



MacIntyre Academies

MAT Bereavement Leave Policy

Version Number	Purpose/ Change	Responsibility	Date
V1	New policy	Interim CEO	October 2023

Person Responsible: Group Director
Date of first draft: Aug 2023
Date of staff consultation: 21/09/23 (Ops Forum)
Date adopted by the Trust Board: Oct 2023
Reviewed: n/a
Next review: Oct 2026

1. Purpose

MacIntyre Academies Trust (the Trust/ MAT) acknowledges the personal nature of bereavement and grief and is committed to supporting employees in practical and reasonable ways. This policy gives guidance on an employees entitlement to time off when a death occurs in their immediate family and how to deal with this sensitively.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees of MacIntyre Academies Trust.

This policy does not form part of any contract of employment and may be amended from time to time.

This policy may be used in conjunction with the MAT Parental Bereavement Policy, and MAT Leave of Absence Policy.

3. Schedule of Responsibilities

The Group Director of MacIntyre Academies Trust takes overall responsibility for the implementation of policies and procedures and to provide reports as appropriate to the Trust Board in relation to this policy.

Principals of MacIntyre Academies and their Senior Leadership Teams, and the Head of Care at Endeavour House, will take active steps to promote good practice under this policy and review and monitor the management and implementation of this policy and practice in their Academy. They will identify training needs, ensuring competence in those staff who are responsible for and involved in the operation of this policy and associated guidance.

MacIntyre Academies Human Resources are responsible for providing advice and training under this policy and reviewing and updating the policy as required; ensuring continuing relevance and effectiveness in line with any developments in employment legislation, good employment practice and other MacIntyre Academies policies. The HR Manager is responsible for collating data for regular Trust Board HR reports and where appropriate, providing confidential reports as required by the Group Director and MacIntyre Academies Trust Board on individual cases.

4. Introduction

Bereavement leave is paid leave that allows an employee time off to deal with their personal grief and related practical arrangement, primarily, but not limited to, when a close family member dies.

5. Eligibility

All employees are entitled to Bereavement Leave when they have 26 weeks of service.

Where an employee experiences the loss of a child under the age of 18, they will be entitled to take two weeks' parental bereavement leave. Please see the MAT Parental Bereavement Policy for more information.

6. Entitlement

MacIntyre Academies acknowledges that bereavement impacts all individuals differently and the guidelines below are intended to show the minimum paid leave an employee is entitled to in different circumstances. The Trust acknowledges that not all employees will need to take the full allowance, and some employees will need additional time, depending on their relationship with the person who has died and the circumstances of the death.

The table below gives guidance on what leave is available in the event of the death of a close family member. Bereavement leave does not have to be taken in blocks, for example employees may wish to use some leave for making funeral arrangements or use a day to attend the funeral. Leave for part time employees is pro-rata.

Up to 2 weeks of paid leave	Up to 1 week of paid leave
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brother /sister • Child • Civil Partner • Husband/wife • Live in partner • Parent/guardian • Fiancé/Fiancée 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brother/sister in law • Grandchild • Grandparents • Nephew/Niece • Parents in law • Partners parents • Step brother/sister • Step children • Step parents • Aunt/Uncle

Note: Child includes children the employee is the adoptive parent, legal guardian or carer for. If the child dies under the age of 18 or is stillborn they may be entitled to additional leave, please see the MAT Parental Bereavement Policy and the MAT Maternity Leave Policy.

If a non-dependent dies, leave may be granted on the death of someone who is not a child or dependent. These circumstances would include (but are not limited to) situations where the employee is responsible for funeral arrangements or has to travel abroad to attend the funeral. In this event leave may be granted in accordance with the MAT Leave of Absence Policy at the discretion of the Principal.

An employee will not automatically have the right to take extended bereavement leave by taking unpaid leave. Unpaid leave may be granted in exceptional circumstances and agreed with the Academy.

Where employees are entitled to annual leave they are able to take leave at short notice to supplement their bereavement leave, this must be agreed by the School Business Manager/ Principal.

6.1 Miscarriage Leave

If an employee or their partner has a miscarriage in the first 24 weeks of pregnancy, MacIntyre Academies, recognises many people will consider this a bereavement. In these circumstances, the Trust provides 5 working days paid leave.

Up to 2 weeks sickness absence related to a miscarriage will be recorded as “pregnancy related sickness”. This absence will not count towards any review or trigger points set out in the MAT Sickness Absence Policy.

