The Dunstan Catholic Educational Trust

Special Leave Policy

Agreed by the DCET Trust Board on: 18th December 2024

Review Date: December 2026

Signed: Catherine Christie Date:18.12.24
Chair of Trust Board

Version Number	Date Amended	Comments and Changes	Date Approved	Author	Approved By
1		First combined Policy for the Trust		Trust Own based on all LA policies	

This policy applies to all academies within the DCET

Objective and Scope:

This Special Leave Policy is designed to assist Headteachers and Local Governing Committees in the Dunstan Catholic Educational Trust in making decisions about requests for leave in accordance with legal, contractual and moral obligations. It will also assist staff when considering and applying for leave of absence.

The principal purpose in setting out this policy is to ensure that requests are dealt with fairly and consistently.

The policy applies to all employees of the school. This policy does not form part of any employees' contract of employment.

Principles:

- Annual leave and sickness absence are managed 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
- All leave allowance should be applied pro rata to an employee's contracted hours, unless otherwise stated
- The operational needs of the school will be paramount and except in emergency circumstances, adequate notice of request for leave of absence must be given
- The responsibility for exercising discretion on behalf of the LGC is the Headteacher in accordance with the professional duties defined in the School Teachers Pay and Condition Document.
- All requests for leave must be submitted to the school to approve l giving reasonable notice of any request made
- Where the request for leave concerns the Headteacher requests should be made to the CEO and the Chair of the LGC. Where the request for leave concerns Central Team requests should be made to the CEO. Where the request for leave concerns the CEO the requests should be made to the Chair of the Trust Board.

This policy does not cover absence caused by sickness, see the Trust's Sickness Absence Policy and Procedure or cover for maternity/adoption leave please see your local policies.

Definitions:

Dependent. A dependent will be a spouse, civil partner, partner (including same sex partners), child (includes children in respect of whom the employee is the adoptive parent and legal guardians and carers) or parent of the member of staff or a person

living with the employee in the same household (but not as an employee, tenant, lodger or boarder).

In the case of injury, illness or where care arrangements breakdown, a dependent can also be a person who reasonably relies on the employee for assistance. This could be an individual for whom the employee has primary caring responsibility, such as an elderly relative not living in the employee's household or someone who is involved in an emergency where the employee is the only who can help. The incident needs to be something which needs immediate attention, where the presence of the employee is required.

Parental Bereavement is available to all employees who are 'bereaved parents' where they are the primary carer for a deceased child under 18. Bereaved parents include: adoptive parents, individuals who are fostering to adopt, legal guardians, most foster parents and parents who suffer a stillbirth after the end of the 24th week pregnancy,

Close Relative means a grandparent, parent, grandchild, brother, sister, or parent in law of the employee

Equality and Diversity Statement

DCET is committed to preventing discrimination, valuing diversity and achieving equality of opportunity. No person will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of the nine protected characteristics (as governed by the Equality Act 2010). In addition to these nine, DCET will bit discriminate on the grounds of domestic circumstances social-economic status, political affiliation or Trade Union Membership.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Trust Board are responsible for:

- Communicating this policy to the school communities
- Ensuring that the policy is consistently applied across the Trust

CEO, Headteachers and line managers are responsible for:

- Communicating this policy to employees and making them aware of their rights to such leave
- Apply the practices detailed in this policy objectively
- Consider each request on an individual basis ensuring consistency of practice
- Ensure employees apply for leave via DCET processes

- Ensure compliance with the policy, providing fairness, objectivity and consistency when making decisions, not just in the school but across the Trust.

Employees are responsible for:

- Reading and understanding the contents of the policy
- Reviewing the school term dates, especially if planning to book a holiday so there is no conflict
- Making contact with their line manager as soon as possible in the case of requests for immediate leave
- Ensuring they apply for leave via DCET processes (Appendix 1 – request form)

- Making applications with honesty and integrity to respect the spirit in which this policy was developed.

