



Special Leave Policy

**Approved and adopted by the Xavier Catholic Education Trust
To be reviewed in April 2028.**

Committee Responsible: HR

Xavier Catholic Education Trust Special Leave Policy

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1. Statement of Intent

The Xavier Catholic Education Trust recognises the importance of consistency, openness and equality in responding to requests from staff for special leave of absence for family and personal reasons or in order to fulfil professional duties other than those immediately related to employment.

This policy recognises:

- employees' statutory entitlement to take time off (paid or unpaid) in certain circumstances;
- national and local agreements recognised by the school;
- best practice, which seeks to maintain good working relationships between staff and management;
- the need to balance requests against the operational needs of the school.

It is intended that this policy will provide a clear and workable framework to enable requests for leave of absence to be reasonably and fairly handled whilst recognising that the operational needs of the school are a priority and there may be times when a request for leave will be refused.

The education of our children is the top priority of all our schools and this requires consistency and high levels of attendance from all staff, irrespective of their role in the school. Whenever considering a request for absence please make every effort to make appointments outside of the school day or during school holidays. When granting a leave of absence under this policy the Headteacher / CEO will always balance the request alongside the impact of the education of our children.

There may be occasions when circumstances arise which are not specifically identified in this policy. The decision regarding granting leave of absence in such cases falls to the discretion of the Headteacher or CEO.

The Headteacher or CEO may grant up to one day of personal leave per academic year for a member of staff to attend a special event, such as a child's graduation, family or close friend's wedding, religious observance or moving house. This may be paid depending on the circumstances and must be applied for in advance to the Headteacher. All other requests, not included below if authorised, will be unpaid.

2. Time Off for Dependents

2.1 Definition of Dependents

A dependent is defined as an employee's spouse, child or parent, or a person who lives in the same household as the employee (but not by reason of being their employee, tenant, lodger or boarder), who reasonably relies on the employee for assistance on an occasion when the person falls ill or is injured or assaulted, or to make arrangements for the provision of care in the event of illness or injury.

Time off for Dependents is reasonable time off work to deal with unexpected or sudden emergencies and to make any necessary longer-term arrangements. The 'emergency' must involve a 'dependent' of the employee.

2.2 Qualifying Conditions for Time off for Dependents

Every employee is entitled to take time off for dependents, regardless of hours worked or length of service.

2.3 Amount of Time off for Dependents

The amount of time that is reasonable for an employee to take off to deal with an unexpected or sudden emergency or to make necessary longer-term arrangements will vary but it is likely that in most cases one or two days will be sufficient. The provision is intended to help the employee to manage a crisis.

There is no limit to the number of times an employee can request time off work to deal with an unexpected or sudden emergency or to make necessary longer-term arrangements, and time off will be granted provided each request is reasonable

2.4 Circumstances for Time off for Dependents

The circumstances under which an employee can take time off are:

- If a dependent falls ill
- If a dependent has been injured, in an accident or assaulted
- To make longer-term care arrangements for a dependent
- To deal with an unexpected disruption or breakdown of care arrangements for a dependent
- To deal with an unexpected incident involving the employee's child during school hours
- If a dependent goes into labour.

2.5 Pay during Time off for Dependents

Whilst there is no statutory right to be paid for time off for dependents, depending upon the circumstances in exceptional circumstances Headteachers can authorise up to a maximum of 5 days' paid dependency leave to enable an employee to deal with an unexpected or sudden emergency or to make necessary longer-term arrangements over a year.

2.6 Notifying the need for Time off for Dependents

The employee must tell their manager/ Headteacher, as soon as practicable, the reason for their absence and how long they expect to be away from work. It is not necessary to give notice in writing.

There may be exceptional circumstances, such as a medical emergency involving a dependent, where the employee must leave work before it has been possible to notify their manager. In these circumstances the employee must still inform the school office of the situation and tell their manager as soon as practicable, advising the reason for absence and if they have not yet returned, how long they expect to be away from work.

2.7 Legal Position

Employees are legally protected from suffering any detriment or disadvantage because they are taking or seeking to take time off for dependents.

