



John Wheatley
Glasgow's Friendliest College.

John Wheatley College

Board of Management

Work-life Balance Policy

1.0 Policy Statement

This is the approved Policy of the Board of Management of John Wheatley College produced in partnership with management and Trade Unions. As part of its commitment to Equal Opportunities and family-friendly measures, John Wheatley College supports the principle of work-life balance. The College is also committed to developing an environment for its staff in which they are enabled to fully contribute to the service while feeling valued and respected. The College recognises that employees may have family and home responsibilities and obligations in addition to the responsibilities that they have to the College. This Policy aims to provide an opportunity for staff, regardless of age, gender, race or any other personal factors, to adjust their working pattern so that they can find a rhythm that enables them more easily to combine work with their responsibilities for home and family.

Work-life balance is about people having a measure of control over when and how they work. The College will provide a range of entitlements, family friendly and flexible working practices, which will enable employees to fulfil their family responsibilities by allowing them to care for, and spend time with, their family, to improve the working lives of staff and enhance service delivery. The College seeks to balance the needs of its staff with the requirements of delivering a high quality service for students and the communities it serves.

2.0 Principles

The College recognise that operating family friendly policies and offering more flexible working arrangements may attract a wider range of candidates for vacancies, including older workers, people wishing to work part-time and those with caring responsibilities who may need a pattern of working that is flexible enough to fit in with the needs of their families or caring responsibilities. People with disabilities or health problems can also gain improved access to work.

The benefits of family friendly polices and flexible working practices for the College include the recruitment and retention of staff in keeping with its overriding purpose to ensure the delivery of a high quality educational experience for all learners. To ensure that the best interests of the students are given full consideration at all times the College recognises that there needs to be an equitable balance between the core business requirements of the College and the welfare of staff. The College's

approach to family friendly and flexible working practices should assist employees balance work and non-work commitments.

The College has clear supporting procedures for assisting staff to achieve a work-life balance. The Policy and procedures are applied equally to all staff.

The College's Work-life Balance Policy covers the following areas:

- Maternity Leave;
- Paternity and Maternity Support Leave;
- Adoption Leave;
- Parental Leave;
- Time off work to care for dependents;
- Other types of leave;
- Flexible working patterns and the right to request flexible working;
- Flexi-time;
- Religious and Cultural Observance; and
- Time-off to attend Medical and Dental Appointments during working hours.

Each of the above is supported by detailed procedures which can be accessed on the College intranet, website, College Information Services or are available from the Personnel Section. A brief outline of the College's procedures is detailed below.

2.1 Maternity Leave

Employee's who become pregnant are entitled to:

- time off work for antenatal care;
- paid suspension from work in certain circumstances in order to protect the employee's health and safety, the College's Health and Safety Officer is responsible for conducting a Risk Assessment once the employee confirms that they are pregnant;
- take maternity leave and resume working afterwards;
- receive statutory maternity pay (subject to a minimum of six months' service); and
- protection from detriment and dismissal for a reason related to pregnancy, childbirth or maternity leave.

2.2 Paternity Leave

Paternity leave is available to male employees and is a period of leave taken by an employee at around the time of childbirth to enable him to spend time with his family.

Paternity leave is available for employees in circumstances where:

- the employee's wife or partner gives birth to a child;
- the employee adopts a child jointly with his/her partner or spouse, provided the employee has not elected to take adoption leave; and
- the employee's partner adopts a child, provided the employee has not chosen to take adoption leave.

Fathers are entitled to:

- take one or two consecutive weeks' paternity leave after the birth of the baby;
- resume normal working afterwards;
- one week will be paid leave and one week will be unpaid leave; and
- receive statutory paternity pay for the two weeks, earnings will not exceed the employee's normal weekly wage.

2.3 Maternity Support Leave

Maternity support leave is available to all employees and is a period of leave taken by an employee at around the time of childbirth to enable her or him to spend time with his or her family.

Maternity Support Leave is available to:

- an employee who is an expected child's father, relative or nominated carer;
- employees of the College regardless of length of service or number of hours each week, this will be in accordance with provisions outlined in the Procedures; and
- enable the employee to attend ante-natal classes, the birth of the child and post natal check ups.

Subject to satisfying the notification conditions employees are entitled to up to a period of five days paid maternity support leave, to be taken within the period of three months before, to one month after the expected date of birth and the leave may be taken as a block, as individual days or as half days.

2.4 Adoption Leave

Adoption leave is available to employees and is unaffected if more than one child is placed for adoption as part of the same placement. Where a couple adopts a child jointly, only one of them may take statutory adoption leave. An eligible employee who is individually or jointly (as part of a couple) adopting a child may take up to 26 weeks' ordinary adoption leave, immediately followed by up to 26 weeks' additional adoption leave.

