IMPERIUM FEDERATION

Policy	**Compassionate Leave**		
Date for Review	October 2027	**Schedule**	Every 3 Years
Date agreed by staff	October 2025	**Date agreed by GB**	October 2025

1. Introduction

1.1 All employees are entitled to take a reasonable amount of time off during working hours to deal with certain types of unexpected or sudden emergencies in relation to their dependants.

1.2 This policy applies to all Royal Greenwich employees and excludes agency staff and contractors. For those employed in schools, employees should consult the relevant School.

2. Definition of dependants

2.1 An employee's dependant is a mother, father, husband, wife, civil partner, guardian, brother, sister, son or daughter or someone living in the employee's household as a member of their family. It also applies to any person who reasonably relies on the employee for assistance as their primary carer if they fell ill or was injured or assaulted or who would rely on the employee to make arrangements for the provision of care in the event of illness or injury.

3. Purpose of Dependants/Compassionate leave

3.1 The purpose of the time off is to enable the employee:

(a) To provide assistance when a dependant becomes ill or is injured or is assaulted.
(b) To make arrangements for the provision of care for a dependant who is ill. or injured, or where there is unexpected disruption or termination of arrangements for the care of a dependant.
(c) To deal with an incident involving the employee's child and which occurs unexpectedly during school/college time.
(d) To make funeral arrangements and /or attend the funeral when a dependant dies.

3.2 It is not the purpose of this policy to allow the employee time off to deal with any emergency regardless of its nature. Therefore, the employee will have no right to time off to deal with, for example, a burst boiler. For such emergencies, managers should view requests for annual/flexi-leave sympathetically.

3.3 If a Headteacher/manager discovers that an employee has abused this policy the matter should be dealt with in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure. It would be sensible for Headteachers/managers to record information about leave taken by an employee.

4. Level of Dependants/Compassionate leave

4.1 Employees are not entitled as of right to any paid dependants/compassionate leave. However, Headteachers may use their discretion to grant paid leave as outlined in the table below. Headteachers have the authority to see such evidence as is required, and to satisfy themselves that the set criteria are met.

4.2 The individual periods of discretionary paid leave are subject to an aggregated maximum of ten days in a leave year. Where an employee seeks more than such period

with pay, the matter should be discussed with School's HR by the Headteacher/manager with all relevant details to enable further consideration.

4.3 The employee is required to tell their Headteacher/manager as soon as they can the reason for the absence and its likely duration.

4.4 Whilst no maximum has been set, the intention is that the employee should only take a reasonable amount of time off to deal with genuine emergencies and for making arrangements that will take care of the issue in the future. It is not intended that time off should be taken on a continuing basis, to attend to the long- term consequences of the emergency until the issue is resolved.

4.5 In relation to the death of a dependant overseas, the employee and the Headteacher/manager will need to agree the amount of time off, and this must be reasonable according to the circumstances.

4.6 Where an employee falls sick on a day that would otherwise have been taken as dependants/compassionate leave, that day will count as sickness (and no equivalent time off will be granted at a later date). The normal arrangements for reporting and managing sickness absence will apply.

4.7 The Application for Dependents/Compassionate leave Form must be completed in respect of paid leave.

5. Unpaid leave

5.1 Where discretionary paid leave is not granted, the employee is entitled to take the time off, unpaid, if the emergency relates to a dependant as defined above and if the employee meets the condition of notifying the emergency as explained above. The right to this unpaid leave is a legal right and must not be breached by unreasonably refusing an employee the time off.

5.2 Where an employee has an issue for which paid leave can not be approved but in the view of a Headteacher the issue is exceptional and warrants sympathetic treatment on compassionate grounds, the Headteacher may exercise their discretion in granting unpaid leave for a duration which takes account of the seriousness of the situation and needs of the service.

5.3 In circumstances where an employee is not granted paid leave under this policy, and where unpaid leave is refused because there is no entitlement to it or the circumstances do not warrant it, the employee should apply for annual/flexi leave in the usual way.

5.4 Headteachers/Managers should keep records of the periods of unpaid leave taken by employees including dates and reasons for the leave.

6. Changes to working hours

6.1 Where through caring commitments, personal or domestic difficulties it would assist employees to alter their hours of work either permanently or temporarily, Headteachers should make every effort to allow this subject to the needs of the service. Employees who wish to alter their hours of work permanently should apply to do so under the Flexible Working Scheme.

7. Parental Bereavement Leave

7.1 Paid Parental Bereavement Leave Introduction

Sadly, bereavement is something that will affect all of us at some time in our lives. In fact, research suggests that 1 in 10 employees are likely to be affected by the death of a loved one at any given point.

