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral)

Evaluation

The policy was reviewed by the Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) and SLT on 23rd October 2025 prior to the submission of the policy to Governors' Community Committee for scrutiny and recommendation to the Full Governing Board for approval.

Key policy dates:

Ratified by the Full Governing Board: 10th December 2025

Review frequency: Annually

Next policy review commences: Autumn Term 2026

Mission Statement

Every member of St. Gregory's Catholic High School will work together in solidarity for the common good of our diverse community. We have no better inspiration than the teaching of Jesus Christ. We believe every person is unique and made in the image of God and should be treated justly with dignity, love and respect. We will follow Jesus by embracing our God given charisms to carry out our mission to serve. We are one family inspired to learn.

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Appendix 1 – Kinship Care Leave Option Form

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The School is committed to supporting employees who become kinship carers. This policy sets out entitlements to kinship carers leave and pay that are available to employees who enter into a new kinship care arrangement. This policy does not form part of an employee's contract of employment, and the school reserves the right to amend it at any time.

1.2 Kinship care (sometimes known as Family and Friends Care) is where a child is being raised in the care of a family friend or family member who is not their parent.

2. ELIGIBILITY

2.1 To qualify for the right to take Kinship Care Leave, this must be a new arrangement, and employees must either have the child(ren) living with them or be preparing for the child(ren) to live with them as a permanent arrangement.

2.2 Staff do not need to have a legal order in place; this can be an informal arrangement.

2.3 Whilst we recognise that there may not be any formal arrangements in place at the time of the request, the following evidence is acceptable:

- A letter or document from the local authority or social worker confirming the kinship care arrangement.
- Court orders or legal documents (if applicable)
- A written statement from the employee explaining their role and responsibilities as a kinship carer.
- Confirmation of appointments or meetings related to the child's care (eg. School, medical or social services).

2.4 If eligible, employees may take up to a total of 52 weeks' Kinship Care Leave, unless the child ceases to live with them or reaches the age of 18.

3. KINSHIP CARE LEAVE PAY

3.1 In order to qualify for Kinship Care Leave Pay, which will be paid at the same rate as Statutory Adoption Pay, employees must:

- Be the child's primary caregiver
- Not have average weekly earnings which are less than the standard earnings limit for the payment of National Insurance Contributions
- Be employed at the Council for a continuous period of at least 26 weeks ending before the child starts living with an employee.

3.2 The current rate will be equivalent to Statutory Adoption Pay which is:

- 90% of gross average weekly earnings for the first 6 weeks
- Equivalent Statutory Adoption Pay or 90% of their gross average weekly earnings (whichever is lower) for the next 33 weeks

3.3 Employees must inform their line manager immediately if any of the following situations apply during their Kinship Care Leave as this may affect eligibility to pay:

- If an employee undertakes work for any other employer for whom they were not working prior to going on leave.
- The child(ren) ceases to live with an employee.
- If an employee is taken into legal custody.
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3.4 The payment that employees are entitled to is the same irrespective of whether more than one child is placed with them.

4. OCCUPATIONAL KINSHIP CARE LEAVE PAY

4.1 Occupational Kinship Care Leave Pay is provided to employees of the school by virtue of this policy and is dependent on having at least 1 year's continuous service with the school ending with the week before the child starts living with them.

4.2 Anyone taking up the option of Kinship Care Leave Pay will be required to return to work for 13 weeks following their return from Kinship Care leave. Anyone on a fixed term contract that is due to expire prior to the end of the 13 weeks may take the option of Occupational Kinship Care Leave Pay, however if the contract is not extended then they will be required to pay back this element of the pay.

4.3 It is assumed that employees will take their full entitlement to occupational Kinship Care leave, unless their line manager is informed differently.

4.4 Entitlement to the rights for occupational Kinship Care Leave pay will depend on the choices the employee makes in terms of returning to work and reserving the right to return to work.

4.5 Employees who qualify for occupational Kinship Care Leave Pay are entitled to:

- 26 weeks occupational Kinship Care Leave Pay commencing on the day the child starts to live with them which is made up of:
 - 6 weeks at 90% of average weekly earnings
 - 12 weeks at half pay plus the current standard rate of SAP (or 90% of weekly earnings if this is less) up to the level of current average weekly earnings
 - 8 weeks at the current standard rate of SAP (or 90% of weekly earnings if this is less)
- 26 weeks additional Kinship Care Leave Pay made up of:
 - 13 weeks at the current standard rate of SAP (or 90% of weekly earnings if this is less)
 - 13 weeks without pay

5. NOTICE TO TAKE LEAVE

5.1 The school recognises that kinship care arrangements can happen unexpectedly and with little notice. With that in mind, if an employee wishes to take Kinship Care Leave, they must inform their manager in writing by completing the Kinship Care Leave Form no later than two weeks after the date on which the child(ren) moved in with them or the employee was informed the child(ren) would be moving in with them.

5.2 Kinship Care Leave can start on the day the child is placed with an employee (whether this is earlier or later than expected) or on a date that is up to 14 days before the expected date of placement.