3. Compassionate Leave & Bereavement

3.1 Compassionate Leave

Compassionate leave is for circumstances not covered by family and parental bereavement leave. Examples of when compassionate leave might be appropriate include: the death of someone who is not the employee's partner or close relative but with whom the employee has had a close relationship; when the employee or employee's partner has had a miscarriage or termination of pregnancy within the first 24 weeks of that pregnancy; in complex domestic situations where a short period of time off work may help the employee to cope with the situation, for example the break-up of a long-term personal relationship or when an employee is experiencing domestic abuse or when an employee's partner or close family member has been diagnosed with a terminal illness or has been in a life threatening accident. However, where a complex domestic situation has affected the employees' health and rendered them unfit for work, then any absence will be regarded as sickness absence and the Absence Management Policy will apply.

The Headteacher may grant compassionate leave. Their decision is likely to consider the reason for the request; the likely duration, the length of service of the employee and any cover arrangements that might need to be made. Compassionate leave of up to 1 week's paid leave and up to 1 week's unpaid leave may be granted.

3.2 Family Bereavement Leave

Time off with pay will be granted at time of family bereavement on the death of a partner, parent, dependent, or sibling. Paid bereavement leave may also be granted on the death of other relatives, such as grandparents, nieces/nephews, aunts/uncles or in laws, depending on the circumstances.

Employees are entitled to up to 2 weeks' paid leave. Additional Bereavement Leave, whether paid or unpaid, is granted at the discretion of the line manager.

Employees may feel the need for a longer period to grieve. In these circumstances they should speak to their Headteacher and discuss:

Using part of their annual leave – Support staff on 52 week contracts only
Taking unpaid leave

3.3 Parental Bereavement Leave

Time off with pay will be granted at time of parental bereavement for primary carers following the death of a child under the age of 18, or a stillbirth after 24 weeks of pregnancy or miscarriage prior to 24 weeks of pregnancy. This includes adopters, foster parents, and guardians, as well as close relatives or family friends who have taken responsibility for the child's care in the absence of parents.

Employees are entitled to up to two weeks' paid leave which includes the statutory entitlement. Leave should be taken in blocks of a week within 56 weeks of the child's death.

Additional Bereavement Leave, whether paid or unpaid is granted at the discretion of the Headteacher.

4 Carer's Leave

4.1 Introduction

We recognise and value the contribution of carers; and understand the additional pressures carers face when managing both their work and caring responsibilities. To support our employees with caring responsibilities we offer 1 week of paid carer's leave in any rolling 12-month period (for the definition of 1 week, please see the eligibility criteria section below). The offering of 1 week of paid carer's leave is in addition to other leave provisions and is available to those who satisfy the eligibility criteria.

4.2 Eligibility Criteria

We acknowledge that everyone's caring responsibilities are different, and people may join Xavier Catholic Education Trust with pre-existing caring responsibilities, therefore employees are eligible to request, with appropriate notice, carer's leave regardless of length of service. However, to be eligible a carer must have a relationship with the individual which falls within one of the following categories:

A spouse or civil partner

An employee's child

A parent or parent of partner

A person who lives in the same household as the employee (otherwise than by reason of being their employee, tenant, lodger, or boarder)

A person who reasonably relies on an employee for care, for example an elderly neighbour with no relatives, who is living alone.

In addition, the individual requiring care must have a long-term care need. The care need may be due to illness or injury (physical or mental) that requires or is likely to require, care for more than three months; a disability as defined under the Equality Act 2010 or issues related to old age. In most cases, one or two days will be the most that is needed to deal with the immediate issues and arrange longer-term care if necessary.

Employees may be granted up to 1 week's paid carer's leave within any rolling 12-month period. Carer's leave can be taken flexibly as whole or half days or a block of one week. For the purposes of Carer's leave, a week is the period that an employee is normally required to work during a week (running Monday to Sunday) under their contract. Where this varies, a week is calculated by dividing by 52 the total amount of time normally required to be worked over the 12 months ending with the last day of the carer's leave requested.

Carer's leave will not affect annual or sick leave provisions and employees are not required to exhaust their annual leave before carers leave is granted.

4.3 What can Carer's Leave be used for?

Carers' leave can be used to carry out a wide range of caring activities which may include one or a combination of the following:

Providing personal support, such as keeping an eye out for someone, keeping them company, and staying in touch. Accompanying someone to medical or other appointments.

