

William Austin Junior School

Policy for a Career Break



1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy outlines the procedure to be followed where a career break is requested by a School employee. All requests for career breaks will be carefully considered with the effective delivery of education to pupils balanced with the individual needs of school employees.
- 1.2 This policy should be read in conjunction with other School policies, in particular the Leave of Absence Policy.

2. Applying for a career break

- 2.1 Any employee that has three years' continuous service with the school may apply for an unpaid career break. This request should be made in writing to the Headteacher /Governing Body.
- 2.2 There is no minimum period for a career break but discretion should be applied. When a career break of less than 12 weeks is requested, consideration should be given to looking at alternative types of leave where appropriate.
- 2.3 In the application for a career break, the employee must make a proposal for how their duties could be covered in their absence. Approval of career breaks is strictly subject to the business needs of the School. Arrangements should be made for keeping in touch during the career break.
- 2.4 When applying for a career break of less than six calendar months, a terms notice must be given. When applying for a career break of between six calendar months and twelve calendar months, two terms notice must be given.

3. Purpose of career breaks

- 3.1 A career break can be used for a variety of purposes. However, career breaks cannot be used by employees who are on long term sick. An employee must be fit for work to apply for a career break.

4. Payment

- 4.1 All career breaks are unpaid, as the career breaker is not working for the School during their career break.
- 4.2 If the School requires the career breaker to attend any training or meeting within the career break, then this will be paid.

5. Rights and responsibilities

- 5.1 It is the responsibility of the career breaker to keep their knowledge and skills updated whilst on a career break. This could involve reading professional journals, or attending a required number of appropriate training courses.
- 5.2 All service rights and accruals will be frozen as at the date of commencement of the career break. Service for additional annual leave purposes, for support staff, will not accrue in the period of the career break. Increments will not accrue in the career break period. The spinal column point which the career breaker commenced their career break on is the same point on which they will return. Service will not accrue for the purposes of contractual sick pay during the career break period.
- 5.3 The career breaker will still be employed by the School throughout their career break, and therefore they are still bound by their terms and conditions as stated in their Statement of Written Particulars, subsequent amendments and the School's Policies.

- 5.4 It is particularly relevant that, whilst on a career break, employees must continue to adhere to the School's Code of Conduct for Employees. The Code of Conduct for Employees refers to Conflicts of Interest and Paid and Unpaid Work. These areas, and others, may still be applicable in certain circumstances whilst on a career break and career breakers should make themselves aware of all relevant sections of the Code of Conduct before commencing their career break. It is the responsibility of the career breaker to notify the School of any circumstances affecting their continued employment in anyway; e.g. the declaration of criminal offences, a medical condition, which could have an adverse effect on their ability to perform the duties of their post.
- 5.5 Prior to undertaking any work during a career break, the employee needs to inform the School and the Inland Revenue. Consideration and in some cases prior agreement needs to be given, before any work is undertaken by a career breaker.
- 5.6 Career breakers are able to return to the same post they held at the commencement of the career break within the School. If it has been necessary to restructure the team during their absence, they will have been consulted on the changes and will therefore return to the post to which they were appointed during their career break.
- 5.7 If a career breaker does not wish to return to work after their career break then they will be required to resign giving the appropriate notice period. If the career breaker resigns and their notice period exceeds the expiry date of the career break, they will be required to work that proportion of their notice period.
- 5.8 Time off for a career break does not count towards any period of service, which needs to be satisfied, following a training agreement between the school and the employee.

6. Pension issues

- 6.1 Career breakers, who are members of the Local Government Pension Scheme, can opt to pay pension contributions or not for the break period (up to 12 months) through Additional Pension Contributions (APC). If the career breaker does not opt to pay pension contributions, that period of time will not count towards their eventual Local Government Pension benefits. Employees wishing to take a career break should seek individual advice from their pension provider.

7. Annual Leave

- 7.1 As career breakers have a contract of employment throughout their career break, contractual annual leave can be taken in the usual way during the career break. Annual leave taken during a career break will be unpaid as the career breaker will not be in receipt of any pay.
- 7.2 The career breaker will only be paid for annual leave they take before or after a career break. Where this is required to be within school closure periods this requirement remains.

8. Maternity Leave

- 8.1 Employees are entitled to run their maternity leave and a career break (in that order) consecutively providing they satisfy the points below:
- They give the correct notice in line with section 2 of this scheme.
 - They forfeit the right to OMP (Occupational Maternity Pay) until after they have returned from the career break and worked for a period of three months (pro rata for part timers).
- 8.2 Career breaks cannot be split to cover the periods before and after maternity leave.

9. Grievances/Appeals

9.1 Where an employee feels that he/she has been unfairly treated in respect of this policy and practice, he/she will have a right to appeal under the Grievance Procedure.

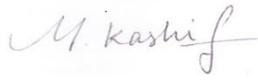
This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the Headteacher on an annual basis.

Policy updated: February 2021

Staff responsible: Jo Adams

This policy was ratified by the Governing body on: 10 March 2021

Signed on behalf of the Governing Body:

 (signature)

Muhammad Kashif (printed)