Special Leave Entitlements:

Medical Appointments

Staff to attend Dentist/Doctor	Time off to attend appointments should be made outside school hours . If this is not possible then paid leave will be granted for the appointment only on the production of an appointment card/letter
Staff to attend Hospital appointments ad medical screening	Time off to attend appointments should be made outside school hours. If this is not possible then paid leave will be granted for the appointment only on production of an appointment card/letter
Staff to accompany a relative to hospital or medical appointments	Unpaid leave may be granted for staff to accompany dependents on production of an appointment letter/card

Parental Leave

Parental leave	18 weeks unpaid leave which can be taken in blocks of one week (part weeks count as one week) with a maximum of four week leave in any one year (1st September to 31st August), per child up until their 18th birthday. If the child is disabled, leave can be taken in blocks of one day.

Carer's leave and dependency leave

Carer's leave	One weeks unpaid leave within any 12 month period to care for a dependent with a long term care leave
Dependency leave	5 days (pro-rata for part time staff) paid leave in a rolling 12 month period from September to August.

Bereavement and Dependent Care

Parental Bereavement	Two weeks paid leave (child under the age of 18)
Bereavement – death of a relative	Dependent – up to 2 weeks paid leave Close relative – up to 2 days paid leave Any other – unpaid leave
Funerals	Dependents – day of the funeral and the next day paid leave Close relative - day of the funeral Any other – unpaid leave for the day/part day of the funeral

Household

Moving House	1 day paid leave may be granted in exceptional circumstances
Weddings	Dependents up to 2 days paid leave may be granted in exceptional circumstances Close relative 1 day paid leave Any other wedding unpaid at the discretion of the line manager
Household emergency e.g. fire, flood, burglary	1 day paid leave
Overstating/delayed returns	Unpaid leave

Career Break

Career Break	This can be requested where a period of extended leave is required which cannot be met through another policy for reasons such as caring responsibilities, further study, travel, pilgrimage, family etc. To take this leave employees are required to resign from their contract of employment giving the required notice as set out in their contract of employment. However, there is no guarantee of re-employment at the end of the career break. They will be given the opportunity of an interview, provided they meet the essential criteria of the job.

Courts and Tribunals

Jury Service	Leave with pay, subject to signed confirmation to reimburse school for the loss of earnings allowance paid by the court
Witness in court	Leave with pay subject to agreement to reimburse compensations for loss of earning
Court attendance as defendant or plaintiff	Leave with pay when representing the employer. Unpaid if not representing the school or the employer.
Justice of Peace or Magistrate	Leave with pay up to 18 working days or 36 half days an academic year.

Councillors and MPs

Local Councillor	Leave with pay, however where an allowance is claimable for loss of earnings the employee must claim and pay the allowance to the Trust
Candidate for Council Elections	Up to 5 working days paid leave (includes polling day) and 5 working days unpaid in an 8-week rolling period
Candidate for parliamentary elections	Up to 5 working days paid leave (includes polling day) and 5 working days unpaid in an 8-week rolling period
Polling clerk or presiding officer	Unpaid leave

Job Interviews

Interviews attendance with posts within the Trust	Leave with pay to attend the interview only
Interview attendance for approved college or other form of study	Leave with pay to attend the interview only
Interview attendance for posts within education	Leave with pay to attend the interview only

Sporting Events

Representing country or county in a sporting event	Reasonable time off including travelling paid leave, additional time unpaid

Armed Forces

Volunteers for non regular forces	2 working weeks, of which one week paid

Other

Maternity leave	See maternity leave policy
Paternity leave	See maternity leave policy
Trade Union Officials	Paid time off as described in the Local Authority's facility time agreement
Companion	Reasonable time off will be granted to accompany a fellow worker at a disciplinary or grievance hearing.
Significant events	To attend the graduation of a dependent or for themselves -1 day paid

Appendix 1

DCET Application for Special Leave of Absence

Section 1 – to be completed by the employee

Name:

Post:

I request special leave of absence on the following date(s): from…….. to…….

For the following reason

Signed:

Date:

When this section has been completed the form should be given to the Headteacher/CEO/Chair of the Trust Board

Section 2 – to be completed by the Headteacher/CEI/Chair of the Trust Board

This application for special leave of absence has been granted with pay

This application for special leave of absence has been granted without pay

This application for special leave of absence has been declined for the following reason(s):

Signed:

Date:

A copy of the completed form should be returned to the applicant and a copy placed in their personnel folder