



'Christ at the centre, children at the heart'

Our Lady of Walsingham Catholic MAT

Company No: 08444133

Registered Office: Fordham Road, Newmarket, Suffolk, CB8 7AA

Approved by the Trust Board:	March 2026
Signed by Trust CEO:	<i>Clare Oast</i>
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PARENTAL BEREAVEMENT LEAVE AND PAY POLICY

Introduction

This policy outlines the arrangements for leave and pay for an employee who sadly suffers the loss of a child, including stillbirth.

The Our Lady of Walsingham Trust applies this policy to employees of the Our Lady of Walsingham Trust only (who, for the purposes of this policy will be referred to as “you”) and therefore does not apply to casual workers, agency workers or the self-employed. However, workers including agency workers who meet certain qualifying criteria may be entitled to Statutory Parental Bereavement Pay. Please contact Judicium for further details.

This policy is provided to all employees for guidance only. It does not form part of any individual’s contract of employment with the Our Lady of Walsingham Trust and is not intended to have contractual effect. Subject to minimum statutory requirements from time to time in force, we reserve the right to vary and amend this Policy and any procedure under it at any time and will notify all employees of the details of the change as soon as is reasonably practical.

Parental Bereavement Leave is in addition to any other types of statutory leave you may be entitled to such as time off for dependants or parental leave.

How we will support you

If you suffer the loss of a child, we will seek to do what we can to support you. In particular:

- we will identify a key point of contact within the Our Lady of Walsingham Trust during any leave you take and following your return to work;
- if you take leave, certain people within the Our Lady of Walsingham Trust will need to know that you have suffered a bereavement. It may also be helpful for your immediate work colleagues and others to know, so that they can be sensitive to your feelings and provide support if needed when you return to work. The key point of contact can discuss with you at the appropriate time what you would like people at work to know, and we will try to ensure that only that information is passed on;
- the key point of contact will also liaise with you during your leave, keeping us informed and explore with you that we can do to help and support you;
- the statutory right to parental bereavement leave and pay is set out in this policy. However, if you feel that you are not ready to return to work at the end of your parental bereavement leave, there are a number of other possibilities that we can discuss with you, e.g. taking sick leave or unpaid leave, or staging your return to work;
- we will consider the need for more formal support, e.g. access to an employee assistance scheme;
- your Line Manager will seek to maintain good communication, with an ‘open-door’ policy and regular meetings with you to offer support and monitor progress over time.

What is Parental Bereavement Leave?

Parental Bereavement Leave (PBL) applies to employees of the Our Lady of Walsingham Trust only and applies irrespective of your length of service.

If eligible, you will be entitled to take two weeks' PBL in the event you lose a child under the age of 18 or suffer a stillbirth from 24 weeks of pregnancy on or after 6 April 2020.

Duration of Parental Bereavement Leave

If eligible, you may take either one or two weeks' PBL. If you opt to take two weeks, the weeks do not need to be taken consecutively.

A week is any period of seven days (including weekends). PBL may be taken at any time within 56 weeks from the date of the child's death. This means you can match your leave to the times you need it most (for example, in the early days or over the first anniversary).

Where we offer Enhanced Bereavement Leave under another policy which is more generous than that offered within this policy, you may choose to take the greater overall amount of leave, rather than being bound by the statutory limit set out below. However, you cannot exercise the statutory right and the corresponding contractual right separately.

Eligibility to Parental Bereavement Leave

Regardless of length of service, if you are an employee, you will be eligible for PBL following the death of a child if you:

- have a parental relationship with the child (or are the partner of the person who has a parental relationship) (see below); and
- comply with the notice requirements (see below).

For the purposes of this leave, a child is a person under the age of 18, or a child stillborn after 24 weeks of pregnancy.

Eligible Relationships under this Policy

You will potentially have the right to PBL if you are an employee and have a parental relationship which falls within one of the following categories:

- you are the child's parent;
- you are the child's natural (or birth) parent, where:
 - a) an adoption order has been made in respect of the child where someone else has adopted them; and
 - b) an order has been made allowing the child to stay with you, or for you to have contact with the child; and
 - c) that order has not been revoked or discharged.
- the child has been placed for adoption with you (unless the child has returned or the placement has been terminated);
- you are the adopter with whom the child was living, following the child's entry into GB from outside the UK, provided you have received official written notification in

respect of the child by or on behalf of the relevant domestic authority that it has issued, or is prepared to issue, a certificate of eligibility and suitability to adopt;

- you are an 'intended parent' in that you have applied, or intended to apply, jointly or solely, during the period of six months beginning with the day of the child's birth for a parental order under the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 2008 in respect of the child;
- you are the child's 'parent in fact' i.e. you lived with the child continuously for at least four weeks before the child's death in your own home and had day to day responsibility for the child's care, unless:
 - a) the child's parent (or person with parental responsibility for the child) was also living there; or
 - b) you were or are entitled to receive wages or other remuneration for caring for the child (unless you fall within a specific exception, including paid foster carers).

You may also be entitled to PBL if you are the partner of person who meets the above criteria (the 'partner' in this context means a person of the same or a different sex who lives with the child and the other person in an enduring family relationship (excluding the employee's parents, adoptive or former adoptive parents, grandparent, sibling or half-sibling, aunt, or uncle)).

