



SOKE EDUCATION TRUST
SUSTAIN • EMPOWER • TRANSFORM

MATERNITY POLICY

Chief Executive Officer	Sign and Date	
Chair of the Board	Sign and Date	
Approved Date	January 2022	
Review Date	January 2023	

Maternity Leave and Pay for All Categories of Employees

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Maternity leave and pay entitlements can be a complex issue. The appendices in this document give a summary of the different entitlements and the qualifying requirements. Statutory entitlements are those provided for by employment law; contractual entitlements are part of the employee's contract of employment.
- 1.2 The status of the employee's contract of employment during the maternity leave period is treated as if she is temporarily absent from work. This means that all contractual benefits, except pay, must continue as normal. Annual leave entitlement will accrue as normal.

2. Entitlement to maternity leave and pay for all categories of employees with less than 26 weeks service as at the 15th week before the EWC

- 2.1 All employees are entitled to take up to one-year (52 weeks) maternity leave from day one of employment. The 52 weeks leave consists of 26 weeks Ordinary Maternity Leave (OML) followed continuously by 26 weeks Additional Maternity Leave (AML). An employee cannot return to work earlier than 2 weeks after childbirth.
- 2.2 There is a requirement to give Soke Education Trust at least 28 days' notice of the date on which the absence will begin. If the employee wishes to resign her employment the normal contractual notice period applies. In all cases, schools are advised to request notification as early as possible although the statutory requirement is for the employee to notify the Soke Education Trust of the intention to take maternity leave by 15 weeks before the Expected Week of Childbirth (EWC). Soke Education Trust is required to respond to the request within 28 days of the request being made.
- 2.3 The employee is not required to give notice of her intention to return to work following maternity leave unless she returns before the end of the 52-week period. In which case, she must give 21 days' notice of her intention to return.
- 2.4 A summary of the entitlements and obligations to maternity leave and pay for employees in schools is set out in Appendices 1 and 2.

3. Entitlement to maternity leave and pay for all categories of employees with more than 26 weeks service as at the 15th week before the EWC, but less than 1 years' service as at the 11th week before the EWC

- 3.1 In addition to the maternity entitlement for employees set out above, for those with more than 26 weeks service as at 15 weeks before the EWC there is a possible entitlement to be paid Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP), depending on the employee meeting certain conditions.
- 3.2 To qualify for SMP the following conditions must be met:
- The employee must have been continuously employed by her current employer for at least 26 weeks by the beginning of the 15th week before the EWC. This 15th week is called the qualifying week.
 - The employee must have average weekly earnings in the calculation period (which

is the eight weeks or two months before the end of the qualifying week) at or above the lower earnings limit for payment of National Insurance contributions. The lower earnings limit is reviewed in the April of each year.

- The employee must still be pregnant at the 11th week before the EWC or have had the baby by that time.

4. Entitlement to maternity leave and pay for all categories of employees with more than one year's service as at the 11th week before the EWC

4.1 For those employees with more than one year's service as at the 11th week before the EWC, in addition to the above maternity leave and pay entitlements there is an entitlement to receive contractual maternity pay in line with the conditions of service for either teaching or support staff.

4.2 A summary of the entitlements and obligations to maternity leave and pay for all categories of employees with more than one year's service as at the 11th week before the EWC is set out in Appendix 2.

5. Miscellaneous Provisions

5.1 Ante-natal care

A pregnant employee has a right to reasonable paid time off to attend ante-natal care appointments. She should produce evidence of appointments if requested to do so by Soke Education Trust.

5.2 Pregnancy-related illness

If a pregnant employee is absent from work due to a pregnancy-related illness in the four weeks before the EWC, then the period of maternity leave will commence automatically.

5.3 Premature Birth

Where a baby is born prematurely, the employee should ensure that the Headteacher is informed. The period of maternity leave will commence automatically the day after the birth unless maternity leave had already commenced. Discretion should be used as to whether it is appropriate to extend the maternity leave period or take any other special action as necessary.