Employees have the right to take time off work to care for a child who has been newly placed with them for adoption. The period of available leave is up to 52 weeks, and the rules and procedures applicable to statutory adoption leave and statutory adoption pay are the same in many respects as those applicable to statutory maternity leave and pay.

2.5 Parental Leave

The legislative definition of Parental Leave is leave of absence to care for a child or make arrangements for the good of a child or children. The College is committed to assisting staff with family and parental responsibilities of children under the age of eight (8) to fulfil this role.

The Policy uses the term 'parent' however the College recognises the broader definition of a parent to include all circumstances where an adult assumes the care of a child – natural parent, step-parent, adoptive/foster parent and same sex partner, grandparent and legal guardian.

Under the Parental Leave Procedure an employee will be entitled to a maximum of 65 working days for each child in an academic year. Part-time employees have the same entitlement on a pro-rata basis.

A maximum of 15 working days, of the 65 days entitlement, will be paid; the paid element will be pro rata depending on the age of the child in accordance with the procedure and will be restricted to a maximum of 5 days per employee per annum.

A maximum of 50 days will be unpaid, the un-paid element will be pro rata depending on the age of the child and this will be restricted to a maximum of 15 days per employee per annum.

An employee must have completed 13 weeks continuous service with the College before parental leave may be granted.

2.6 Carer's Leave

Employees have the right to take a reasonable amount of time off work to deal with an unforeseen situation involving a dependent.

Time off work to care for a dependent applies to all employees of the College regardless of length of service or number of hours worked each week.

In cases where a dependant falls ill, is injured or assaulted, dies or gives birth or in certain other defined circumstances, employees may apply for up to a maximum of three working days paid leave in any academic year. Where appropriate, a reasonable amount of additional time off with or without pay may be granted at the discretion of the Principal. The entitlement is intended to cover unforeseen matters and not those that can be planned for in advance.

The definition of family member or dependant includes – spouse, partner, child, step child, foster child, parent (natural, step and foster) or relative, a dependant of the employee who lives in the same household as the employee (other than as their employee, tenant, lodger or boarder) or any person who reasonably relies on the employee to make such arrangements on their behalf.

2.7 Other Types of Leave

The College may grant compassionate leave or personal leave. Such leave will be granted at the discretion of the Principal.

2.7.1 Compassionate Leave

Compassionate leave may be granted in circumstances where a close member of the employee's family, or even family friend, requires to be accompanied to hospital under certain circumstances, became seriously ill or died. There may be other circumstances for which the College might consider granting compassionate leave such as an event in an employee's personal life that is causing severe distress.

2.7.2 Time off Work to Cope with Personal or Family Difficulties

The College may consider granting a reasonable amount of paid time off work to employees in a range of other situations. The College understand that such circumstances inevitably occur from time to time and that an employee may need support. Time off may be granted within reason at the Principal's discretion.

2.7.3 Bereavement Leave

Leave with pay shall be granted where the employee is an immediate family member or dependant of the deceased mother or father (natural, step, foster), brother, sister, child, step child, foster child, partner or spouse) and/or where the employee is responsible for making arrangements in connection with a death. Up to a maximum of five days bereavement leave may be granted.

2.7.4 Domestic Emergencies

The College may grant up to a maximum of one day off with pay to assist staff who experience a domestic emergency. Time off may be granted in circumstances were an employee requires to make their home safe. Such circumstances may include:

- serious flooding;
- ensuring the safety of their home; and
- fire.

Additional time off with or without pay may be granted at the discretion of the Principal.

2.8 Flexible working patterns and the right to request flexible working

The College recognise that it is not only working parents but others who may wish to obtain a better balance between work and their personal life. The College offer a range of options to staff. These include:

- part-time working;
- job-sharing; and
- term-time working.

Other options may be considered.

2.9 The right to request flexible working

Employees with parental responsibility for young (under the age of six) or disabled children (under the age of 18) have the right to formally request a change to their working arrangements in order to enable them to work more flexibly.

The College will consider applications from employees for flexible working who have care responsibilities.

Employees do not have an automatic right to work flexibly, qualifying employees are entitled to request flexible working and the College is obliged to give the request serious consideration.

The College is happy to consider an application from an employee made through the formal Procedure.

2.10 Flexi-time

The flexible working scheme will provide staff with some flexibility in relation to their start and finish times where the nature of the work permits it. Staff covered by the scheme are required to be present during set core times and managers must ensure that the services which the College provides does not suffer, otherwise staff are free to adjust their start and finish times with the agreement with their line manager. The arrangements must at all times operate in accordance with and will be subject to the operational requirements of the College.

The Procedure clearly states the conditions of the flexible working scheme, this will ensure fairness and consistency and make sure that the service needs of the College continue to be met and the operational requirements of the scheme are clear to staff.

