



**Nursery Strategic Leader & Nominated Individual Mrs E Williams BEd. Hons NPQH**  
**Nursery Manager: Miss C Bates**

Initial Policy date	July 2016	Next scheduled review	November 2024
Nursery Governor approved	November 2023	Key person/people	NI & Rotherly Manager
Model Policy	Yes	Model localised	Yes

**COLLEAGUE ABSENCE, ANNUAL LEAVE AND COVER (INCLUDING ENSURING SAFE OPENING AND RATIOS)**

**Purpose and background**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure consistent practice in granting leave of absence to all colleagues within a framework which respects family and other personal commitments and supports a healthy work life balance. It applies to all employees of the nursery with respect to procedures for colleague absence. It ensures compliance with the relevant legislation whilst also enabling the school reasonable flexibility to support colleagues in activities such as professional learning.

**Policy objectives**

- To establish guiding principles that offer reasonable flexibility regarding absence.
- To publicise the criteria used to ensure that decisions regarding leave of absence are fair and transparent.
- To implement the national strategy for workforce remodelling.
- Wherever compatible with the educational and operational needs of the nursery, to support part-time and flexible working.

**Practice and procedures**

This policy is established and reviewed in consultation with all members of colleagues and professional associations represented within the nursery.

**1. Colleague Absence**  
**Absence due to illness**

The school recognises the need for employees to be absent from nursery during a period of illness and that this period of absence should be sufficient to ensure a positive return to work. The school will make reasonable efforts to accommodate the impact of illness or disability and will consider a change in working conditions or role either on a temporary or permanent basis. In cases where there is a regular or sustained period of absence due to ill health, the Nursery Strategic Lead or Manager may refer an employee for an occupational health assessment. The purpose of this assessment is to support the employee's return to work and identify any changes to working conditions that may be required. If an occupational health assessment recommends that an employee is no longer able to perform their role the school will seek to provide alternative employment or to support in applying for early retirement if appropriate. In doing this the school will ensure full compliance with disability rights legislation.

Any colleague absent for over five consecutive days, or absent on the last day or first day after an agreed holiday, will upon return need to see the Nursery Manager for a return-to-work meeting.

Employees must notify the Nursery Manager of absence due to illness at the earliest possible time and no later than 7am on the day of illness.

## **Procedures**

Colleagues who are absent should:

- Contact the Nursery Manager by telephone by 7am on the day of absence. Colleagues must contact the nursery by **3.00pm** to inform of attendance or absence for the following day if they have been off sick. If no call is made, we will presume the colleague will return.

### ***Absence due to professional responsibilities***

Absence due to professional responsibilities such as attendance at meetings and case conferences or training must be approved in advance by notifying appropriate line manager. Requests for absence for training that do not meet the Nursery's development priorities will not be approved.

### ***Absence for personal reasons***

Leave of absence for personal reasons may be granted by the Strategic Lead/Nominated Individual within the framework of this policy. Any absence should be approved in advance by completing a leave of absence form and passing it to the Strategic Leader, Mrs. Williams. There may be exceptional circumstances when this is not possible and the colleague should see the Strategic Leader as soon as possible to discuss this.

Criteria for approval of leave of absence are as follows:

### ***Compassionate leave***

Compassionate leave will normally be granted in the case of personal crises: serious illness or death of a spouse, partner or other close relative, attendance at a funeral. Requests for compassionate leave will normally be discussed with the Strategic Leader. There is no set limit to the length of compassionate leave although it would normally not exceed five days. It is normally granted with pay but it may be granted with or without pay at the discretion of the Strategic Leader. A record of the leave taken and the reasons for it will be made. A leave of absence form must also be completed; this can be found on the Colleague Dashboard

### ***Care of dependants***

Employees are entitled to reasonable unpaid leave to take action in one of the following circumstances:

- to provide assistance on an occasion when a dependant falls ill, or is injured or assaulted;
- to make arrangements for the provision of care for a dependant who is ill or injured;
- because of unexpected disruption or termination of arrangements for the care of a dependant;
- to deal with an incident which involves their child and requires their attendance.

Colleagues must make every effort to tell the Nursery as soon as possible that they will be absent and the reasons for this. This leave will not normally exceed three days in any calendar year. In the case of the illness of a dependant, it would normally be expected that leave of absence will be granted for a short period of time until alternative arrangements for care can be made. It is normally granted with pay but may be granted with or without pay at the discretion of the Headteacher. A record of the leave taken and the reasons for it will be kept.

### ***Other personal leave***

Leave of absence may be granted for other personal reasons. This leave will not normally exceed three days in any school year and must be with the prior approval of the Strategic Leader. Leave of absence with pay will normally be granted for:

- attendance at interview;
- moving home (one day only);
- graduation of self, spouse, partner or dependant (one day only);
- attendance at the wedding of an immediate family member (one day only).

Leave of absence may be granted without pay, or arrangements made to work time in lieu if practicable, for:

- attendance at a wedding other than of an immediate family member.

A record of the leave taken and the reasons for it will be kept.

Leave of absence in other circumstances may be granted with or without pay at the discretion of the Strategic Leader in line with the spirit of the procedures laid out above.

### **ANNUAL LEAVE**

The H.C.C. annual leave year runs from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March.

All annual leave and TOIL requests **must** be made using the correct form. No form will mean no leave to be taken/TOIL used.

All requests for annual leave and TOIL **must** be put in the green folder in the office.

Annual leave and TOIL are **only permitted if operationally possible**.

No more than 2 colleagues are permitted annual leave at any time. These colleagues must not be based in the same base room. However, there may be occasions when this will occur, depending on colleague/room changes. Term time colleagues are not included in this ratio unless it affects the operational needs of the nursery.

Requests of annual leave or TOIL **must** be made known to the Manager to enable rotas to be operationally safe.

Where possible, requests are confirmed or declined within one week of application by the manager.

Requests **must** be made before booking travel arrangements.

Requests **must** be made or cancelled with at least 2 weeks notice.

Requests are only confirmed when they are entered on Family. All colleagues are personally responsible for checking their own details/dates on Family.

Agreed requests are entered into the main nursery diary.

In the event of unexpected circumstances that affect the operational needs of the nursery, colleagues may be approached to adjust annual leave to ensure safe ratios.

The manager is responsible for arranging and/or approving appropriate cover, with support from the strategic lead.

## **2. Flexible working**

Any employee may request a reduction in working hours or flexible working hours. In deciding whether to grant this request, the Strategic Leader will consider whether the request is compatible with maintaining high quality of provision for babies and children and the operational needs of the nursery. Whilst every effort will be made to accommodate the request, it will not always be possible within the limitations of the Nursery's operations.

## **3. Cover for Absent Employees & Procedure for Ensuring Safe Opening**

Managers of Rotherly Day Nursery are responsible for ensuring the safe operation and compliance of Rotherly Day Nursery and must ensure that the setting operates within legal ratios at all times. In the event that there may be a staff shortage, the Nursery Manager/s will need to consider whether temporary arrangements can be made (eg the merging of rooms or moving children between rooms) or, invite part-time colleagues, bank staff or agency staff to work or, support by being in a room to maintain ratios. In the event that it is still not possible to maintain safe and compliant ratios, the Nursery Manager/s will implement a partial closure of the setting in consultation with the Strategic Leader and Finance Manager (where possible). Governors support Nursery Managers in taking necessary action to ensure the safe and compliant operation of the setting.

**4. Monitoring and evaluation**

The Strategic Leader and Rotherly Manager will monitor and analyse the Nursery's record of patterns of absence (planned and unplanned) quarterly basis.