

**Ninestiles Academy Trust Mission Statement**

Ninestiles Academy Trust will be nationally and internationally acknowledged as a high achieving, innovative and exciting group of schools which recognise and respect the richness and diversity of their communities. The trust will be structured and resourced to meet the needs of 21st century students and pupils. Within a caring environment, we will develop and reinforce the values, skills and attributes which promote good citizenship and lifelong learning. Parents, directors and councillors, and the wider community will work in partnership with our committed, appropriately skilled workforce and our students and pupils, to ensure that high quality learning takes place.

Outcomes will be outstanding.

Policy title	Leave of Absence Policy
Rationale	<p><b><u>Staff Attendance</u></b> The norm is that all staff are contracted to attend 100% of the time. Any deviation from this will be unusual and will fall into the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sickness: statutory entitlement</li> <li>- Public Duties: statutory entitlement</li> </ul> <p>All other absences are at the discretion of the Principal and requests are expected to be reasonable, and the response is expected to be reasonable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Principal is expected to be consistent in the reasonable response to reasonable requests</li> <li>- Any member of staff who feels the Principal’s response is not reasonable or consistent to a reasonable request may use the school’s grievance procedure.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Absence – Sickness</u></b> Staff – teaching and non teaching – have a statutory entitlement to paid sick leave. The following do need to be noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There is a requirement to notify the school at the earliest opportunity of absence due to sickness (by 8.00 am at the latest).</li> <li>▪ There is also a legal requirement to certify absences. For each day’s absence: self certification After 7 days: doctor’s certificate NB weekends are included when calculating days</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A responsibility to keep in contact with the school during an absence.</li> </ul> <p>Principal has a responsibility to report sickness absence on any reference. This usually takes the form of days absent during previous two years and the number of occasions involved</p>
<p><b>Policy statement</b></p>	<p><b><u>Time off for medical appointments etc</u></b></p> <p>Employees are expected to arrange appointments with doctors and dentists outside working hours. It is acknowledged that this may not be possible when the appointment is with a hospital consultant, although where possible employees should seek an appointment during a school holiday. However, when this is not possible (because of waiting lists or the urgency of the medical condition) then the employee should be given paid time off to attend the appointment. Likewise when an employee needs to see a doctor or dentist urgently and an appointment is not available outside school hours paid time off should also be granted; it is “an urgent personal reason, which could not have been foreseen”. Where a routine appointment is made during working time it is possible the Principal may ask that the time is taken unpaid or made up.</p> <p><b><u>Absence – Public Duties</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Includes JP, Councillor, union official, governor, jury service and witness at court etc</li> <li>▪ Specific to the role. Anyone who feels they are entitled because they fall into this category should notify Principal</li> <li>▪ Volunteer members of the Armed Forces Reserves (including commissioned officers accredited to cadet units) should try to arrange their annual training during school holidays. However, if this is not possible, then they should be granted paid leave for the fortnight’s training.</li> </ul> <p>For reservists called up for active service, the Reserve Forces Act allows the Ministry of Defence to compensate companies for the loss of key employees and allows them to apply for an exemption or deferral.</p> <p><b><u>Special Leave of Absence – compassionate or other personal reasons</u></b></p> <p>Principals are advised to remind all employees at appropriate intervals that they are expected to consider their responsibilities under their contracts of employment and how to reconcile them with family needs. If requests for special leave become frequent, a Principal may need to discuss the reasons with the employee and explain that the frequency is incompatible with the needs of the school. Principals are also advised to invite employees to apply for leave of absence for unavoidable religious festivals at the beginning of the school year so that plans for cover can be made in good time; they should remind employees that the leave is only for unavoidable religious observance which cannot be fulfilled outside working hours.</p> <p><b><u>The following general principles apply:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No employee should grant themselves leave of absence</li> <li>▪ All leave of absence must be properly approved</li> <li>▪ All leave taken should only be what is reasonable in the circumstances</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Principles informing application of this for the Ninestiles Academy Trust</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- That we meet, wherever possible, the reasonable requests people make.</li> <li>- That we continue to show flexibility with personal circumstances that fall outside this document.</li> <li>- That we all agree to be professional and restrained – remembering that all requests have some impact on the education of students and the workloads of other staff.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- That we are honest and share the problems we find with the system.</li> <li>- That teaching and support staff are always mindful of the need to do the following in cases of emergency absence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) early notification</li> <li>b) the need to request permission, which in emergencies may come after the notification</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b><u>Reminder of practice</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In the case of emergency personal illness notification to the member of staff in charge of cover and line manager by 8.00 am.</li> <li>- In the case of emergency leave of absence due to the illness of a dependant or sudden death of a close relative, notification to member of staff in charge of cover and line manager.</li> <li>- In the case of emergency personal illness a follow up conversation with member of staff in charge of cover in the first instance indicating when you hope to return. This may be followed up by a phone call from line manager, Principal or Vice Principal to discuss management of remainder of absence.</li> <li>- In the case of emergency leave of absence, the member of staff must contact school to speak to Principal or Vice Principals about the absence and its possible/probable length. This should happen by 12.00 on the first day of absence.</li> <li>- In the case of both personal illness and emergency leave of absence, a return to work interview should be conducted by line manager (see Trust' s sickness policy).</li> <li>- Should there be concern about frequency and reasonableness of absences the Principal may meet with the member of staff – this may be delegated to a Vice Principal or Assistant Principal in certain circumstances.</li> </ul> <p><b>For summary of policy please see Appendix 1</b></p>
<b>Monitoring and review</b>	CEO, Director of Primary Education, Principals
<b>Links</b>	Sickness Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Disciplinary Policy
<b>Staff responsible</b>	CEO, Director of Primary Education, Principals
<b>Committee responsible</b>	Board of Directors
<b>Date approved</b>	March 2015
<b>Review date*</b>	March 2017