Attendance at appointments concerning the welfare and care of the person needing care, (e.g., child guidance, making arrangements for the resettlement of a person in long-term sheltered accommodation/nursing home, psychiatric care etc.).

Providing practical support, such as making meals, going shopping for them, laundry, cleaning, gardening, maintenance, and other help around the home.

Helping with official or financial matters, such as helping with paperwork, dealing with 'officials' (also over the phone and the internet), paying bills/rents/rates, collecting pension/benefits.

Providing personal and/or medical care, such as collecting prescriptions, giving medications, changing dressings, helping them move around the home, getting dressed, feeding, washing, bathing, using the toilet.

Making arrangements, such as dealing with social services or the voluntary sector, moving someone into a care home, making home adjustments or adaptations.

This list is not exhaustive, and carer's leave may be granted for other reasons which fall under the spirit of this agreement.

4.4 Making a Request

Employees should give their line manager as much notice as possible of the date(s) they would like to take carer's leave. The leave must be requested in advance of the date(s) required and where reasonably possible notice should be twice the length of the leave being requested, plus one day or three days before, whichever is earlier. Line managers cannot unreasonably decline a request for carers leave however; they can in some circumstances postpone or refuse the request on that occasion. The grounds on which they can do so will be strictly limited to where the manager considers that the operation of the school would be unduly disrupted. Where this is the case, the manager must consult with the employee to agree a new arrangement, which must be no later than one month after the first day of the leave period originally requested.

The manager must write to the employee setting out the reason for the postponement and the agreed new date(s) for the leave. This should be done as soon as reasonably practicable, but no later than whichever is the earlier of 7 days after the employee gave notice to the manager to request leave, or before the first date given in that notice.

4.5 Identification and Disclosure

Carers are not required to disclose to their line manager their caring responsibilities, however the success of this policy will rely on managers and employees having open and honest discussions therefore employees are encouraged to do so.

Upon disclosing caring responsibilities, managers should inform employees of the support options available within Xavier Catholic Education Trust. Available support options are detailed in the related resources section on page 4 of this document.

Carers are not required to provide evidence to request carer's leave, however, false claims for carer's leave will be considered serious and may be handled in line with the disciplinary policy.

4.6 Legal Position

Employees are legally protected from suffering any detriment or disadvantage because they are taking or seeking to take carer's leave.

5. Support Leave for Maternity and Adoption

Headteachers may grant up to 5 days' paid leave (pro-rata for part time employees) to a member of staff who is the nominated carer of a birth mother or an adoptive mother or father. A nominated carer is the person nominated by the birth mother or the adoptive mother or father as their primary provider of support at or around the time of birth or adoption. The leave should be taken around the time of birth or adoption and can be taken on separate days if preferred. Employees should let their manager know as soon as possible the exact dates.

6. Foster Carers

6.1 Introduction

Xavier Catholic Education Trust is keen to encourage its employees to become Foster Carers, Friends and Family Carers, Staying Put Carers, Supported Lodging Providers and Special Guardians and to support those already providing these types of care by providing time off work where necessary.

6.2 Qualifying Conditions for Leave

Every employee who is a prospective or approved Foster Carer, Friends and Family Carer, Staying Put Carer, Supported Lodging Provider or Special Guardian is entitled to make a request for time off under this policy, regardless of hours worked. Employees are entitled to this right from their first day of work.

6.3 Circumstances for Support Leave

Support Leave can be granted for a variety of reasons, to enable employees to become carers or to continue to provide care where a child is in placement, or a young person is in a staying put arrangement.

The following are examples of when an employee may request time off work for reasons relating to their caring role. This list is not exhaustive. and each request should be considered.

Leave during assessment for prospective foster carers, friends and family carers, supported lodgings providers and special guardians

Foster carers, friends & family carers, supported lodging providers and special guardians can take up to 5 days of paid leave, in whole or half days, during the assessment process.

Leave at the commencement of a Foster Care placement and/or Friends & Family Care placement
Foster carers and friends & family carers can take up to an additional 10 days of paid leave in the 12-month period following placement.

Leave to attend meetings or other activities related to caring for the foster child or young person in a Staying Put arrangement or to attend meetings or other activities related to being a Supported Lodging provider.