The scheme will apply to members of the Senior and Operational Management Team and support staff, permanent or temporary and full or part time (Agency workers are excluded from the scheme). Support staff who work part time in the evening and academic staff are excluded from the scheme however they will be expected to record their access and departure from the building using this system. The system will be used to produce a list of those in the College building to provide a fire report in the event of the fire alarm being triggered.

2.11 Religious and Cultural Observance

There are some employees who have particular needs for time off in relation to religious and cultural observance. This may be on a daily or weekly basis for a small number of staff, but more often, will involve requests for time off for a particular religious or cultural occasion.

The College requires responsible Heads of Section to reasonably accommodate the religious needs of employees within the employees existing leave provisions. Employees are not entitled to additional leave to accommodate time off for religious and cultural observance.

Absences from work for the purpose of observance of religious or cultural holidays which do not coincide with designated official College or statutory holidays shall be off set against accrued leave, approved absence without pay, accrued time off in lieu, or accommodated by an alternate work schedule approved in advance by the appropriate member of senior management.

All employees who have needs for time off for religious or cultural observance may request the following:

- a) flexibility in the arrangement of rotas and working hours generally; and
- b) annual leave, flexi-days, TOIL or unpaid leave.

Employees may not be discriminated against because of their religious or cultural belief or practice, or absence of religious belief. Heads of Section must make a reasonable attempt to accommodate individual religious or cultural practices. Refusal to accommodate an employee's request for time off from work to observe religious or cultural occasions is justified only when College's operations would suffer unduly because of the employee's absence.

2.12 Time-off to Attend Medical and Dental Appointments during working hours

Routine appointments

It is important to arrange routine appointments that cause least disruption to the working day. Every effort should be made by staff to make all appointments, where possible, in their own time, if this is not possible appointments should be made as follows:

- a) early morning;
- b) lunch time; or
- c) late afternoon

Time Off Arrangements

If an employee has tried and has been unable to obtain an appointment in their own time and has requested time off from their Head of Section or line manager they will be granted a maximum of 2 hours to attend a routine appointment. If the employee is absent from the workplace for more than 2 hours they will be required to repay the time owed by one of the following methods: the use of flexi time, annual leave or a time owed arrangement.

Reasonable time off will be granted to staff to attend follow up appointments for on-going treatment or monitoring. If a staff member is admitted as a day patient for treatment this will require to be treated as a days sick leave in accordance with the College's Attendance at Work Policy and Procedure.

Staff are expected to report for duty and leave from their place of work to attend the appointment if possible. Staff are expected to return to work after any appointments if there is a reasonable amount of time still within normal working hours.

Line managers may ask to see written confirmation of appointments.

Hospital, doctor or dental appointments which take up part of a working day will not be counted as sick leave and therefore will not count for Statutory Sick Pay.

Appointments relating to surgery or dentistry for cosmetic purposes should be arranged outside working hours or taken as annual leave.

3.0 Implementation

In order to implement this policy, the College will ensure that:

- the policy is communicated to all employees, through induction training, management training, team briefings, displayed on notice boards, contained in the staff handbook, accessible through the College Intranet, referred to in the College Newsletter on a regular basis and made known to job applicants;
- managers will monitor and report on the impact of the Policy and associated Procedures on their team and the service their team deliver through their Curriculum or Project Team Annual Review;
- managers and supervisors are aware of their responsibilities through appropriate and regular training;
- consultation will take place with management, staff, recognised Trades Unions and Professional Association on the implementation of this Policy and any amendments to the supporting procedures and working practice; and
- reasonable resources are made available to fulfil the aims of this Policy.

4.0 Monitoring of Policy

The College will monitor and report on the use of this Policy and associated Procedures in terms of applications received, those approved and the impact on staff well-being through its Well-being Policy and the quality of the College's services.

The content, effectiveness and operation of the Family Friendly and Flexible Working Policy and associated Procedures will be reviewed, at least, on an annual basis at the end of each academic session by the Equal Opportunities Development Forum and updated in partnership with management, Trades Unions, Professional Association and staff. Account will also be taken of any developments in legislation and case law.

The College's Annual Equal Opportunities Review shall report on employee use of the Work-life Balance Policy and associated Procedures to the College's Joint Consultative Committee, Personnel and Staffing Committee and the Board of Management. The Annual Equal Opportunities Review will be made available to staff on request.

The abuse of this Policy and associated procedures by any members of staff obtaining leave under false pretences will be considered serious and could result in the matter being considered under the College's Disciplinary and Appeals Procedure.

5.0 Supporting Policies

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Dignity at Work Policy and Procedure
- Well-being Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure
- Grievance Policy and Procedure
- Code of Discipline, Disciplinary and Appeals Procedure
- Commendations and Complaints Procedure
- Race Equality Policy

Date Approved: Board of Management	Date Implemented	Review Date
12.10.2006	16.10.06	16.10.2008