*\*Please note that should any further national guidance be issued by external agencies that are relevant to this policy, it will be updated accordingly prior to the review date shown above and referred to the next academy council meeting*



**LEAVE OF ABSENCE – PRINCIPAL’S DISCRETION**

**APPENDIX 1**

Reason for absence	Maximum allowed without special additional circumstances	With or without salary	Comment and advice  <b>(d)</b>
1. <b>Death and funeral of close relative</b>	Up to 3 days plus 2 days for travelling	With salary	A close relative is defined as “parent, husband, wife, partner, brother, sister, child, grandparent, grandchild, parent in law, daughter or son in law”.
2. <b>Funeral of close friend</b>	Up to 1 day	With salary	It would not be normal to grant more than one day. Travelling would be expected to be done in that time. Special additional request would have to be made for any additional time in this circumstance.
3. <b>Illness of a dependant or immediate member of an employee’s family</b>	Up to 3 days	With salary	This provision overlaps with the statutory right for reasonable time off for dependants <u>UNPAID</u> under the Employment Rights Act 1996. The request for leave, be it paid or unpaid, should be reasonable and proportionate. Employees are expected to consider their responsibilities under their contracts of employment and how to reconcile them with family needs. If an employee’s absences start to become frequent a Principal should explore the alternatives open to the employee, and explain that further absences will be incompatible with the needs of the school and may be regarded as unreasonable in law.
4. <b>Wedding of a close relative or friend</b>	1 day plus 2 days travelling in unusual circumstances	With salary	Travelling time above the day’s leave would not be the norm.
5. <b>University graduation of an employee or employee’s immediate family</b>	1 day (travelling time to be negotiated in unusual circumstances)	With salary	Travelling time above the day’s leave would be far from the norm.
6. <b>Other very urgent and special personal reasons which could not have reasonably have been foreseen</b>	Up to 3 days	With salary	If such requests become frequent a Principal may need to discuss the personal reasons with the employee and explain the frequency is incompatible with the needs of the school.
7. <b>Moving house</b>	1 day usually	With salary	
8. <b>Interview for other post</b>	As necessary	With salary	
9. <b>Attendance at a religious ceremony</b>	Up to 2 days per year (any additional special request)	With salary Without salary	Expectation that there would be adequate notice for the school to make arrangements.
10. <b>Participation in sporting or cultural events at the highest professional level</b>	To be negotiated	With salary	
11. <b>To undertake higher qualification and to take associated exams</b>	To be negotiated	With salary	
12. <b>Time off for medical appointments</b>	Emergency doctor/hospital/dentist’s appointments only	With salary	All routine appointments must be made after school time or during school holidays. Where this is not possible the Principal may ask that the time is taken unpaid or made up.