In a 12-month period, Foster Carers, Friends & Family Carers, Staying Put Carers and Supported Lodging Providers can take up to 5 days of paid leave to attend meetings, training etc.

6.4 Circumstances when other types of leave should be considered

Paid Foster Carer Support Leave would not be appropriate to, for example, enable an employee to take the child/young person to a pre-planned medical appointment. The line manager should be prepared to explore with the employee whether they can accommodate this through agile working arrangements or whether the employee could take contractual annual leave (employees cannot be made to use their statutory entitlement to take time off for these circumstances)

Paid Foster Carer Support Leave should not be given in situations where the Carer needs leave at short notice to deal with an emergency – for example when a child falls ill or arranged childcare is unexpectedly unavailable. Such situations are covered by Xavier Catholic Education Trust's Time off for Dependents provisions as set out in Section 2 of this policy and which are available to Foster Carers, Friends and Family Carers, Staying Put Carers and Supported Lodging Provider.

7. Disability Leave

7.1 Guiding Principles

Xavier Catholic Education Trust understands that people are disabled by the barriers they face in society (both physical and because of attitudes based on prejudice or stereotype) and not by their impairment or condition. The removal of these barriers creates a more equal society where disabled people can live independently and have more control over their lives.

The skills and experience of our disabled employees are highly valued, and at Xavier Catholic Education Trust we are committed to supporting our disabled employees by removing access barriers, tackling discrimination, and implementing best employment practice. As part of this commitment, Xavier Catholic Education Trust recognises and accepts that disabled employees may require time off work for medical reasons (treatment, tests, respite, recuperation etc.) to support and/or treat their condition.

7.2 What is Disability Leave?

Disability leave is a type of [workplace adjustment](#) and is in accordance with good employment practice as recommended by the Equality and Human Rights Commission. Disability Leave is paid time off work for circumstances when the employee is well enough to work, however needs time away from work to attend appointments related to their disability or long-term health condition. This might, for example, be for pre-planned appointments or treatments that help to improve or maintain their health and wellbeing or for training an assistance animal. On occasions, disability leave may be given when time off work is needed but is unplanned.

Disability leave is not the same as a disability-related sickness absence which is unplanned absence that is related to a known disability or health condition and is taken when an employee is not well enough to attend work. For example, time off for a period of mental ill health or for condition-related fatigue or for a fluctuating condition.

Any time off for disability leave will not be counted towards triggers for our formal absence management processes, will not be included in absences for references, will not be taken into consideration for formal performance monitoring and will not be taken into consideration during any redundancy processes

8.0 Eligibility

All employees who are disabled or who have a long-term health condition are eligible for disability leave where disability leave would be a reasonable adjustment. An employee should not be asked to "prove" that they are disabled or that they have a long-term health condition to access disability leave.

8.1 Arranging Disability Leave

Not all disabled employees/employees with long-term health conditions will need additional time off work as disability leave. It may be possible to accommodate the time off work that they need by, for example, adjusting working patterns. Together with their line manager, a disabled employee may be able to agree working pattern adjustments that will help them and the organisation to accommodate appointments in the following, or similar ways:

- 8.1.1 Arranging appointments at the beginning or end of the day and making up the time by starting earlier or finishing later that day
- 8.1.2 Making up the time during the rest of the week
If the person works shifts, altering shift rotas to allow the person to go to appointments on days off work. However, this will not always be possible and, therefore, line managers may give a reasonable amount of time off work dependent upon the specific requirements of the employee without the need for the employee to make up those hours. Sometimes a combination of working pattern adjustments and additional disability leave might be an appropriate reasonable workplace adjustment.

It is not possible to give hard and fast guidelines on the amount of disability leave an employee may need because individuals' disabilities, personal management strategies and circumstances will all be different. Individuals may have the same disability but different coping mechanisms and different circumstances which need to be considered. Each employee's needs must be considered on a case-by-case basis. Line Managers should adopt a flexible approach and should seek advice from the Xavier HR team and/or [Occupational Health](#) as appropriate.

What is vital is a positive and pragmatic approach. Disabled employees need to feel confident and supported when they approach managers and should not be left feeling vulnerable or that they have been disadvantaged. Employees should be fully consulted about any decision made or advice received.