5.4 Death of a Baby and Still Birth

If the baby dies or is still-born after 24 weeks' pregnancy the provisions of the relevant scheme apply. Where this occurs before 24 weeks (miscarriage), consideration as to the circumstances should be made and, where necessary, special leave or sick leave should be granted. The decision should be made with consideration given to the needs of the employee and medical advice.

5.5 Dismissal Protection

The law protects an employee against dismissal when she is pregnant or during maternity leave regardless of hours worked or length of service. Only when a dismissal would have occurred, regardless of the fact that the employee is pregnant or on maternity leave, would a dismissal not be automatically unfair.

5.6 Keeping in Touch Days

Employees may, by agreement with Soke Education Trust, attend work for up to ten days, known as “Keeping in Touch days” (KIT days), under their contract of employment during the maternity leave period. Such days are different to the reasonable contact that employers and employees may make with one another, as during KIT days employees can carry out work for the employer, for which they may be paid.

Any work done on any day during the maternity pay or maternity leave period will count as a whole KIT day, up to the 10-day maximum. In other words, if an employee comes in for a one-hour training session and does no other work that day, she will have used one of her KIT days. Applications should be made using the Keep in Touch form (appendix 3)

The type of work that the employee undertakes on KIT days is a matter for agreement between the two parties. They may be used for any activity which would ordinarily be classed as work under the employee’s contract.

The employee may be paid for the work undertaken during KIT days without loss of SMP. The rate of pay is a matter for agreement with Soke Education Trust. However, when determining the rate of pay for each KIT day, Soke Education Trust must be mindful of equal pay considerations. Please contact your HR Adviser at EPM if you require further information.

6. Health and Safety

6.1 Pregnant employees must be given specific health and safety protection under UK Health and Safety Legislation. The main provisions are set out below.

6.2 Risk Assessment

Soke Education Trusts must assess all workplaces for risks to the health and safety of their employees and others affected by their work activities. In particular, they must consider if there are specific or enhanced risks for new and expectant mothers who are defined as “an employee who is pregnant, who has given birth or miscarried within the previous six months, or who is breast feeding”. Such risks would include exposure to certain harmful substances or microbial agents/infectious diseases, extremes of heat and cold, noise, movement and posture, lifting/handling loads, and potential exposure to violence (including verbal abuse).

6.3 Where an unacceptable risk is identified, Soke Education Trust will take any protective or preventative measures required by other health and safety legislation to remove it. See <http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/resources.htm> for risk assessment form templates. Where this would not prevent the employee from being at risk, a hierarchy of measures should be followed:

- If it is reasonable to do so, working conditions or hours of work should be altered to avoid (or minimise) the risk;
- If this is not possible, or the risk cannot be avoided by this, the employee should be offered suitable alternative employment on existing, or not substantially less favourable, terms and conditions;
- If no suitable alternative work is available, the employee should be given leave of absence with full pay. If the employee refuses an offer of suitable alternative work, the leave may reasonably be unpaid.

6.4 Period of Protection

These provisions apply from the time the School receives written notification that the employee is pregnant until 6 months after the date of childbirth, or until the employee stops breast feeding if she continues to do so beyond this six-month period. The paid leave of absence provisions will not apply during the maternity leave period. The employee will receive whatever maternity pay she is entitled to as normal.

