

# Leave Policy



St Francis of Assisi  
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

## St Francis of Assisi Catholic Academy Trust

**Signed off by: Trust Board**

**Date from: January 2026**

**Review Date: November 2026**

### **Commitment to equality:**

We are committed to providing a positive working environment which is free from prejudice and unlawful discrimination and any form of harassment, bullying or victimisation. We have developed a number of key policies to ensure that the principles of Catholic Social Teaching in relation to human dignity and dignity in work become embedded into every aspect of school life and these policies are reviewed regularly in this regard.

**This Leave Policy has been approved and adopted by the St Francis of Assisi Catholic Academy Trust in January 2026 and will be reviewed by November 2026.**

**Signed by Director of the Academy Trust Company:**

**Signed by Headteacher:**

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## 1. DEFINITIONS

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

- i. 'Academy' means the academy named at the beginning of this Leave Policy and includes all sites upon which the Academy undertaking is, from time to time, being carried out.
- ii. 'Academy Trust Company/Trust' means the company responsible for the management of the Academy and, for all purposes, means the employer of staff at the Academy.
- iii. 'Board' means the board of Directors of the Academy Trust Company.
- iv. 'Chair' means the Chair of the Board as appointed from time to time.
- v. 'Clerk' means the Clerk to the Board as appointed from time to time.
- vi. 'Directors' means directors appointed to the Board from time to time.
- vii. 'Governors' means (if appropriate to the context), the governors appointed and elected to the Local Governing Body, from time to time.
- viii. '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.
- ix. 'Vice-Chair' means the Vice-Chair of the Board as elected from time to time.
- x. 'Teacher' means a teacher employed by the Academy Trust Company to work at the Academy and, where the context so admits, includes the Headteacher.
- xi. 'Working Day' means any day on which you would ordinarily work if you were a full-time employee. In other words, 'Working Day' may apply differently to teaching and non-teaching staff. However, part-time and full-time staff will not be treated differently for the purposes of implementing this Leave Policy.
- xii. 'Working Week' means any week that you would ordinarily work.

## 2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This Leave Policy applies to you if you are an employee of an Academy or Trust Central Team (hereinafter referred to as and "employee" or "you").
- 2.2 The purpose of this Leave Policy is to establish a fair, consistent and caring approach towards staff absence from work. Whilst it is important to have clear guidelines, so employee know what to do if they take time off work, it is also important to assist the Academy Trust Company in making decisions about requests for leave in accordance with legal, contractual, and moral obligations.
- 2.3 An employee is entitled to have access, by arrangement, to their personnel file and to request the deletion of time-expired records in line with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- 2.4 The Trust delegates its authority in the manner set out in this policy.
- 2.5 While implementing this policy, the Academy/Trust should have regard to the Trust's Health and Safety Policy and Procedure in relation to any overlapping health and safety considerations(s) that may arise.
- 2.6 The Trust is committed to providing a supportive working environment for all employees. The Trust is also committed to ensuring respect, objectively, belief in the dignity of the individual, consistency of treatment and fairness in the operation of this policy. This commitment extends to promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating unlawful discrimination throughout the Academy community which includes all of the academies in the Trust's group.
- 2.7 The Trust is committed to ensuring this policy is in line with Local Authority guidelines and recent changes to Employment Law.

- 2.8 All personal and sensitive personal data obtained during the operation of this policy will be handled with the utmost integrity and confidentiality.
- 2.9 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment, and it may be amended at any time. We may also vary this policy, including any time limits, as appropriate in any case.

### **3. GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

- 3.1 Annual leave will be in accordance with the relevant conditions of services for Teachers and support staff.
- 3.2 All leave allowance should be applied pro rata to an employee's contractual hours.
- 3.3 New employees will only be given unpaid leave during their first 3 months of employment, except where they have a statutory right to paid leave. This restriction applies to all the categories below.
- 3.4 The operational needs of the Academy/Trust will be paramount and, except in emergency circumstances, adequate and reasonable notice of a request for leave of absence must be given.
- 3.5 An Application for Leave of Absence Form (please refer to Appendix 1) must be completed by employee and signed by the Line Manager and the Authoriser.
- 3.6 The responsibility for exercising discretion on behalf of the Academy/Trust is the Headteacher/CEO.
- 3.7 It should not be assumed approval has been given until the request has been authorised by the Headteacher/CEO.
- 3.8 Where the request for leave concerns the Headteacher and CEO requests should be made to the CEO and the Chairs respectively.
- 3.9 For all planned personal or work-related absence, employees with teaching responsibilities must complete a cover request form at the Academy. This form must be signed and processed before leaving the site.
- 3.10 If an employee needs to leave the site for an unplanned reason (e.g. emergency appointments or urgent family matters), they must first meet with the Headteacher/Line Manager, or Duty Manager to gain authorisation. This ensures necessary logistical and cover arrangements are made.
- 3.11 When leaving the site, employee must sign out at Reception. This ensures that in the event of a fire-alarm or other such event, the Academy/Trust is aware you are not on-site. If you return the same day, you are required to sign back in.