7. Notification

An employee should notify their line manager/ School Business Manager/ Principal of their need to take leave as soon as reasonably possible or, at the latest, on the first day of absence. An employee’s next of kin or family member can inform the Academy on their behalf.

In exceptional circumstances, applications for leave will be considered after the first day of absence, the School Business Manager and Principal have the right to exercise discretion in exceptional circumstances. Leave days do not have to be taken consecutively.

8. During bereavement leave

MacIntyre Academies understands the deep impact that death can have on an individual and accept that there will be occasions when the School Business Manager/ Principal will need to use discretion and apply the guidelines flexibly in regards to Bereavement Leave.

The line manager/School Business Manager or Principal (or nominated contact) must make a welfare call to the employee within 24 hours of being notified of the bereavement to see if there is any support that can be offered and they should also ensure the employee understands their Bereavement Leave entitlement as outlined in this policy.

The employee's absence should be recorded on the Academy HR system and with Payroll.

It is at the discretion of the nominated contact whether they feel the need to contact the employee again during the first five days of their leave to offer any further support. If appropriate (with the employees' permission) other employees in the Academy should be told about the situation and when they can expect the employee back at work.

MacIntyre Academies recognises that different cultures respond to death in significantly different ways. Line Managers/ School Business Managers/Principals should check whether the employee's religion, belief or culture requires them to observe any particular practices or make special arrangements which would require them being off work at a particular time. Employees should not assume that their line manager is aware of any such requirements and should draw this to their line manager's attention as soon as possible.

Line managers who are unsure of how to respond to a bereaved employee from a different culture should ask the bereaved employee or someone else from their cultural group about what is appropriate.

9. Return to work

On return to work a return to work interview must be completed with the employee's line manager/School Business Manager/ Principal in order to a welfare check and offer any further help or support.

In certain circumstance a full return to work may not be possible for an employee following a bereavement. For example, when the employee's grief is likely to impact on their ability to perform their role or if new childcare arrangements need to be sourced. In such instances a phased return or alternative duties may be considered. This should be discussed prior to the employee returning to work or during their return to work interview. A phased return would be for a maximum of 2 weeks.

Bereavement can have an impact on concentration, sleep and decision making, any employee who is concerned about their ability to conduct their duties safely in the weeks following a bereavement must discuss this with their line manager/School Business Manager or Principal.

All employees have access to our Employee Assistance Programme, and MacIntyre Academies would like to encourage bereaved employees to use it, if you feel that you would like to talk to someone about your loss, they can also provide counselling sessions. Details can be found: www.lifeworks.com or 0800 169 1920.

APPENDIX 1

Support

- Lifeworks Employee Assistance www.lifeworks.com 0800 169 1920
- Compassionate Friends (a helpline to give support to people suffering from a recent bereavement of a child) 0845 123 2304 www.tcf.org.uk
- Cruse Bereavement (A helpline to support people suffering from a recent bereavement) 0808 808 1677 www.cruse.org.uk
- Citizens Advice Bureau (Free Help and support with legal, money and other issues) 0800 144 8848 www.citizensadvice.org.uk
- Mind (Support and advice for mental health) 0300 123 3393 www.mind.org.uk
- The Samaritans (Local help) 116 123 www.samaritans.org
- Relate (advice and support for family relationships) 0300 0030396 www.relate.org.uk
- Gingerbread (support and advice for lone parents and their children) 0808 802 0925 www.gingerbread.org.uk
- The Miscarriage Association 01924 200799 www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk
- Sands (support for anyone affected by the death of a baby) 0808 164 3332 www.sands.org.uk
- Tommy's (support for miscarriage, stillbirth and premature birth) 020 7398 3400 www.tommys.org
- Marie Curie (support for bereavements following a terminal illness) <https://www.mariecurie.org.uk/help/support/bereavement>

APPENDIX 2

Bereavement Leave Process

Employee notifies relevant person of a bereavement as soon as possible



Line Manger/School Business Manager/Principal makes a welfare call to employee within 24 hours to offer support
They should ensure the employee fully understands their bereavement leave outlined in this policy
Ensure the abence is recorded on PS people and with Payroll



Line Manager/ School Business Manager/ Principal calls the employee again during the first five days of their leave to offer any further support and to help make coming back to work easier.



On the employees return to work, a return to work interview must be completed by Line Manager/ School Business Manager /Principal and offer any further help or support.