Notification Requirements for Parental Bereavement Leave

As well as meeting the eligibility criteria above, you must also give notice to us of the following:

- the date of the child's death;
- the date on which you want your PBL to start; and
- whether you want to take one week or two weeks' PBL.

1. Leave intended to begin within 8 weeks

If you want to take your PBL within 8 weeks of the child's death, you must give notice to us of your intention to take leave:

- before you are due to start work on your first day of your intended PBL; or
- where it is not reasonably practicable to give notice at that time, as soon as is reasonably practicable.

2. Leave intended to begin 9 weeks or later

If your intended period of PBL will start 9 weeks or more after the date of the child's death, you must give one weeks' notice of your intention to take PBL.

Parental Bereavement Leave

You can cancel a period of PBL which has not already started by notifying us in writing in accordance with the timescales below. The amount of notice of cancellation you need to give will depend on when the intended PBL falls.

1. Leave intended to begin within 8 weeks

If your leave is due to start within 8 weeks of the date of your child's death, you need to give us notice of cancellation no later than the time you would have been due to start work on the first day of the leave.

2. Leave intended to begin 9 weeks or later

If your leave is due to start 9 weeks or later after the date of your child's death, you need to give us notice of cancellation at least one week before the start of that leave.

If you do not notify us that you wish to cancel your leave within the required time frame, you will not be able to cancel any period of leave and your leave will instead begin on the date specified in your notice of intention to take PBL unless we agree otherwise.

Regretfully, you cannot cancel any week of PBL which has already begun.

Leave Interrupted by another type of Statutory Leave

If you begin another period of statutory leave below during a period of PBL, the period of PBL will end immediately before the start of the other period of statutory leave.

The other types of statutory leave referred to here, are:

- maternity leave;
- adoption leave;
- shared parental leave;
- parental leave; and
- paternity leave.

If you have any remaining untaken period of PBL, this leave:

- may be taken after the end of the other period of statutory leave (if that is within the 56-week period beginning with the child's death); and
- must be taken in a single consecutive period.

If, in these circumstances, you choose to take your remaining entitlement to PBL after the end of the other period of statutory leave, you must provide written notice in respect of that remaining entitlement (regardless of whether your remaining entitlement to PBL is less than one week) in line with the notification requirements set out above (except that it does not have to state whether you intend to take one or two weeks' leave).

Contractual benefits during Parental Bereavement Leave

During PBL you are entitled to enjoy your normal terms and conditions of employment apart from pay. You may, however, be entitled to Statutory Parental Bereavement Pay further details are set out below.

Annual Leave

During any period of PBL, annual leave will continue to accrue at the rate provided under your contract.

Pension

If you are a member of the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) or the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), during any period of paid PBL, we will continue to make employer pension contributions based on the terms of the scheme. You will continue to pay contributions at your normal rate but based on the actual reduced salary which you receive.

During any period where you are not receiving contractual or statutory pay, we will not make any payments into the TPS or the LGPS and the period shall not count as pensionable service. However, following your return to work, you may elect to pay additional contributions for additional pensionable service in the scheme (to make up for any pension lost during the period of unpaid leave). Further details can be found as follows:

- [TPS](#)
- [LGPS](#)

If you wish to pay additional contributions to make up any shortfall, then please contact your Line Manager in the first instance.

Returning to Work

You are normally entitled to return to work in the same position you held before commencing PBL. Your terms of employment shall be the same as they would have been had you not been absent.

However, if you took PBL consecutively with more than four weeks of parental leave, or if your PBL and any other statutory leave you have taken consecutively in relation to the child adds up to more than 26 weeks' in total, and it is not reasonably practicable for us to allow you to return into the same position we may give you another suitable and appropriate job on terms and conditions that are not less favourable.

Statutory Parental Bereavement Pay

If you meet the eligibility criteria below, you are entitled to receive up to two weeks Statutory Parental Bereavement Pay (SPBP).

SPBP is paid at a weekly rate set by the government each year or, if lower, 90% of your average earnings. Your Line Manager can advise you of the current lower earnings limit and the current rate of SPBP.

To qualify for SPBP, you must have a parental relationship with a child (see above) and satisfy the following conditions:

- you must have at least 26 weeks continuous service at the end of the week immediately before the week in which the child dies;
- you remained in employment with us at the date of the child's death; and
- your average weekly earnings must be no less than the lower earnings limit set by the Government at eight weeks ending with the week immediately before the child's death.

SPBP will be paid in the same way and at the same time as you would normally be paid.

Notification Requirements for Statutory Parental Bereavement Leave Pay

If you are eligible and you wish to claim SPBP, you must give us written notice as soon as practicably possible, using the Parental Bereavement Pay Form, which can be obtained from the Trust website.

Alternatively, if you do not give us written notice at that time, you must give us written notice within 28 days of the first day SPBP is being claimed for, or where this is not reasonably practicable, as soon as is reasonably practicable.

When giving notice, you must provide:

- your name;
- the date of the child's death;
- a declaration that you have a parental relationship with a child; and
- the week(s) in which SPBP is being claimed