Previously, there was no legal obligation for employers to provide paid time off for grieving parents.

7.2 What does this mean for staff?

With effect from April 2020, new entitlements are being introduced to support grieving staff.

Under the Employment Rights Act 1996, employees only have the legal right to take 'reasonable' time off to deal with an emergency – such as the death of a child. This entitlement is only to unpaid leave and does not necessarily allow for a longer time off to grieve.

7.3 Who is entitled to paid Parental Bereavement Leave?

- Parents and primary carers who have suffered the loss of a child under the age of 18.

- 'Primary carers' include adopters, foster parents, guardians and those classed as 'kinship carers', who may be close relatives or family friends that have assumed responsibility for looking after a child in the absence of parents.

- The new entitlement will also apply to parents who suffer a stillbirth after 24 weeks of pregnancy. In this instance, female employees will still be entitled to up to 52 weeks of maternity leave and/or pay, as will a mother who loses a child after it is born.

- Parents and primary carers must have been employed for a continuous period of at

least 26 weeks before a child's death to be eligible for paid parental bereavement leave. However, all employees have a 'day one' right to unpaid bereavement leave.

8. Parental Bereavement Leave Entitlement and Pay

8.1 W**hat are employees entitled to?**

8.2 Parents and primary carers, who have been employed for a continuous period of at least 26 weeks prior to when the child dies and have received pay above the lower earnings limit for the previous eight weeks, are entitled to at least two weeks' statutory paid leave.

8.3 Workers who have not been employed for a continuous period of at least 26 weeks are entitled to two weeks' unpaid leave.

8.4 The two weeks' leave can be taken either in one block of two weeks, or as two separate blocks of one week each. It must be taken within 56 weeks of the date of the child's death. This is to allow for time to be taken off for difficult events such as birthdays or anniversaries.

8.5 Notice requirements for taking the leave will be flexible, so it can be taken at short notice, by completing the Application for Dependents/Compassionate leave Form.

8.6 The pay rate for bereavement leave is expected to be similar to the statutory rate for maternity/paternity leave.

8.7 If an employee loses more than one child, they will be entitled to take a separate period of leave for each child.

9. **Parental Bereavement Leave - Additional Considerations**

9.1 Managers will not request a copy of the child's death certificate as evidence of an employee's right to the entitlement.

9.2 Managers will pay regard to the fact that different religions have their own bereavement traditions and funeral rites that must be followed.

9.3 Managers should not refuse to allow an employee to observe their beliefs.

9.4 Royal Greenwich recognises, under the Data Protection Act 2018, that employees have the right to keep details of their child's death confidential.

9.5 HR and managers will be clear on how much detail employees would like their colleagues to know and ensure that their wishes are respected.

9.6 Royal Greenwich recognises that that people recover at different rates and managers will be supportive and sensitive to employee needs during this difficult time**.**

10. Further Information

10.1 Further information and advice can be obtained from the School's HR team.

HR Professional Services April 2020

REASON FOR REQUEST	CONDITION
A Compassionate Leave Death of Dependant (see definition para 2)	If responsible for making the funeral arrangements: If not making the funeral arrangements:
B Parental Bereavement Leave – loss of a child under the age of 18.	> 26 weeks of service < Less than 26 weeks service
C Death of a relative other than as specified at A and B	
D Illness, physical injury or assault of a dependent (see definition at Para 2)	Where the employee obtains from the medical practitioner responsible for the care of the person v is ill, physically injured or physically assaulted either doctor's certificate or written statement certifying t his/her presence is needed to care for the individual a stated duration and provides this as soon as he/sh able at his/her own cost.
E Where normal child care arrangements breakdown due to illness of person caring for child for whom the employee is responsible or emergency childminder absence where the employee is unable to make suitable alternative child care arrangements; OR F Where normal care arrangements break down in an emergency in respect of an adult disabled/infirm relative/partner. Such as the emergency closure of a Day Centre. The relative/partner must live with and be dependant on the employee.	Where the employee provides as soon as possible a letter from the person/institution who normally provides the care to confirm their inability to provi this for the duration of the difficulty.

G Where the employee is the primary carer of a child whose school closes due to adverse weather conditions or transport strike, as a result of which the employee is unable to attend work;	The benefits will apply where Headteachers (or th with delegated authority) are satisfied that the absen from work is directly related to adverse weather conditions or transport strike and as a consequence employees suffer travelling difficulties. Normal arrangements for reporting absences will apply in all cases.

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