6. KEEPING IN TOUCH/REASONABLE CONTACT

6.1 Employees are able to attend work for a maximum of 10 days during their Kinship Care leave without their leave or pay being affected. This includes carrying out any work under the contract of employment, training or any activity undertaken for the purpose of keeping in touch with the workplace. Any work carried out on a day or part of a day shall constitute one kit day for these purposes.

6.2 Attendance at work must be agreed between an employee and their line manager.

6.3 The line manager will need to consider whether the employee should be paid for their attendance at work, dependent on the nature and duration of the work. Where an employee undertakes work under their contract of employment, they are entitled to be paid for that work. Employees will be paid their normal hourly rate for the hours worked on that KIT day, regardless of whether they are in receipt of pay. Any payment (inclusive of the equivalent SAP) should not exceed a normal day's pay.

6.4 During the period of leave, the employee and their line manager should be in reasonable contact to discuss issues, such as the return to work. This would not constitute as 'work' and will not count towards the 10 days.

6.5 In addition, employees should be kept informed of other work issues, for example, job vacancies (where requested by the employee), workplace developments and training opportunities. In cases of redundancy, there are statutory obligations placed on the Council in terms of communicating, consulting etc. with employees on leave. Further information is available from Human Resources.

7. RETURNING TO WORK

7.1 If an employee decides not to return to work, they are required by law to give contractual notice if they are resigning from their position.

7.2 Employees wishing to apply for flexible working arrangements to commence on return from their leave are advised to take advice from their trade union representative before submitting the request to their line manager for consideration as soon as possible in order for the process to be followed and any practical arrangements to be implemented in a timely manner. Employees may wish to discuss the issue with their line manager prior to commencing leave.

7.3 Where an employee is unable to return to work on their expected return date due to illness, they will be covered by the school's normal sickness scheme from the date they should have returned.

7.4 If an employee changes their mind about the date, they intend to return to work they are required to give 21 days' notice, in writing, of the date on which they wish to return.

8. ANNUAL LEAVE FOR STAFF PAID ALL YEAR ROUND

8.1 Employees should consider their position in relation to annual leave where the period of kinship care leave runs from one leave year to the next. Annual leave should be taken in the current year; however, employees can carry any untaken annual leave into the next leave year. Leave arrangements should be discussed and agreed with the line manager as early as possible.

8.2 Employees are entitled to accrue any Bank Holidays that fall during the whole period of Kinship Care Leave. A pro-rata entitlement will be added to the employee's annual leave entitlement.

9. ANNUAL LEAVE FOR TERM TIME ONLY STAFF

9.1 Term time only staff have the right to paid leave under the Working Time Regulations (WTR). This is not an additional entitlement to annual leave on top of the current school closure arrangements. For this purpose a year would commence 1st September (commencement of a new academic year).

19.2 Annual leave entitlement can be offset by any period of school closure that has taken place in the leave year in question, both before and after Kinship Care leave.

10. LGPS PENSION

10.1 The 39 weeks kinship care pay is treated as pay for pension purposes and contributions will be deducted from it, meaning that the period counts towards future pension calculations on retirement.

10.2 Employees who are members of the Local Government Pension Scheme can choose whether or not to pay pension contributions for the duration of any unpaid leave. Contributions will be based on the last weeks or month's pay. Employees will need to indicate on the appropriate Option Form that they wish to continue paying deductions. Further information is available from Human Resources.

10.3 The effect of continuing to make payments is that the period of unpaid leave also counts as service for pension purposes and will be taken into account when calculating any benefit under the scheme.

10.4 For any period of unpaid leave, employees may wish to consider making voluntary National Insurance Contributions to ensure their state retirement pension is not affected. Employees can ascertain the status of their contributions by contacting the Contributions Agency. The Contributions Agency will be able to advise whether or not backdated payments are necessary.

11. TEACHERS PENSION

11.1 The 39 weeks adoption pay period is treated as pay for pension purposes and contributions will be deducted from it, meaning that the period counts towards future pension calculations on retirement.

11.2 Any periods of unpaid leave will not count as pensionable employment and will be shown as days excluded for pension purposes.

KINSHIP CARE LEAVE OPTION FORM

I wish to inform you that I am expecting to become a Kinship Carer.

The date or expected date of placement:

Start date of Leave: _____ End Date of Leave: _____

I have/have not attached official notification (delete as appropriate).

Pensions - I understand that contributions will be deducted from all the pay I receive during my Kinship Care Leave and that I have certain options regarding any unpaid period of Leave. I wish to:

Elect to pay contributions during any period of unpaid Kinship Care Leave.

Reserve my right to pay pension contributions for any unpaid period of Kinship Care Leave retrospectively.

I understand that I must elect to do this within 30 days of my return to work and should contact Employee Services to obtain the relevant form.

NAME:

EMPLOYEE NO:

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

JOB TITLE:

DIRECTORATE/ESTABLISHMENT