8.2 Planned Disability Leave

Planned disability leave is leave that is agreed in advance between the employee and their manager. Planned leave might include time off for (this is not an exhaustive list):

- 8.2.1 Therapeutic treatment/counselling for physical and/or emotional health related to the employee's disability/long term health condition.
- 8.2.2 Hospital, G.P. or complementary medical practitioner appointments
Assessments for conditions such as dyslexia
- 8.3.2 Hearing Aid tests
- 8.3.3 Appointment time and recovery period relating to blood transfusion or dialysis treatment
- 8.3.4 Blood tests for diabetes
- 8.3.5 Physiotherapy
- 8.3.6 Radiology or chemotherapy treatments and recovery time (where the employee is well enough to attend work but is signed off for short periods to avoid infection)
- 8.3.7 Recuperation or rehabilitation following treatment
- 8.3.8 Training with guide or hearing dog/assistance animal
- 8.3.9 Planning and implementing adjustments to the workplace or job
- 8.3.10 A phased return to work or period off work for a newly disabled employee
- 8.3.11 Having equipment serviced or fitted. To accommodate the needs of individual employees, disability leave may be taken in different ways for example once a week for a period, a few days over the course of each year, a block of time or perhaps as periods of part time working to enable the employee to receive treatment or assessment related to their disability/long term health condition.

Disability leave may also be agreed where, based on medical advice, for example from [Occupational Health](#), it is not appropriate for an employee to remain at work or be redeployed, whilst other reasonable adjustments are being made. However, please note that if reasonable adjustments are not possible or fail to enable the employee to return/remain at work then the line manager should seek advice from Xavier HR about next steps and the Absence Management Policy may apply.

Agreement must be reached between the line manager and employee regarding the number of days of planned leave that is required as part of the reasonable workplace adjustments process and alongside other types of reasonable workplace adjustments where appropriate.

Where planned disability leave is agreed, as with all reasonable adjustments, it must be reviewed on a regular basis, and at least annually, to ensure it remains appropriate and relevant. Reviews will be supportive and confidential. Employees whose circumstances change throughout the year may request a meeting to review their planned disability leave or other workplace adjustments at any time.

8.3 Unplanned Disability Leave

The line manager and employee should discuss the likelihood of any unplanned leave, taking into consideration previous disability-related absences and any improvement or deterioration (actual or anticipated) in the employee's condition. It may be possible to identify reasonable workplace adjustments, which would counteract the need for unplanned disability leave. Unplanned leave may include circumstances such as:

8.4.1

Breakdown of usual arrangements at work (e.g., malfunction of an aid or adaptation)

8.4.2

Breakdown of usual arrangements that make it difficult to get to work (e.g., care breakdown and in the absence of an accessible alternative)

Where unplanned disability leave is required, employees must notify their line manager as soon as possible, providing a reason for the absence and indicating, where possible, when they expect to return

9. Fertility Treatment

For the purposes of this policy, fertility treatment includes:

any form of assisted reproduction carried out by a registered medical practitioner or registered nurse (for example in vitro fertilisation (IVF), intrauterine insemination (IUI) and intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI))

any treatment carried out by a registered medical practitioner or registered nurse for the purpose of preserving fertility (for example freezing eggs, sperm, embryos, or reproductive tissue) and any medical examination or treatment in connection with the treatment mentioned above (for example blood tests, ultrasound scans, egg collection, sperm collection, embryo transfer).

9.1 Time off for Fertility Treatment

Whilst there is no statutory right to time off for fertility treatment, Xavier Catholic Education Trust is committed to providing an environment where staff feel supported. We recognise the physical and emotional stress that having fertility treatment can have on employees and are committed to providing support where we can.

To make a request for time off to attend a fertility treatment appointment, the member of staff should contact their Headteacher, giving their Headteacher as much notice as possible of when they need the time off. However, we understand that the member of staff may need to take time off at short notice to attend their appointments. We also understand that the amount of time that the employee may need off for each appointment will depend on the nature of the appointment and the type of treatment that they are receiving and therefore that we need to remain flexible.

Time off for medical appointments both at the investigation stage and for fertility treatment (other than where the treatment will necessitate the employee's absence from work for a full working day or more) will be treated in the same way as leave for other medical appointments. Where possible appointments should be arranged outside working hours or covered by using flexible working arrangements.

If an employee needs to take time off for fertility treatment that requires their absence from work for a full working day or more and which cannot be covered by agreeing flexible working arrangements, this should be recorded as Sickness for reason of Fertility. Sick pay will be paid if the employee is eligible.

Employees whose partners are undergoing fertility treatment and who wish to accompany them to appointments may request to take the time off as annual leave, unpaid leave or we may agree to a flexible working arrangement so that they can make up lost time by working additional hours at another time.

9.2 Sickness Absence during Fertility Treatment

We understand that there may be times whilst undergoing fertility treatment when the member of staff may be unwell or may be advised to take time off work to recuperate following treatment. There is no expectation on the member of staff to work if they are unwell because of side effects related to their fertility treatment or to work when they have been advised to take time off work to recuperate. If they are sick and unable to work or if they are taking time off work to recuperate, this will be recorded as Sickness Absence. The employee does not have to disclose that their absence is due to their fertility treatment if they wish to keep this private. However, we want our staff to feel confident that they can be open about the reason for their leave and that it will be handled sensitively.

Sickness absence due to fertility treatment, including recommended recuperation periods will not be counted in relation to absence monitoring and management; will not be included in absences for references; will not be taken into consideration for performance monitoring and will not be taken into consideration during redundancy processes.

9.3 Working whilst undergoing Fertility Treatment

We understand that working while undergoing fertility treatment can be incredibly challenging. We encourage members of staff who are finding it difficult to cope at work whilst undergoing fertility treatment to speak to their line manager or, if they feel unable to approach their line manager, to speak to a member of Xavier HR team.

We urge members of staff to be as open as possible about any issues that they are experiencing or adjustments that they need to ensure that they are provided with the right level of support whilst they are receiving treatment.

Any health-related information disclosed by the member of staff during discussions with their line manager or the Xavier HR team will be treated sensitively and in strict confidence.

Help and support are also available through our [Employee Assistance Programme \(EAP\)](#).

9.4 Implantation

From the point of implantation of fertilised ova, the member of staff is considered pregnant and has a statutory right to paid time off for antenatal appointments. For further information, please refer to the [Maternity Leave and Pay Policy](#).

Sickness absence will be regarded as pregnancy-related sickness absence from the point at which the fertilised ova have been implanted. If the implantation is unsuccessful, the protected period ends two weeks after the end of the pregnancy, that is two weeks after the date you find out that the implantation was not successful.

Medical Appointments

Routine visits to the doctor or dentist should, where possible, be made outside normal working hours.

Where this is impossible, reasonable concessionary time may be granted by managers, depending upon the needs of the service. Additionally, concessionary time may be granted to an employee who necessarily and urgently requires time off to visit the doctor, dentist, or hospital or where they need to make a series of hospital visits for treatment and these visits cannot be arranged outside normal working hours.

If it is necessary for an employee to accompany a dependent to visit a doctor, dentist, or hospital, managers have discretion to allow absence from work, but the time should be made up at a later stage.

A manager may ask to see an appointment letter or card to support a request for time off to attend a medical appointment.

10. Work-related Leave

10.1 Companion at a Formal Work Meeting

Employees have the right to be accompanied at a disciplinary or grievance hearing. Employees and workers are permitted to take a reasonable amount of paid time off to act as a companion to a colleague. While this obviously covers time off for the hearing itself, it may also be appropriate to permit time off for the companion to familiarise themselves with the case and talk to the colleague they are accompanying both before and after the hearing.

10.2 Trade Union Representatives

Recognised Trade Union representatives accompanying staff at formal workplace meetings are covered by the Xavier Trade Union Recognition and Facilities Time Agreement.

10.3 Study Leave

Where an employee is studying towards a qualification which is sponsored by Xavier, they are entitled to paid time off to study or sit examinations, in accordance with individual learning agreements.

Reservist Leave

Part of the commitment for Members of the Reserve Forces (RNR, RMR, AR, RAFVR) is to attend annual training lasting two weeks. This is known as the Annual Camp. This time off can be taken as special leave and is paid.

Members of the Reserve Forces (RNR, RMR, AR, RAFVR) can be called up for active duty. This leave is unpaid as the relevant Reserve Force will pay the employee for periods of active duty.

Public Duties

Employees have a right to reasonable [time off work for public duties](#). The law does not set the amount of time off that is permitted, just that it must be reasonable. When deciding whether a request is reasonable, your line manager will need to consider:

- How long the duties might take
- The amount of time the employee has had off previously for public duties
- How the time off will affect the service

Your line manager can refuse a request for time off if they think it is unreasonable.

Time off for Public Duties Leave will be unpaid, other than in the following circumstances:

Magistrates (also known as justices of the peace) will need to attend court at least 13 days or 26 half days per year. SCC will allow up to 18 paid days of leave in any 12-month period.

Candidates at Parliamentary and local council elections may be granted up to 15 days (parliamentary elections) and up to 1 day (council election) of paid leave during the election campaign.

Employees who are members of the managing or governing body of an educational establishment maintained by a local authority, a foundation school, or a higher education provider, may be granted up to 5 days' paid leave in any rolling 12-month period.

In addition, the Council will grant reasonable paid time off work for the following public duties:

Employees attending a Youth Offender Panel as a panelist may be granted up to 18 days of paid leave in any 12-month period.

Employees attending meetings (as a member of the staff side) of an appropriate national, provincial, or local negotiating or consultative committee may be granted up to 18 days of paid leave in any 12-month period.

12. Jury Service

Jury Service is a type of Public Service for which time off work must be granted. An employee will receive full paid leave if they are called for jury service. However, the employee must claim the allowance for loss of earnings from the Court for the period, and this amount will be deducted from the employee's pay. The council will complete a certificate of loss of earnings to enable the employee to make this claim. The government website has further helpful information about [Jury Service](#).

13. Sabbaticals/Unpaid Leave

Employees may wish to apply for a long period of unpaid leave, sometimes known as a sabbatical, for several reasons, for example to travel, to study, to attend a religious festival etc.

Permanent employees with more than two years' service may apply to their line manager for unpaid leave of up to 6 months. It is not an automatic entitlement, and the needs of the service will have to be balanced with those of the employee. It may be granted but only after all possible measures to avoid taking such as unpaid leave, for example the use of annual leave or flexible/agile working.

Employees do not have to resign from the school whilst on unpaid leave and they will return to their substantive post at the end of the unpaid leave period if the post still exists. All pay, allowances, sickness entitlements etc. will cease during the period of unpaid absence. However, their continuity of service will be protected for the duration of the unpaid leave. Employees may not take up any paid employment during the period of unpaid absence.

In exceptional circumstances an individual may apply for up to 12 months' unpaid leave. Applications for such sabbaticals would need to be authorised by the CEO. For such sabbaticals of between 6 and 12 months in duration, there is no guarantee of returning to the same post. However, the Xavier Catholic Education Trust will make best endeavours to find a suitable and equivalent post for the returner.

14. Other Concessionary Paid Leave

14.1 Adverse Weather and Travel Conditions

As a general principle, employees are expected to take all practicable steps to reach their place of employment on time, and to maintain their normal hours of work and working practice, during adverse weather or travel conditions. During adverse conditions, managers have the discretion to approve alternative working arrangements, e.g., to work in an agile way, from home or provide online learning if appropriate

Employees may be granted concessionary time to make up their daily standard hours if conditions mean that they arrive late.

14.2 Interviews with other Schools

Managers may grant reasonable concessionary time off for employees to attend job interviews with other schools

14.3 Professional Bodies

At the manager’s discretion, concessionary time may be given where it is considered necessary for an officer to attend an approved meeting of a professional body during the day.

Unauthorised Absence

As stated in the introduction to this policy, Xavier Catholic Education Trust appreciates that employees will on occasions need time away from work, which may be planned or unplanned. The leave options outlined in this policy are there to help support employees during these times and are in addition to provisions relating to annual leave, sick leave, and parental leave arrangements covering maternity, paternity, adoption, shared parental leave, unpaid parental leave, and surrogacy.

If an employee is unable to attend work for any reason, they are required to inform their line manager by telephone as soon as possible. Employees are responsible for keeping in touch with their manager whilst absent and informing their manager of the reason for their absence. A text message is generally unacceptable. If an employee fails to notify their line manager of their absence it may be considered as unauthorised absence or absence without official leave (AWOL).

