



1. This policy covers occupational sickness leave, annual leave, family leave and miscellaneous leave. It is based on the RBC compassionate leave policy.

### **The policy applies to:**

- all employees of the College, including the Head teacher;
- staff who are centrally employed by the local authority (LA) and who work for Cranbury College;
- staff employed in units or bases that are attached to the College

### **The procedure does not apply to:**

- College meals staff employed by external contractors
- employees of external contractors and providers of services. (Such staff are covered by the relevant procedures of their employing body)

## **2. PURPOSE SCOPE & PRINCIPLES**

- Annual leave and **occupational sick leave** will be in accordance with the relevant conditions of service for teachers and support staff.
- Other leave of absence will normally be on an unpaid basis, unless otherwise specified.
- The operational needs of the College will be paramount and, except in emergency circumstances, adequate notice of a request for leave of absence must be given.
- The responsibility for exercising discretion on behalf of the Governing Body is the Head teacher's, in accordance with the professional duties defined in the school Teachers Pay and Conditions Document.
- Any dispute or grievance about a request for leave of absence or payment during leave of absence will be dealt with through the College's Grievance Procedure.
- A principal purpose in setting out this Policy is to ensure that requests are dealt with fairly and consistently.

- Staff will not be permitted to take leave during the term unless express consent from the Head teacher has been given.

### 3 Sicknesses

- Occupational sick leave will be in accordance with the relevant conditions of service for teachers and support staff.

#### 3.1 Reporting sickness

- All sickness should be reported to the college by telephone (not text) at the earliest opportunity and no later than 8:00 on the day of absence
- Sickness may be self certified for the first five days of absence a doctors note will be required for any absence exceeding five days
- Anyone signed off from working by a doctor may not return to work until the end of the period stated unless the 'Fit Note' suggests that a return to work is possible if certain adjustments are made. These adjustments need to be agreed with the line manager and if agreement cannot be reached the individual remains on sick leave
- A return to work interview will take place as soon as is practicable with a senior manager on return from any period of sickness
- Managers will follow the procedures for managing absence should issues relating to performance arise.

#### 3.2 Monitoring absences

- The college follows procedures outlined in RBC document "Attendance management in the workplace a guide for managers" and **Capability: Managing Sickness Absence - Procedures for Schools**
- The Council is required to submit sickness absence data as part of the scheme of National Best Value Performance Indicators. Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) 12 measures the number of working days / shifts lost due to sickness absence. Sickness absence is part of the Comprehensive Performance Assessments matrix used by the Audit Commission to evaluate local authorities' performance. Absence management is linked to internal and external assessments of organisational performance and is seen as a key indicator of 'corporate health'.
- Reading Borough Council's targets for sickness absence are decided corporately and based on previous years' absence levels.

**Sickness absence per employee per year should be no higher than 8 days given normal circumstances.**

- Managers should aim to ensure that the average sickness absence level for their team does not exceed the corporate target.

### ***Undertaking Reviews - What is a 'trigger point' and how should it be set?***

*(From "Attendance management in the workplace a guide for managers")*

*1.7.1 'Trigger points' refer to a defined level of absence (or benchmark) at which point a manager carries out a personal absence review and considers whether further action is required for that employee. It can also provide a common understanding within the team/unit and/or organisation of the level of absence that is acceptable.*

Cranbury College triggers are defined below:-

- 9+ days absence triggers a well-being check and review
- 11+ days absence triggers a significant absence conversation and action planning
- 16+ days absence triggers an Occupational Health referral and ill-health capability conversation.

## **Other Leave**

### **4 TEACHERS' WORKING TIME**

A Teacher employed full-time must be available for work for 195 days in any College year.

190 of those days must be days of which he/she may be required to teach pupils and perform other duties and 5 days must be days on which he/she may only be required to perform other duties. The same applies for a Teacher employed part-time, except the number of hours he/she must be available for work must be a proportion of full-time hours.

In addition to the hours a teacher is required to be available for work, he/she must work such reasonable additional hours as may be necessary to enable him/her to discharge effectively his/her professional duties.

