



SPARKEN HILL
ACADEMY

NEONATAL CARE LEAVE AND PAY POLICY

ADOPTED: APRIL 2025
NEXT REVIEW DATE: JUNE 2027

SPARKEN HILL ACADEMY
SPARKEN HILL
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NEONATAL CARE LEAVE AND PAY POLICY

The governing board of Sparken Hill Academy shall apply the statutory provisions for neonatal care leave and pay.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's policies on maternity leave, adoption leave, paternity leave, shared parental leave and parental bereavement leave.

This policy does not form part of any contract of employment and may be amended from time-to-time.

This policy applies to all employees who meet the eligibility criteria outlined below and have a child requiring neonatal care in a hospital or other neonatal care setting.

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

Neonatal care

Neonatal care is medical care of a child that starts within 28 days of birth. It is designed to assist new parents of babies who are admitted into neonatal care.

Neonatal care includes:

- Medical care received in a hospital.
- Medical care received in any other place which meets the following criteria:
 - The child was an inpatient in hospital and the care is received upon that child leaving the hospital,
 - The care is under the direction of a consultant, and
 - The care includes ongoing monitoring by, and visits to the child from, healthcare professionals arranged by the hospital where the child was an inpatient.
- Palliative or end of life care.

Entitlement to neonatal care leave

You have the right to take neonatal care leave if you:

- Are the child's parent (this includes where a child has been adopted, including from overseas and surrogacy arrangements).
- Are the partner of the above at the date of birth or (in the case of adoptions at the date of placement by a UK adoption agency or the date the child entered the UK if adopting from overseas).
- Have or expect to have responsibility for the child's upbringing (or, if you are the partner of the child's mother, the main responsibility apart from any responsibility of the mother).

Neonatal care leave is available once a child has received neonatal care for an uninterrupted period of seven days, not counting the day on which the neonatal care starts. The first week of neonatal

care would ordinarily be taken as maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave as appropriate.

You are entitled to take up to a maximum of 12 weeks of neonatal care leave.

After the uninterrupted period of seven days of the child first receiving neonatal care, neonatal care leave may be taken at any time up to 68 weeks after the date of birth.

Neonatal care leave can be taken as a continuous period or in flexible blocks, subject to agreement with the school and in accordance with the two periods set out below.

Neonatal care leave can be taken in two periods as follows:

- Tier 1 period – begins with the day the baby starts receiving neonatal care until the seventh day after the child stops receiving neonatal care. During this period, neonatal care leave can be taken in continuous blocks of a minimum of one week.
- Tier 2 period – the remainder of the 68-week period. Leave during this period must be taken in one continuous block.

Notifying the school of the intention of taking neonatal care leave

You should notify your line manager as soon as reasonably practicable of your intention to take neonatal care leave.

- During the tier 1 period, you must provide notice on or before the day you wish to start neonatal care leave.
- During the tier 2 period, you must give 15 days' notice to take one week of neonatal care leave, or 28 days' notice to take two or more weeks.

You have the right to cancel any tier 2 period of neonatal care leave by providing notice at least 15 days before the leave starts (for a single week) or 28 days before the leave starts (for two or more consecutive weeks).

When providing notice, the following information must be provided in writing:

- Your name.
- Your child's date of birth.
- In cases of adoption, the date the child is placed (or in cases of overseas adoption, the date the child enters Great Britain).
- The date the child started to receive neonatal care.
- If the child is no longer receiving neonatal care, the date the neonatal care ended.
- The date you wish neonatal care leave to begin.
- The number of weeks of neonatal care leave you wish to take or have taken.
- A declaration that you are taking neonatal care leave for the purpose of caring for the child.
- A declaration that you meet the eligibility requirements as set out above.

- A formal request should include relevant medical evidence, estimated leave dates and expected duration.

You must keep your line manager informed about any changes and the date that the child's neonatal care ends as soon as reasonably practicable after the care has ended.

The school reserves the right to maintain reasonable contact with you during any period of neonatal care leave.

Entitlement to neonatal care pay

You may be entitled to statutory neonatal care pay, subject to eligibility criteria.

You must have at least 26 weeks' continuous service ending with the relevant week.

You must have received normal weekly earnings, for a period of eight weeks ending with the relevant week, of not less than the lower earnings limit.

Statutory neonatal care pay will be in line with the government-set rate or 90% of an employee's average weekly earnings, whichever is lower.

Employees earning below the lower earnings limit may not qualify for statutory pay but can explore other financial support options.

Rights during neonatal care leave

You will continue to accrue holiday entitlement during your leave.

You will remain eligible for benefits such as pension contributions, subject to scheme rules.

You have the right to return to your previous role or an equivalent position upon completion of neonatal care leave.

Additional support

You are encouraged to speak to your line manager if you are finding it difficult to cope at work while your child is in neonatal care. Any information disclosed will be treated with sensitivity and in strict confidence.

The school also supports and encourages employees to access additional support services, such as Employee Assistance Programs (EAP), flexible working arrangements and parental support groups.

Line managers should provide appropriate support, including reasonable adjustments where necessary.