### **4. PERSONAL LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

This section covers the main categories for staff absence and gives clear guidance on each. For the purpose of these absences (except Annual Leave), per academic year means September through to August.

#### **4.1 Medical/Doctor's Appointment**

Where possible, all medical appointments should take place outside of school hours unless it is an emergency. If referrals and hospital appointments have to be made during the school day, requests should be made in advance and accompanied by a hospital letter or appointment card. The first five days of absence for such referrals and hospital appointments will be granted as paid leave as part of the compassionate leave arrangements (see below).

Before arranging non-urgent medical/doctor's appointment, employees should seek the approval of the Headteacher/CEO if it is necessary to take time off work. Employee should make every attempt to make these appointments at the beginning or end of the day to minimise the time they have to be absent from work. Elective medical treatment should be arranged during holiday periods and will be on an unpaid basis.

#### **4.2 Dental/Optician Appointment**

Check-ups should always be taken outside of school hours where possible. Emergency appointments (those made up to 72 hours in advance) clearly must take priority and can be taken as paid leave as part of the compassionate leave arrangements (see below). Any follow-up appointments that are non-urgent should be taken outside of school hours. If this is not possible, absence will be granted but this may be as unpaid leave.

#### **4.3 Emergency Child Care as a Result of Ill-health**

The Trust recognises that some employees may not have immediate access to local childcare support. Therefore, the first day of absence due to child's illness will be paid, to enable the employees to make alternative childcare arrangements. Any further absence relating to the same episode of illness of that child will be unpaid.

This paid provision is limited to three separate instances per academic year per employee. All absence beyond this annual allowance will be unpaid.

#### **4.4 Job Interviews**

In order to maintain a fair balance between the operational needs of the Trust and its Academy and to minimise the burden on other employees, employee going for external interviews can attend up to two interviews per term (maximum of six per academic year) without affecting pay. Further leave of absence for this purpose will normally be on unpaid basis.

#### **4.5 Compassionate Leave (including Bereavement)**

For a direct member family, the Headteacher/CEO may award up to a maximum of five days paid compassionate leave per academic year. Requests for absence in excess of these five days or for indirect family members may be granted but these will be at the discretion of the Headteacher/CEO and will be unpaid unless for exceptional circumstances. Such exceptional circumstances would include the hospitalisation of a child.

Direct family member means an individual who is the employee's spouse, civil partner, long-term partner, parent, parent-in-law, step-parent, child (including adoptive, step or foster children), or sibling. The Trust may, at its discretion, extend this definition to include grandparents, grandchildren, or others with whom the employee has a significant caring relationship.

#### **4.6 Study Leave and Time off for Examination**

Requests to study leave or examination time off will be granted at the discretion of the Headteacher/CEO. Employees who are undertaking a professional qualification that is directly relevant to their current employment may request up to three paid days of study leave to support preparation for examinations. In addition, paid time off to sit examination will be granted where the qualification is relevant to current role.

#### **4.7 Maternity & Paternity Leave**

Please refer to the government guidance; the Trust honours statutory parental leaves rights.

#### **4.8 Moving House**

Employees should make all efforts to move outside of their normal working hours. Where this is not possible, one day is granted per academic year on the day of the move. The Headteacher/CEO may agree an alternative day (e.g. to allow connection of basic services to your new home) in exceptional circumstances.

#### **4.9 Industrial Action**

May only be taken by union members if they are following recognised union action and have taken a ballot to do so. All industrial action will be unpaid.

#### **4.10 Jury Service**

Employees who are requested to attend for jury service should arrange for the loss of earnings certificate which is issued by the court in question. The Academy/Trust will treat the leave as paid providing the member of staff claims full re-imbusement from the court. Paid leave for this reason will usually be limited to two weeks, though the Headteacher/CEO has discretion to extend this for a further two weeks.

#### **4.11 Personal/Discretionary Leave/Requests for Unpaid Leave**

Any other requests for absence will be at the Headteacher's/CEO's discretion taking into account the reason, the amount of time requested, the impact upon the Academy/the Trust Central Team and length of service. Employee wishing to inform the Headteacher/CEO of such a request should do so personally. Teachers who are granted a request for unpaid leave will lose 1/365 of annual salary for each day granted.

Support staff that are granted a request for unpaid leave will lose pay in line with the Green Book which outlines their conditions of service.

The Headteacher/CEO may grant any period of emergency unpaid leave. However, requests for planned unpaid leave of more than one month will be taken to the governors' Personnel committee, which will deal with each request on an individual basis, taking into account the likely disruption to the academy's/Trust Central Team's operations, and the capacity within the Academy to cover for the absent colleague.

#### **4.12 Time off in Lieu (TOIL)**

This clause only applies to support staff, as their contractual terms allow for the accrual of time off in lieu. TOIL may only be accrued where additional hours have been expressly authorised in advance by the relevant line manager. Any additional hours worked without prior approval will not qualify for TOIL and will not be compensated..

TOIL can be taken by the employee with the agreement of their line manager and authorised by the Headteacher/CEO. TOIL should be taken as soon as practicably possible after it has been accrued and, in any event, it must be taken within 3 months of accrual and within the academic year. TOIL accrued and not redeemed within 3 months of accrual will be considered forfeited and no monetary compensation will be offered in lieu. Unlike annual leave, there is no payment for TOIL not used upon the termination of employment.

Employee must provide reasonable notice when requesting to take TOIL. There may be circumstance where your Line Manager cannot grant the request, such as operational/staffing requirements and suitable alternative dates will be discussed with the employee. TOIL will not normally be approved immediately before a school holiday, unless in exceptional circumstance.

TOIL must not be used as a substitute for additional hours or days contracted to be worked under a contract of employment, for example, a term time plus employee. Any such days/hours to be worked pursuant to contract must be agreed in advance by the line manager.

#### **4.13 Annual Leave**

Teaching staff and support staff employed term time only contracts have their annual leave entitlement built into their contracts.

For support staff contracted to work for 52 weeks per year should refer to their contract of employment for details of their annual leave entitlement. You are required to seek prior approval from your Line Manager, and the Authoriser and give reasonable notice of your request to take leave. There may be

circumstance where your Line Manager cannot grant the request, such as operational/staffing requirements and this will be discussed with the employee.

It is expected that employees will use their annual leave within the leave year (i.e. 1 April to 31 March). In exceptional circumstances, for example if you are unable to take it due to sickness or maternity leave unused Annual Leave can be carried over (to be used within an agreed period of time) with the consent of the Headteacher/CEO. In all other circumstances carrying over of any unused Annual Leave will not normally be allowed and will only be allowed with the consent of the Headteacher/CEO.

## 5. LEAVE APPROVER AND AUTHORISER

<i>Employee Level</i>	<i>Leave Approver</i>	<i>Authoriser</i>
CEO	Chair or another Director (other than the Vice-Chair) appointed by the Chair	Chair or another Director (other than the Vice-Chair) appointed by the Chair
Senior Executive Leadership Team/ Trust Central Team	CEO/ dCEO/ CFO	CEO
Headteacher	CEO	CEO
Other Leadership Spine	Headteacher	Headteacher
Other Teaching Staff	Headteacher or a sufficiently senior members of staff appointed by the Headteacher	Headteacher
Other Support Staff (Academy Level)	Headteacher or a sufficiently senior members of staff appointed by the Headteacher	Headteacher

## 6. MONITORING THE IMPACT OF THIS POLICY

The Academy Trust Company will monitor all applications and decisions relating to requests for leave of absence under this policy to ensure that a fair and consistent approach is taken for all staff.

The procedure will be monitored to ensure consistency of application and adherence to equalities legislation, to ensure that the policy operates in accordance with the duties to promote equality, to eliminate discrimination and to promote good relations between staff with protected characteristics as required under the Equality Act 2010. When carrying out any reviews or monitoring, the Trust will ensure that individuals' personal data is handled in accordance with GDPR. Records will be treated as confidential.

## APPENDIX 1 – APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FORM

**Application for Leave of Absence Form****Important Notes:**

- This form is for a planned absence request. Forms must be submitted with 14 days' notice unless in exceptional circumstances.
- Please refer to the Trust's Leave Policy and other Trust's policies as applicable for guidance.
- Upon completion, this form should be submitted first to your Line Manager for acknowledgment and then a paper copy must be submitted to Headteacher for authorisation.

**Section A: Employee Details**

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Job Title/Role:</b>	<b>Department:</b>
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**Part 1 – Application for Leave of Absence**

**Section B: Leave Request Details:** Please enclose evidence for the reason for the request where applicable, failure to provide satisfactory evidence may result in the request being denied or approval delayed.

Date/Time of Planned Absence:		
<b>Date from:</b>	<b>Date to:</b>	<b>NO. of days:</b>
<b>Time from (if part-day leave):</b>	<b>Time to:</b>	<b>NO. of hours:</b>
Reason for Request (Please '✓' the box and provide details of the leave):		Details of the request
<input type="checkbox"/> Medical/Doctor's Appointment: Please provide evidence with this form		
<input type="checkbox"/> Dental/Optician Appointment: Please provide evidence with this form		
<input type="checkbox"/> Compassionate Leave, including Bereavement: <i>(insert details and relationship to deceased)</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Study Leave: <i>(insert details of qualification)</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Maternity Leave: Please provide evidence with this form		
<input type="checkbox"/> Paternity Leave: Please provide evidence with this form		
<input type="checkbox"/> Time in Lieu: <i>(insert details) (as agreed with Line Manager)</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Jury Service: Please provide evidence with this form		
<input type="checkbox"/> Going Off-site: <i>(insert details)</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Other Leave: <i>(insert details)</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Unpaid Leave: <i>(insert details)</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Annual Leave: <i>(only applicable to staff with all year-round contract) – please also complete Part 2</i>		

**Please Note:** Requests for Leave are not approved and therefore regarded as unauthorised and/or unpaid until Section D below has been completed by the Headteacher and notified to the employee.

**Employee's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Section C: Line Manager Acknowledgment**

**Line Manager's Signature & Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Section D: Headteacher Authorisation**

1) Decision (Please '✓' the box)		2) Paid or Unpaid leave (Please '✓' the box)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Declined	<input type="checkbox"/> Paid	<input type="checkbox"/> Unpaid
<b>Notes:</b>			
<b>Signature:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	

**Page Two – Annual Leave Booking Only:** (Only applicable to staff with all year-round contract – please also complete Part 1)**Notes:**

1. Annual Leave must be used within the leave year (i.e. 1 April to 31 March) and must not be carried over.
2. Employees are responsible for planning ahead and submitting Annual Leave requests by completing pages one and two of this Application for Leave of Absence form.
3. In exceptional circumstances, for example if you are unable to take it due to sickness or maternity leave unused Annual Leave can be carried over (to be used within an agreed period of time) with the consent of the Headteacher.
4. In all other circumstances carrying over of any unused Annual Leave will not normally be allowed and will only be allowed with the consent of the Headteacher.

**Next Steps:**

1. Plan Ahead and Review Your Leave Balance: Check your remaining leave days and plan accordingly.
2. Use it or lose it: Ensure you have planned all of your Annual Leave and it is taken before the end of the relevant leave year to 31<sup>st</sup> March. Any unused Annual Leave will be lost and will not be carried forward or paid in lieu/compensated.
3. Submit Your Leave Request: Please submit your Annual Leave request for any remaining holiday through your Line Manager by completing this Application for Leave of Absence form.
4. Complete the Annual Leave Card below: Complete the table below, complete Part 1 and 2 of this form and submit this form to your Line Manager for acknowledgment and Headteacher for approval.

**Annual Leave Card:**

<b>A. Start Date if after 1 April in this Leave Year: (Insert start date or leave blank if before 1 April)</b>	
<b>B. Annual Leave already taken in this Leave Year (do not include Public/ Bank Holidays):</b>	
<b>C. Annual Leave already requested and agreed but not yet taken in this Leave Year:</b>	
<b>D. Annual Leave now being requested:</b>	
<b>E. Annual Leave remaining after D above:</b>	

**Employee's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Line Manager Acknowledgement:**

**Signature & Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Headteacher Authorization:**

**Signature & Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_