These provisions do not apply to deputy head teachers, assistant head teachers, advanced skills teachers or teachers in receipt of an acting allowance for carrying out the duties of a head teacher, deputy head teacher or assistant head teacher.

### **5 SPECIAL OCCASIONAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

The following are situations that qualify for compassionate leave.

#### **5.1 Time off for a sick dependant or immediate family member**

The first day is normally paid to allow the employee to make arrangements for further care of the individual. Any further absence

should be unpaid except in exceptional circumstances e.g. hospitalisation.

**This leave would not normally exceed 1 or 2 days per incident and should not amount to more than 5 days paid time off in any year.**

## **5.2 Compassionate, Emergency or Exceptional Leave**

Staff will normally be granted up to 5 days paid leave in compassionate, emergency or exceptional circumstances, such as the death or serious illness of a close relative or equivalent. The leave is to deal with the immediate issues and to sort out long term arrangements if necessary. In some cases a longer period of absence may be approved on an unpaid basis.

## **5.3 Other personal reasons**

Exceptionally, there may be other personal reasons for requesting leave of absence. Examples might be attendance at a child's graduation ceremony or "once in a lifetime" visit to relatives overseas. Such leave, where granted, will normally be unpaid and subject to adequate notice so that replacement staff can be employed if necessary.

## **5.4 Extended leave of absence**

Requests for longer periods of leave will be considered on an unpaid basis in consultation with Reading LA, for example, in the case of a lengthy period of caring for a chronically sick, disabled, or terminally ill, dependent relative. Extended leave can be for up to a year's duration. Sufficient notice that allows the appointment of a replacement should be given wherever possible.

## **5.6 Moving house**

Reading Borough Council policy is that such leave is unpaid. Cranbury College allows 1 day paid leave for moving house.

## **5.7 Service with Auxiliary Forces**

Volunteer members of UK Armed Forces are allowed two weeks paid leave to attend an annual summer camp. Teaching staff are only granted paid leave if the force's unit cannot arrange exercises during holiday periods.

## **5.8 Mobilisation**

When reservists are needed to fulfil their part of the UK's defence strategy, they are 'mobilised' or 'called out' into full time service with the regular forces or military operations. While the reservist is mobilised the College does not have to continue to pay them, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) will pay their salary. For further information on

mobilisation, please refer to the SaBRE (Supporting Britain's Reservists and Employers) website: [www.sabre.mod.uk](http://www.sabre.mod.uk)

## **5.9 Carry over of annual leave**

The College expects employees to take their annual leave during school holidays. Any member of staff on leadership scale may be asked to work during this time by the head teacher. Further details are outlined in teachers pay and conditions documentation. All staff have a Minimum entitlement of 24 days paid holiday in accordance with Working Time Regulations, Inclusive of Bank Holidays.

## **5.10 Religious Festivals**

Where staff can show that they are bona fide adherents of any organised religion and that they require leave for the purpose of an official holy day, the Governing Body will allow up to 2 days paid leave. Staff taking such leave are asked to make up this time at a later date.

## **5.11 Sporting Events**

Up to 18 days paid leave per year may be granted for staff who represent their country in recognised sporting events.

## **5.12 Attendance at Court Proceedings**

### **5.12.1 Jury Service**

Staff required to attend for jury service should arrange for the loss of earnings certificate to be forwarded to the RBC payroll team. The certificate will be returned to the member of staff completed to show to what extent the salary will be stopped during their absence. The amount will then be claimed from the court.

### **5.12.2 Witness summonses and subpoenas**

Staff subject to a witness summons or subpoena should be allowed paid time off work to attend court.

## **5.13 Public Duties**

College employees may be granted up to 18 days per annum paid leave to carry out the duties of the office of Leader, Mayor, JP or Chairman of Local Authorities. For employees who are College Governor's, up to 3 days per annum will be paid, In addition to this, unpaid leave can be granted for employees carrying out public duties.

## **5.14 Study/Examination Leave**

For employees who are sitting examinations relevant to their current post as outlined in their performance management documents, providing the employer is paying the fees, half a day study per examination plus half a day per examination will be paid.

## 5.16 Time off for Trade Union duties

The College recognises the legal requirement for employers to allow reasonable time off work for the College's elected representatives of recognised trade unions to carry out their duties. Duties that warrant time off with pay include:

- consultation on terms and conditions of employment or the physical conditions of work;
- consultation on recruitment and selection policies, redundancy and dismissal arrangements;
- meetings with College management or LEA officers on matters of joint concern;
- representing a union member at grievance, capability or disciplinary interview;
- attendance at relevant training courses organised by the trade union.

## 5.17 Bad weather conditions

There may be circumstances when the employee is unable to attend work due to bad weather, but the College remains open as usual. All reasonable effort should be made to attend work. Alternative arrangements may be agreed with the Head teacher, e.g. working from home or at a different location. Where this is not possible, **non-attendance will normally be treated as unpaid leave**, but exceptional circumstances may warrant paid leave.

## 5.18 Time off for medical appointments

Where possible, College employees are expected to make appointments out of College time, reasonable paid time off will only be allowed for personal hospital appointments, emergency dental work or other exceptional appointments.

**Leave to accompany a sick dependant or dependant with a disability, to a medical or professional appointment with their dependant's e.g. GP, dentist, clinic or hospital.**

Employees may be required to provide their line manager or supervisor with a medical appointment card or letter and will need to give as much notice as is reasonably possible - normally not less than five working days, except in the case of an emergency.

In the case of an emergency, the employee should notify their line manager/supervisor as soon as possible and provide the appointment card on their return to work.

If an employee is unable to provide satisfactory confirmation of appointment on return to work she/he will be required to take unpaid leave.

Where appointments can be arranged outside the employee's normal working hours she/he will not be able to request dependency care leave.

## **6 MATERNITY, PATERNITY, ADOPTION, CARERS LEAVE & ANTENATAL CARE**

There are specific entitlements for maternity, paternity, adoption, carer's leave and antenatal care contained in the RBC maternity/paternity policy

## **7 INTERVIEWS**

The Governing Body recognises the increasing tendency for prospective employers to require interviewees to attend for more than one day, especially for College management posts. There is also a growing tendency to expect prospective candidates to undertake a preliminary visit before the formal interviews.

In order to maintain a fair balance between the operational needs of the College and to minimise the burden on other staff, and to be fair to employees who will be seeking to further their career, the Governing Body will grant leave of absence for interviews as follows:

- a) The Head teacher is empowered to approve up to a maximum of 6 days paid leave of absence for interviews, to cover both formal and informal stages of the process, during any one academic year.
- b) Further leave of absence for this purpose will normally be agreed and will be on an unpaid basis.

## 8 UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

If an employee takes leave of absence without the prior consent of the Head teacher this may warrant an investigation under the College's Disciplinary procedure.

Type of Leave	Legal Requirement	No Legal Requirement	Paid	Unpaid
Annual Leave entitlement for Local Government staff	✓		✓	
Time off for sick child		✓	✓ 1 day	
Compassionate, Emergency or Exceptional Leave	✓		✓	
Other personal reasons		✓		✓
Extended Leave of Absence		✓		✓
Moving House		✓	✓ 1 day	
Service with Auxiliary Forces	✓		✓	
Mobilisation	✓		✓	
Carry over of annual leave		✓	✓	
Religious festivals		✓	✓	
Sporting Events		✓	✓	
Attendance at Court Proceedings		✓	✓	
Public Duties	✓			✓

### Requesting Leave

All requests for leave must be made in writing to the Head teacher Gill Dunlop. Requests for leave will be approved or declined within 48 hours and a written response will be returned

## **APPEALS**

In the first instance, an appeal should be made to the appropriate Head of Service. In the event that an individual is still unhappy, or if the leave was in excess of what was provided for in the scheme, then they may appeal to their Corporate Director. This process should act to escalate the appeals procedure, ensuring that a decision is arrived at as soon as possible.

Employees who wish to raise a concern about the application of this policy are advised to seek the support of their trade union representative. In the event that this situation occurs, an employee can raise their concern using the council's Grievance procedure.

Employees are also encouraged to contact their directorate HR team for advice regarding compassionate leave.

## **STAFF SUPPORT**

The Council has established an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), provided by PPC. The assistance programme is available at any time, day or night, on any day of the year. Just a free phone call away, PPC can offer independent advice, information and support that are completely free and confidential for staff and their immediate families.



**COMPASSIONATE LEAVE REQUEST FORM**

**\*\*\*CONFIDENTIAL\*\*\***

This form should be completed by the requesting employee and forwarded to Gill Dunlop for consideration.

Name: .....

Position: .....

Dates Leave Requested: From: ..... To: .....

How will you minimise the impact of your absence on children and colleagues during this time

Reason for Leave request (Please Specify and give details)

Employee's signature:.....

Date:.....

Leave Granted?  Yes  No (tick as appropriate)

Leave is:  Paid  Unpaid (tick as appropriate)

Service Head's brief comments on reason for decision:

Signature of Service Head or Representative:

..... Date.....

Forward a signed copy of the request form to the appropriate Directorate HR Team



**CRANBURY COLLEGE RETURN TO WORK INTERVIEW**

**Cranbury College adopts the Reading Borough Council Return to Work Form below**

# RETURN TO WORK FORM

**This form must be completed and signed by all members of staff following each episode of sickness absence. The form will be held on the individual's Personal File. For absences exceeding 7 calendar Days (5 working days), a medical certificate must also be provided by the member of staff.**

The first parts of the form may be completed by the person receiving the initial notification of absence.

Surname ..... Other names:.....

Post Title .....

Department.....

Absence reported to ..... at .....(time) on .....(date)

Reason for absence

.....  
...  
.....

First day of illness ..... Last day of illness

First day of absence ..... Date of return to work

Has a medical certificate been provided YES / NO / Not required

Was your absence a result of an injury at work or work related accident or illness YES /NO

If yes, please give details

.....  
.....

When was the incident report ..... (time) ..... (date)

To whom .....

.....  
.....

## **SUMMARY OF SICKNESS ABSENCE IN PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS**

Number of days ..... Number of episodes .....

## **SUMMARY OF RETURN TO WORK INTERVIEW**

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

## **ACTION REQUIRED**

Referral to Occupational Health

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.....

Referral to Staff Counselling Service

.....  
.....

Referral to support agencies  
(e.g. Disability Employment Advisory Service, Remploy)

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.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Alterations to working arrangements agreed (hours/environment etc)

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

.....  
Manager's Signature ..... Date

.....  
**I certify that I have been unable to work during the period above due to  
sickness as  
stated and confirm the content of discussions as above.**

Signature .....

Date.....

## Appendix 1

### Staged process for Attendance Management at Cranbury College

#### Information for managers and staff

Managers needs to have available the following guidance and policies:-

- Attendance Management in the Workplace- guidance for managers
- Capability: Managing Sickness Absence - procedures for schools
- Cranbury College Leave Policy

#### Well-being check and review

- Triggered by 9+ days absence
- Manager presents data
- Reminder of RBC guidance: Attendance Management in the Workplace and impact of absence on colleagues and Cranbury College
- Well-being check

#### Significant absence meeting (persistent short term absence)

- 11+ days absence triggers a significant absence conversation and action planning
- All action above
- Consider referral to Occupational Health if appropriate / signposting to Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) or other support
- Risk Assessment where relevant (on-going medical condition that affects day-to-day work)
- Action plan for managing absence and improving attendance at work
- Set date for follow-up well-being check and action review (within 8 weeks or next new term)
- Progress to stages 2 and 3 (refer to Capability: Managing Sickness Absence - procedures for schools)

#### Ill Health capability conversation

- 16+ days absence triggers an ill health capability conversation
- relevant actions above
- Occupational Health referral form completed, agreed and signed by manager and member of staff
- Book review meeting every 4 weeks
- Discuss Occupational Health report(s) and devise an action plan
- Consider adjustments to:-
  - Working patterns / hours
  - Duties
  - Work location
  - Equipment

- Access
- Training
- Mentoring / coaching support
- Flexible working - rights to apply
- Give the staff member a copy of Managing Sickness Absence - procedures for schools

#### Dealing with chronic or long term ill health absence

- The process will follow that set out in the above guidance and policies