



# **Woolwich Polytechnic School**

## **PolyMAT**

### **TIME OFF FOR DEPENDANTS POLICY**

**January 2017**

The law recognises and the School respects that there will be occasions when employees will need to take time off work to deal with unexpected events involving one of their dependants.

This policy applies to employees of the School only. It does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and is not intended to have contractual effect. The School reserves the right to vary and amend this policy and any procedure under it at any time.

All employees have the right to take a reasonable amount of unpaid time off work to deal with certain situations affecting their dependants and the School is committed to a programme of action to make this policy effective and to bring it to the attention of all employees. No employee who takes time off in accordance with this policy will be subjected to any detriment.

### **Leave for Dependants**

All employees have a right to take a reasonable amount of unpaid time off work when it is necessary to:

- provide assistance when a dependant falls ill, gives birth, is injured or assaulted;
- make longer-term care arrangements for a dependant who is ill or injured;
- take action required in consequence of the death of a dependant;
- deal with the unexpected disruption, termination or breakdown of arrangements for the care of a dependant; and/or
- deal with an unexpected incident involving their child during school hours (or those of another educational establishment).

A dependant for the purposes of this policy is:

- an employee's spouse, civil partner, parent or child;
- a person who lives in the same household as the employee but who is not their tenant, lodger, boarder or employee;
- anyone else who reasonably relies on the employee to provide assistance, make arrangements or take action of the kind referred to in this Policy.

Employees are only entitled to take time off under this policy to provide personal care for a dependant where there is an immediate crisis.

If you know well in advance that you wish to take time off to care for a dependant yourself, rather than arrange for someone else to do so, this policy will not apply. You should take advice from your Line Manager/Head of Department or the head Teachers if you need to take time off work in these circumstances.

For the right to time off under this policy to arise, it must be necessary for you to take action in relation to a dependant. Whether action is necessary will depend on the nature of the problem, the closeness of the relationship between you, and whether someone else is available to assist. Action is unlikely to be considered necessary if you knew in advance that a problem might arise but didn't make alternative arrangements for a dependant's care.

Reasonable time off in relation to a particular problem will not normally be more than one or two days. However, we will always consider each set of circumstances on their facts.

### **Exercising the right to time off**

You will only be entitled to time off under this policy if, as soon as is reasonably practicable, you tell your Line Manager/Head of Department or the Head Teachers:

- the reason for your absence; and
- how long you expect to be away from work.

If you fail to notify us as required above, you may be subject to disciplinary proceedings under the School's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure for taking unauthorised time off.

Where it is possible to do so in advance or when you return to work after taking time off under this policy, we might ask you to provide evidence for your reasons for taking the time off. Suspected abuse of this policy will be dealt with as a disciplinary issue under the School's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

In addition to the statutory right to time off for dependants, additional leave with or without pay may be granted in special circumstances at the discretion of the School. The School shall give particular consideration to granting reasonable paid time off for dependants.

Such additional leave (and whether this is paid or unpaid) will be granted at the Head teachers' absolute discretion depending on the individual circumstances of the case.