7. The Administration of Maternity Leave

- 7.1 When the employee notifies the Headteacher (or other designated person) that she is pregnant she should be given the appropriate maternity leave application form and summary of entitlements – appendix 4 and 5.
- 7.2 The School is advised to make it clear that it is the responsibility of the employee to notify the School by, at the latest, the 15th week before the EWC, of the intended date maternity leave is to commence. Should the employee decide she intends to commence maternity leave at an earlier date, she is required to give a minimum of 28 days' notice of the revised date.
- 7.3 When the Headteacher has received formal confirmation of an employee's intention to take maternity leave, the completed maternity application form should be forwarded to the HR Adviser immediately to enable a response to be sent to the employee within the statutory required 28 days. EPM provides a schedule of maternity leave pay for the employee.
- 7.4 A certificate of pregnancy from a registered medical practitioner or midwife (MatB1) should also be provided to Soke Education Trust. The MatB1 is not issued until the 20th week before the EWC.
- 7.5 If the employee chooses to return before the end of the 52 weeks maternity leave period, she is required to give a minimum of 21 days' notice of the revised return date, in writing, to the Headteacher.
- 7.6 When the School has been informed of the above, then the HR Adviser for the School should be notified via the EPM portal in order that any maternity cover arrangements may be terminated and the employee's full pay re-commenced as appropriate.

8. Pensions

- 8.1 Members of the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) and Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) will pay contributions based on the actual maternity pay received during the first 39 weeks of the maternity pay period.
- 8.2 During unpaid maternity leave the Soke Education Trust shall not make any payments into the pension scheme and the employee will no longer continue paying contributions. Employees should seek further information from the relevant pension scheme in respect of their options to enhance contributions for the period of unpaid maternity leave.

Appendix 1

Entitlement to maternity leave and pay for all categories of employees with less than 26 weeks service as at the 15th week before the EWC

Entitlements				Obligations		
Category of Employees	Period with Soke Education Trust	Length of Absence	Pay	Period of Notice by Employee to Soke Education Trust of Intention to Cease Work	Period of Notice by Employee to Soke Education Trust to Change the Date Maternity Absence Begins	Period of Notice by Employee to Soke Education Trust of Intention to Return to Work
Support	Less than 26 weeks service as at 15 weeks before EWC	Up to 52 weeks	No contractual or statutory maternity pay. Form SMP1 to be provided by payroll provider to apply for statutory maternity allowance.	By 15th week before EWC, if not earlier	28 days	None unless returning before 52 weeks, then 21 days
Teachers	Less than 26 weeks service as at 15 weeks before EWC	Up to 52 weeks	No contractual or statutory maternity pay. Form SMP1 to be provided by payroll provider to apply for statutory maternity allowance.	By 15th week before EWC, if not earlier	28 days	None unless returning before 52 weeks, then 21 days

EWC: Expected Week of Childbirth; SMP: Statutory Maternity Pay

Appendix 2

Entitlement to maternity leave and pay for all categories of employees with more than one year's service as at the 11th week before the EWC

Entitlements				Obligations		
Category of Employees	Qualifying Period of Continuous Service with Soke Education Trust	Length of Absence	Pay*	Period of Notice by Employee to Soke Education Trust of Intention to Cease Work	Period of Notice by Employee to Soke Education Trust to Change the Date Maternity Absence Begins	Period of Notice by Employee to Soke Education Trust of Intention to Return to Work
Support	1 year with any maintained school as at 11 weeks before EWC	A total of up to 52 weeks leave; of which: up to 11 weeks may be taken before EWC	6 weeks at 90% of average earnings, followed by 12 weeks half pay & lower rate SMP followed by 21 weeks lower rate SMP only. Remainder unpaid.	By 15th week before EWC, if not earlier	28 days	None unless returning before 52 weeks, then a minimum of 21 days
Teachers	1 year with any maintained school as at 11 weeks before EWC	A total of up to 52 weeks leave; of which up to 11 weeks may be taken before EWC	4 weeks at full pay, 2 weeks at 90% of average earnings, followed by 12 weeks half pay & lower rate SMP followed by 21 weeks lower rate SMP only. Remainder unpaid.	By 15th week before EWC, if not earlier	28 days	None unless returning before 52 weeks, then a minimum of 21 days

*All Statutory Payments subject to National Insurance Contributions;
EWC: Expected Week of Childbirth; SMP: Statutory Maternity Pay