Appendix A Summary of Leave Entitlements – to be read in conjunction with the relevant section of the Policy

Purpose of leave	Maximum days/weeks/months in any 12-month period (unless otherwise specified)	Paid or Unpaid
Time Off for Dependents		
Time off for dependents	5 days for emergency (sudden/unexpected event)	Unpaid (Paid in exceptional circumstances)
Bereavement		
Compassionate Leave	2 weeks per bereavement event	1 week paid, 1 week unpaid
Family Bereavement Leave	2 weeks, plus additional leave at line manager discretion per bereavement event	2 weeks paid; any additional leave unpaid
Parental Bereavement Leave	2 weeks, plus additional leave at line manager discretion per bereavement event	2 weeks paid; any additional leave paid or unpaid at line manager discretion
Carers		
Carer’s Leave	1 week (taken in whole or half days or as a block of 1 week)	Paid
Support Leave		
Support Leave – Maternity & Adoption	5 days per maternity or adoption	Paid

Foster Carers		
Foster Carers, Friends & Family Carers, Special Guardians, Supported Lodgings Providers, and those Fostering to Adopt: during the assessment for approval process – to attend meetings, for home visits, for training etc.	5 days (taken in whole or half days)	Paid
Foster Carers, Friends & Family Carers and those Fostering to Adopt: additional leave during the approval process or leave when the child is in placement – to attend meetings, training etc.	5 days (taken in whole or half days)	Paid
Foster Carers and Friends & Family Carers – additional leave at the start of the planned permanent placement	10 days –	Paid
Former Foster Carer under a “Staying Put” arrangement – leave to attend meetings, training etc.	5 days	Paid
Supported Lodgings Provider: additional leave during the approval process or leave when the child is in placement to attend meetings, training etc.	5 days	Paid
Disability Leave		
Medical or non-medical appointments related to a disability or long-term health condition that help to improve or maintain the employee’s health and wellbeing or for training an assistance animal.	Reasonable	Paid* *Note – some disability leave may be paid as sick pay, which is subject to eligibility. See policy details above.
Fertility Treatment		
Medical appointments for Fertility Treatment	Reasonable	Paid* *Note – some disability leave may be paid as sick pay, which is subject to eligibility. See policy details above.
Medical Appointments		
Doctor, hospital, dentist appointment that cannot be scheduled outside normal working hours or by using agile working arrangements	Reasonable	Paid

Work Related Leave		
Companion at a formal work meeting – for example to accompany a colleague at a formal disciplinary or grievance hearing	Reasonable as necessary	Paid
Time off for recognised Trade Union representatives to undertake employee relations functions.	Refer to the Trade Union Recognition and Facilities Time Agreement	Paid
Study Leave/leave to sit an approved examination	Headteacher or CEO discretion	Paid
Reservist Leave		
To attend training known as ‘annual camp’ as a member of the reserve forces	10 days	Paid
Active duty	As required	Unpaid (payment is made by the Reserve Forces)
Public Duties		
To attend court as a magistrate (also known as a justice of the peace).	Reasonable - Magistrates will need to be in court at least 13 days or 26 half days per year.	18 days paid. Additional time off unpaid
To undertake duties as a member of a local authority	18 days	Paid
Candidate at a Parliamentary election	15 days (during the campaign)	Paid
Candidate at a Local election	1 day (during the campaign)	Paid
Member of the managing or governing body of an educational establishment maintained by a local authority, a foundation school, or higher education corporation	5 days	Paid
To attend a meeting (as a member of the staff side) of an appropriate national, provincial, or local negotiating or consultative committee	18 days	Paid
To attend a Youth Offender Panel as a Panelist	18 days	Paid
Other Public duties not listed above	Reasonable	Unpaid
Jury Service		
Attending court for Jury Service	As required	Allowance awarded by the Court is topped up to full pay by SCC

Sabbaticals		
Sabbaticals and unpaid leave	Up to 6 months. In exceptional circumstances, up to 12 months	Unpaid
Other concessionary leave		
Adverse weather and travel conditions	Reasonable, if agile working arrangements (such as home working or altered hours) are not appropriate	Paid
Interviews with other local authorities	Reasonable	Paid
Attendance at professional body meetings	Reasonable	Paid