



SPARKEN HILL
ACADEMY

PATERNITY LEAVE POLICY

	Date Issued	Prepared By	Approved	Comments
1.0	September 2021	CEFM	Sept 2021	Adoption of CEFM policy from historic LA version
1.1	April 2026	CEFM	May 2026 (FGB)	Amendment to policy following ERA 2025

PATERNITY LEAVE POLICY

The governing board of Sparken Hill Academy shall apply the statutory provisions for paternity leave. If eligible, statutory paternity pay (SPP) would apply at the same rate as for statutory maternity pay (SMP).

This policy should be read in conjunction with the academy's policies on maternity leave, adoption leave, shared parental leave and neonatal leave and pay.

Paternity leave is defined as an absence from work for the purpose of caring for a new-born child or for supporting the child's mother.

Time off to accompany partner (or surrogate mother) to antenatal appointments

Employees have the right to take unpaid time off work to accompany their partner (or the surrogate mother) to two antenatal appointments, up to a maximum of 6.5 hours for each appointment.

Employees wishing to accompany their partner to an antenatal appointment must notify the academy in writing of the date and time of the appointment.

Paternity leave

Eligibility

In order to qualify for paternity leave and statutory paternity pay, the employee must:

- Be the biological father of the child; or be married to the mother of the child; or be the partner of the child's mother (including a same-sex partner of the mother), living with her in an enduring family relationship; or be the intended parent (if you're having a baby through a surrogacy arrangement).
- Have or expect to have responsibility for the upbringing of the child if they are the child's father; or have the main responsibility for the upbringing of the child, apart from that of the mother, if they are the mother's husband or partner, but not the child's father; or is the intended parent of a child in a surrogacy arrangement and expects to be entitled to and intends to apply for a parental order for the child.
- For adoption cases, the employee must be the spouse, civil partner or partner of the child's adopter. The employee must have been continuously employed for not less than 26 weeks ending with the week the child's adopter is notified they have been matched with the child.
- Have average weekly earnings equal to or above the lower earnings limit for national insurance purposes for the eight-week period leading up to and including the week of notification.
- Provide the governing board with a signed declaration that they meet the conditions for eligibility. The academy may also request a self-certificate as evidence of entitlement to paternity leave.

Paternity leave arrangements

Paternity leave may be taken as two consecutive weeks or in two blocks of one week split over the course of the first year after birth or adoption.

Paternity leave cannot start before the child's birth.

The paternity leave may begin either:

- From the date of the child's birth, even when this is earlier or later than expected.
- From a chosen time after the child's birth, even when this is earlier or later than expected.
- From a chosen date later than the first day of the expected week of childbirth.

Paternity leave may begin on any day of the week on or following the child's birth, but must be taken and completed within the first year after the birth or adoption of the child.

Paternity leave will not be available in the following circumstances:

- The employee has taken statutory paid time off to attend adoption appointments in respect of that child (see the adoption leave policy). This is because paid time off is limited to the parent taking statutory adoption leave (the primary adopter).
- The employee has already taken paternity leave in relation to the child as a result of the child being placed with a prospective adopter who, at the time of the placement, was the employee's spouse, civil partner or partner.

Notifying the academy of the intention to take paternity leave

The employee shall be required to satisfy the governing board as to their entitlement to paternity leave, as identified in the above paragraphs and they must give at least the required statutory notice. This notice must be given in writing and should be given 28 days before the date of paternity leave is due to start. The employee must include the following details in the written notice:

- The expected week of childbirth.
- The duration of paternity leave the employee has decided to take, that is, two consecutive weeks or two blocks of one week at any point in the first year.
- The date the employee has chosen to begin their paternity leave entitlement (whether as consecutive weeks or blocks of one week).

Conditions

- The employee must provide their employer with a signed declaration and, where requested, a completed self-certificate as evidence of their entitlement to statutory paternity pay. The employee must give notice of the birth to the governing board as soon as is practicable.
- The employee shall be entitled to return to their job following paternity leave on the same conditions as if they had not been absent. For the duration of the paternity leave, the employee's normal terms and conditions, with the exception of pay, will apply.
- An employee requesting to take parental leave immediately after paternity leave shall be required to give the required notice for both (as described above) to the governing board.

Neonatal care leave and pay

The statutory right to neonatal care leave and pay came into effect from 6 April 2025. This provides eligible parents with time off from work to care for their newborn baby who requires extended hospital care.

Neonatal care leave will be available to parents of babies who are admitted into neonatal care up to 28 days old and who have a continuous stay in hospital of seven full days or longer. Eligible parents are entitled to one week of neonatal care leave for each qualifying week their child spends in neonatal care, up to a maximum of 12 weeks. This leave is on top of any other leave they are entitled to, including maternity, adoption, paternity and shared parental leave.

Employees may also be eligible for Neonatal Care Pay if they have a minimum of 26 weeks continuous service and earnings that meet the Lower Earnings Limit.

Please see the neonatal care leave and pay policy for further details.

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually.