
Supporting Foster Care Policy and Procedure

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This Policy is not for publication externally



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1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Council is committed to helping make a difference for foster carers and the children they care for in our local community and, improving the support for our employees who foster a child/children, enabling them to balance employment with looking after children.
- 1.2 As a Fostering Friendly employer, we offer foster carers flexible working and up to 5 additional days of paid time off for training, settling a new child into their home and for ongoing responsibilities such as statutory case reviews and meetings with the case worker.
- 1.3 Personal Committee has approved the Supporting Foster Care Policy.

2. Applicability

- 2.1 This Policy applies to:
 - 2.1.1 All non-school based employees working for the Council, who are registered Foster Carers and have a child/children in their care.
 - 2.1.2 The policy is not applicable to employees who are undertaking 'fostering for adoption'; there are separate arrangements, included in the council's adoption procedure, for these employees.
- 2.2 Adherence to this Policy is a condition of working for the council or using its assets.
- 2.3 This Policy has had consultation with trade unions and has been ratified by the Council's Corporate Board.

3. Policy

- 3.1 The council will offer an additional allowance of paid time off for eligible employees of up to 5 days per year. Up to one day of this additional leave may be used by employees being assessed as foster carers during the assessment period. Where two employees are 'jointly' fostering a child/children, they should agree who is to receive the additional leave; only one will be eligible.
- 3.2 For employees who foster more than one child, the manager will seek advice from the Fostering Team Manager and will apply discretionary, additional paid or unpaid days if and as required to best meet the needs of any statutory review / management of incident crisis.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- 4.1 Managers are responsible for:
 - 4.1.1 approving requests for time off received from eligible employees and keeping a local record of these, and the days taken, ensuring the maximum is not exceeded

4.1.2 informing Payroll of any additional leave due to be taken which will be unpaid.

4.2 Employees will:

4.2.1 in all cases, inform their manager they are a foster carer and eligible/no longer eligible for the additional leave

4.2.2 familiarise themselves with, and adhere to, this policy and procedure

4.2.3 when in a 'joint fostering arrangement', provide written notification to the Fostering Team Manager, and if appropriate their manager, of their decision as to who will receive the 5 days additional leave. The notification must be signed by both employees

4.2.4 when requesting the additional leave, complete the [Request for Additional Leave form](#).

4.3 Fostering Team Manager will:

4.3.1 in 'joint fostering' they will send the written notification of the foster carers' election to receive or, to enable the other employee who is in the 'joint fostering' arrangement, to receive the additional leave to the manager

4.4 Human Resources will:

4.4.1 review and maintain this policy and provide advice and guidance on its implementation.

5. Procedure

5.1 To confirm eligibility, the employee will give their line manager a copy of their invitation to the Skills to Foster training. Once the employee is approved they will receive a letter confirming they are approved as a carer, which can also be provided to the line manager.

5.2 Managers are required to review the eligibility on an annual basis with their staff.

5.3 When requesting time off under this policy the [Request for Additional Leave form](#) will be used.

5.4 Time off will be approved in full or half days under this scheme.

6. Failure to comply with WBC Supporting Foster Carers Policy

6.1 This document provides staff and others with essential information regarding how the Council supports foster carers and sets out conditions to be followed. It is the responsibility of all to whom this Policy document applies to adhere to these conditions. Failure to do so may result in:

- withdrawal of access to relevant services
- informal disciplinary processes
- formal disciplinary action under the disciplinary procedure

7. **Review**

- 7.1 This Policy does not form part of the employee's contract of employment and the council retains the right to review and change the Policy at any time, ensuring that it complies with current employment legislation and the requirements of the council. Trade Unions will be consulted on any significant changes.
- 7.2 This policy will be reviewed to respond to any changes and at least every 5 years.
- 7.3 Human Resources is responsible for reviewing and maintaining this Policy.

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Other Relevant Documentation

[Adoption Procedure](#)

[Additional Leave Procedure](#)