

Compassionate and Bereavement Leave Policy



St Benedict
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

Authors:	HR
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ST BENEDICT CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

COMPASSIONATE AND BEREAVEMENT LEAVE POLICY

Our mission is inspired by our Patron St Benedict, to live, learn, pray and celebrate together. Our community of Catholic schools are committed to ensuring that each child realises their God given gifts. Our strong sense of community promotes Gospel values which inspire students to make a positive contribution to society. We provide the best possible opportunities for every child's education, with an overarching mission focused on delivering a strong Catholic education, firmly rooted in the belief that Christ should be at the core of all our endeavour.

This Compassionate and Bereavement Leave Policy has been approved and adopted by St Benedict Catholic Academy Trust for use in all its academies on 01 September 2025 and will be reviewed every three years.

DEFINITIONS

In this Compassionate and Bereavement Leave Policy, unless the context otherwise requires, the following expressions shall have the following meanings:

- i. 'Academy' means any academy operated by St Benedict Catholic Academy Trust and includes all sites upon which the Academy undertaking is, from time to time, being carried out.
- ii. 'Board' means the board of Directors of the Trust.
- iii. 'Headteacher' means the most senior teacher in the Academy who is responsible for its management and administration. Such teacher may also be referred to as the Head of School or Principal.
- iv. 'Local Academy Committee/Local Governing Board' means the body carrying out the employment functions of the Trust in relation to the Academy.
- v. 'Trust' means St Benedict Catholic Academy Trust, which is the company responsible for the management of the Academy and, for all purposes, means the employer of staff at the Academy.

1. About this policy

- 1.1 Compassionate leave is designed to help you cope with unexpected illness and/or injury of a close relative for whom you provide care, and which leads to domestic difficulties.
- 1.2 Bereavement leave is designed to help you cope with the death of a close relative, deal with necessary arrangements and attend their funeral. It may also be granted where a close relative is seriously or critically ill or has suffered a life-threatening injury.
- 1.3 Close relative means a spouse or partner, child, step-child, parent, step-parent, parent-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, brother or sister, stepbrother or stepsister, or brother or sister-in-law.

1.4 This policy applies to all employees. It does not apply to agency workers, consultants or self-employed contractors.

1.5 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment, and we may amend it at any time.

2. Personnel responsible for implementing the policy

2.1 The Board has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance. The Headteacher has delegated day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its maintenance and review.

2.2 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. Entitlement

3.1 You are entitled to take [paid] compassionate leave of up to [NUMBER] days in any academic year in respect of a close relative where that person relies on you to make arrangements for their care in emergency circumstances.

3.2 You are entitled to take [paid] bereavement leave of up to [NUMBER] days in any academic year in respect of a close relative. In the event of a death of a child (including a stillbirth) please see our Parental Bereavement Leave Policy.

3.3 We may exercise our discretion to grant a period of [paid] compassionate leave in respect of any other relative or close friend who does not meet the definition in paragraph 1.3, depending on the circumstances of each case.

3.4 If you are still unable to return to work following an authorised period of compassionate leave you should contact your Headteacher or HR Department to discuss any additional requirements for ongoing leave that you may have. It may be appropriate to take a period of annual leave, subject to your manager's approval, or we may at our discretion grant you further unpaid leave in those circumstances. This will be determined by the circumstances of the case and the impact that your ongoing absence will have on operations and other staff workloads, though we will deal with all such requests sensitively.

3.5 If you need longer term changes to your working arrangements, please talk to your Headteacher in the first instance and consider making a request under our Flexible Working Policy.

4. Requesting compassionate leave

4.1 We recognise that it may not always be possible to request compassionate leave or bereavement leave in advance. However, where it is possible, you should make a request to your Headteacher or HR Department. You should tell them the reasons for your request and the number of days leave you would like to take.

- 4.2 Where it is not possible to request leave in advance you should contact your Headteacher or HR Department as soon as possible to tell them the reason for your absence and the number of days you expect to be absent. Someone can do this on your behalf if necessary.

Compassionate & Bereavement Leave Policy – Flow Chart

This policy outlines the Trust's approach to providing support for employees facing difficult personal circumstances. It covers two distinct, but related, types of leave: Compassionate Leave, which supports employees dealing with the unexpected illness or injury of a close relative for whom they provide care, and Bereavement Leave, which supports employees in coping with the death of a close relative, including managing necessary arrangements and attending the funeral.

Bereavement Leave may also be granted when a close relative is seriously or critically ill or has suffered a life-threatening injury. A 'close relative' is defined within this policy. Requests for leave should be made to the Headteacher as soon as possible.

Flow chart

Compassionate & Bereavement Leave

1. Compassionate leave is designed to help you cope with unexpected illness and/or injury of a close relative for whom you provide care.

2. Bereavement leave is designed to help you cope with the death of a close relative, deal with necessary arrangements and attend their funeral. It may also be granted where a close relative is seriously or critically ill or has suffered a life-threatening injury.

3. Close relative means a spouse or partner, child, stepchild, parent, stepparent, parent-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, brother or sister, stepbrother or stepsister, or brother or sister-in-law.

4. Request is made to Headteacher as soon as possible.

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