



Staff Maternity Policy

I have an obligation to ensure the safety and welfare of everyone who uses or is involved with the running of my childcare service, including my assistants and staff. This comes with added responsibility when a staff member becomes pregnant as extra consideration must be taken to ensure their wellbeing and to assist them with tasks that may become increasingly difficult. I value the contributions of all my staff members and every effort will be made to provide the support necessary during pregnancy and to encourage the return to work following maternity leave.

Sharing your news

If you are expecting a baby, I would be grateful if you can inform me as soon as possible. Although legally, employees are not required to inform their employer of their pregnancy until the 15th week before their baby is due, it is important to think about whether the nature of your work could have an impact on the health and wellbeing of you and your baby. We must take into consideration circumstances that come with additional risks during pregnancy, for example lifting heavy items such as boxes of toys, equipment, or young children; encountering harmful bacteria, for example when changing nappies; or being exposed to infection. The sooner I am informed the better as I will be able to provide you with additional support for certain tasks and I can ensure extra precautions are taken with regards to hygiene and illness procedures.

Absence and appointments

I understand that you may at times feel unwell throughout your pregnancy or suffer from morning sickness or extreme tiredness. Please let me know as soon as possible if you are feeling unwell or if you are unable to work. This is extremely important so that sufficient time is available to organise cover and ensure that staff: child ratios can be met. Please refer to the staff sickness policy for further details on reporting procedures if you are feeling unwell and cannot come into work.

To monitor the health and wellbeing of both you and your unborn child, it is essential that you receive ante-natal care throughout your pregnancy. Whilst you are entitled to time off during your normal working hours to attend appointments, to minimise disruption to the children and families using the service, I would appreciate if you could where possible arrange appointments out with your working hours or on days where our staff: child ratios may be less affected. Where this is unavoidable, please let me know details of appointments as soon as possible so that suitable cover can be arranged. There will be no deduction from your salary for absence whilst you are attending ante-natal appointments (including any time spent travelling to or waiting for the appointment) so long as you have provided sufficient evidence, for example an

appointment card, doctor, or hospital letter.

Maternity Leave (for employed staff)

Ordinary maternity leave - You are entitled to take 26 weeks maternity leave, irrespective of your length of service or the number of hours worked each week, provided you have notified me of your pregnancy at least 15 weeks before your due date and provided me with a MATB1 form (usually issued by your GP, doctor, or midwife) confirming your pregnancy and the EWC (expected week of childbirth). You should also provide details of the date that you wish to commence your maternity leave (which cannot be any earlier than 11 weeks before the EWC).

Additional maternity leave - If you qualify for ordinary maternity leave and have 26 weeks service at the beginning of the 14th week before the expected week of the birth (EWC) of your child, you are entitled to take an additional period of 26 weeks maternity leave. This is in addition to and follows ordinary maternity leave.

Compulsory maternity leave - Legislation prohibits you from returning to work during the two-week period immediately after the birth of your child.

Maternity Pay

If you qualify for maternity leave, then you will be entitled to Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) for up to 39 weeks. Please refer to the government website for further information and details of the current SMP rates: <https://www.gov.uk/maternity-pay-leave/pay>

Maternity Leave Cover

To minimise disruption to the children and families using the service and for the continued operation of my business, I may require taking on new staff or increase the number of hours worked by existing staff to cover your role whilst you are on leave. It will be made clear on any new or adjusted contracts that this is a temporary arrangement that will cease on your return to work. Prior to the commencement of your maternity leave I will inform you of the arrangements I have made and also discuss ways in which we can keep in touch whilst you are on leave. I may want to make you aware of any significant changes taking place within the setting, inform you of training opportunities that would be of benefit to your continued professional development or simply include or invite you to work-related social events.

Returning to Work

After the compulsory two-week period, you have the right to return to work at any time during the remainder, or at the end of your maternity leave, provided you give at least 8 weeks written notice of your intention to return. You have the right to return to your own job, or to a suitable alternative one should my business circumstances change. I will always seek to avoid redundancies and in accordance with statutory requirements, where job losses are unavoidable, I will give existing staff (including those on maternity leave) first consideration for any suitable alternative employment opportunities that may arise.

If you are planning on returning to work but would like to request a change to your existing contracted hours, please let me know about this as soon as possible so that I can work with you to establish a suitable solution.

Please let me know if you have any questions regarding this policy or if you wish to discuss any aspect of your maternity arrangements.