

Family Friendly Policies - Parental Leave

HR Service Effective from April 2026

1. Introduction

The following guidance is for employees under 'Green Book' terms and conditions. For other employees, please speak to your HR contact to check where your terms and conditions may vary.

2. Parental Leave

Employees are entitled to take unpaid leave to:

- spend time with their children
- deal with family or domestic incidents

These statutory rights complement local and national special leave arrangements, including maternity leave and 5 days paid maternity support leave for nominated carers, and are in addition to normal annual leave entitlement. More details about special leave arrangements are available on the staff intranet, B:HIVE.

3. Conditions applying for Parental Leave

Parental Leave taken **before 6 April 2026** requires the employee to have been employed for at least one year. The employee must have, or expect to have, responsibility for a child. Employees that meet these criteria and the conditions below can take up to 18 weeks unpaid leave.

Parental Leave taken **after 6 April 2026** has no qualifying service. The employee must have, or expect to have, responsibility for a child. Employees that meet this criteria and the conditions below can take up to 18 weeks unpaid leave.

There are some conditions that apply to taking parental leave:

- the term "parent" covers adoption and where parental responsibility is legally assumed
- leave must be taken before the child's 18th birthday
- employees must give at least 21 days' notice before taking leave
- leave must be taken in weekly blocks regardless of the actual time taken (except by employees with parental responsibility for a disabled child where leave can be taken on a daily basis). For example, if an employee takes only 2 days parental leave in a week it will be counted as a full week against the 18 weeks entitlement. However, where less than the full week is taken at the request of the manager (e.g. because of pressing priorities), the remainder of that week's entitlement can be taken at the earliest opportunity
- a maximum of 4 weeks parental leave may be taken in any one year
- leave entitlement applies proportionately to part-time employees i.e. a 'week' equals the length of time the employee normally works in a week
- terms and conditions of employment are protected whilst on leave in much the same way as a mother is protected when on maternity leave
- parental leave can be taken in addition to maternity leave or shared parental leave. Where maternity support leave is granted it shall count towards parental leave
- a manager may ask for evidence of parental responsibilities (with discretion and in appropriate cases)

- parental leave can only be postponed by up to 6 months where it is reasonable to do so and there is a strong business reason. It cannot be postponed where the request is for leave at or around the expected date of birth or the placement date for adoption. A request for postponement must be made within 7 days of the original request giving a new start date within six months of the original start date. No change may be made to the amount of leave requested
- parental leave should be requested via MyView