All half pay payments are conditional on a return to work

Appendix 3 – KIT (Keeping in Touch) Day Claim Form

Section A (to be completed by the employee) <i>Please complete Section A and submit to your line manager for approval after you have attended work on a KIT Day</i>			
Name			
Payroll Reference			
Post Title			
School			
I confirm that I am currently on maternity/adoption* leave and wish to claim payment for attending work on an agreed KIT Day(s)			
Dates worked			Half/full day*
			Half/full day*
			Half/full day*
I understand that any monies claimed will be subject to tax/NI and pension deductions in the normal way (*please delete as appropriate)			
Signed			Date
Section B (to be completed by the Headteacher/Senior Manager) <i>Please complete Section B and forward to HR/SBM for EPM processing</i>			
Name			
Post			
I can confirm that the above KIT Day payment is authorised			
Signed			Date

Appendix 4 - Teacher Staff Maternity Entitlements

What service do I have?	What options are available to me?	How much maternity leave am I entitled to?	What maternity pay am I entitled to?
Less than 26 weeks service , irrespective of hours worked, as at the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth (EWC)	A I would like to return to work	Up to 52 week's absences in total including up to 11 weeks before the expected week of childbirth	Form SMP 1 should be provided from your payroll provider to be submitted to the Benefits Agency who will arrange for Statutory Maternity Allowance to be paid to you, subject to qualifying
	B I would like to resign	Not applicable	As above
26 weeks or more , irrespective of hours worked, as at the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth and less than 1 years' service as at the 11th week before the expected week of childbirth (EWC)	C I would like to return to work	Up to 52 weeks absence in total including up to 11 weeks before the expected week of childbirth	Depending on salary and average earnings: 6 weeks higher rate SMP at 90% of average earnings followed by 33 weeks lower rate SMP and the remainder unpaid
	D I would like to keep my options open as I may choose to resign or to return to work	Up to 52 weeks absence in total including up to 11 weeks before the expected week of childbirth	Depending on salary and average earnings: 6 weeks higher rate SMP at 90% of average earnings followed by 33 weeks lower rate SMP and the remainder unpaid
	E I would like to resign	Not applicable	Depending on salary and average earnings: 6 weeks higher rate SMP at 90% of average earnings followed by 33 weeks lower rate SMP
At least 1 year's continuous service , irrespective of hours worked, as at the 11th week before the expected week of childbirth (EWC)	F I would like to return to work	Up to 52 weeks absence in total including up to 11 weeks before the expected week of childbirth	4 weeks at full pay and 2 weeks at 90% of full pay followed by 12 weeks half pay. You must return to work for a minimum of 13 weeks otherwise the 12 weeks half pay must be repaid. Plus, depending on salary and average earnings: 33 weeks lower rate SMP to be paid alongside the 12 weeks at half pay
	G I would like to keep my options open as I may choose to resign or to return to work	Up to 52 weeks absence in total including up to 11 weeks before the expected week of childbirth	4 weeks at full pay and 2 weeks at 90% Plus depending on salary and average earnings: 33 weeks lower rate SMP and the remainder unpaid The 12 weeks at half pay will only be paid if you return to work for a minimum of 13 weeks
	H I would like to resign	Not applicable	4 weeks at full pay and 2 weeks at 90% Plus depending on salary and average earnings: 33 weeks lower rate SMP

SMP - Service for SMP is continuous service with the current employer only and is only payable if employed during the 8 week period 15 weeks before the expected week of childbirth, subject to the qualifying period.

Teacher Application for Maternity Leave and Pay

Please read the maternity policy and the table, then complete and return the form below to the school office during or before the 15th week before your expected week of childbirth.

Name:	
Payroll Number:	
Home Address:	
School Name:	

Expected Week of Childbirth (EWC)

The MATB1 certificate is available from your midwife from the 20th week of pregnancy onwards (please tick)

I enclose my MATB1 certificate with this form.

I will forward my MATB1 certificate to the School as soon as possible and understand that I will not receive any maternity pay until I provide this.

Maternity Options

Please tick one option below. Refer to table overleaf.

A	C	D	F	G
First date of maternity leave: I understand this date can be altered and I must give at least 28 days' notice of the revised date maternity leave is to commence.				

B	E	H

I do not intend to return to work and thereby wish to formally terminate my contract of employment effective from:

Date:

The end of my maternity pay period

I have read and understand the maternity policy, which I have retained.

Signed:		Date:	
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NB. If you are intending to take a period of unpaid absence during your maternity leave you should be aware that you will not pay contributions during this period. You are advised to contact Teachers Pensions to seek advice on the effect that a period of unpaid maternity leave will have as well as any options available to enhance your pension: www.teacherspensions.co.uk

Keeping in Touch Days

You are entitled to “keep in touch” with the workplace for up to a maximum of 10 days during your maternity leave without affecting your entitlement to statutory or contractual maternity pay. The exact arrangements for “keeping in touch” must be discussed with your Principal/Headteacher/Line Manager.

I wish to discuss with my Principal/Headteacher/Line Manager arrangements for “keeping in touch” days.

I do not wish to discuss arrangements for “keeping in touch” days but reserve the right to discuss this with my Principal/Headteacher/Line Manager at a later date during my maternity leave.

Authorising Signature

I confirm that an assessment to identify hazards that could be a risk to any new, expectant, or breastfeeding mothers has been or will be undertaken and I have discussed “keeping in touch” days with the employee if requested.

I certify that I have seen the original MATB1 certificate

Signed:		Date:	
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Please return this completed form to EPM as soon as possible to enable a response to be provided to the employee within 28 days of this form being returned to the School office.

Appendix 5 - Support Staff Maternity Entitlements

What service do I have?	What options are available to me?	How much maternity leave am I entitled to?	What maternity pay am I entitled to?
Less than 26 weeks service , irrespective of hours worked, as at the 15 th week before the expected week of childbirth (EWC)	A I would like to return to work	Up to 52 week's absence in total including up to 11 weeks before the expected week of childbirth	Form SMP 1 should be provided from your payroll provider to be submitted to the Benefits Agency who will arrange for Statutory Maternity Allowance to be paid to you, subject to qualifying
	B I would like to resign	Not applicable	As above
26 weeks or more , irrespective of hours worked, as at the 15 th week before the expected week of childbirth and less than 1 year's service as at the 11 th week before the expected week of childbirth (EWC)	C I would like to return to work	Up to 52 weeks absence in total including up to 11 weeks before the expected week of childbirth	Depending on salary and average earnings: 6 weeks higher rate SMP at 90% of average earnings followed by 33 weeks lower rate SMP and the remainder unpaid
	D I would like to keep my options open as I may choose to resign or to return to work	Up to 52 weeks absence in total including up to 11 weeks before the expected week of childbirth	Depending on salary and average earnings: 6 weeks higher rate SMP at 90% of average earnings followed by 33 weeks lower rate SMP and the remainder unpaid
	E I would like to resign	Not applicable	Depending on salary and average earnings: 6 weeks higher rate SMP at 90% of average earnings followed by 33 weeks lower rate SMP
At least 1 year's continuous service , irrespective of hours worked, as at the 11 th week before the expected week of childbirth (EWC)	F I would like to return to work	Up to 52 weeks absence in total including up to 11 weeks before the expected week of childbirth	6 weeks at 90% of contractual full pay followed by 12 weeks half pay. You must return to work for a minimum of 13 weeks otherwise the 12 weeks half pay must be repaid. Plus, depending on salary and average earnings: 33 weeks lower rate SMP to be paid alongside the 12 weeks at half pay
	G I would like to keep my options open as I may choose to resign or to return to work	Up to 52 weeks absence in total including up to 11 weeks before the expected week of childbirth	Depending on salary and average earnings: 6 weeks at 90% of full pay followed by 33 weeks lower rate SMP and the remainder unpaid 12 weeks at half pay will only be paid if you return to work for a minimum of 13 weeks
	H I would like to resign	Not applicable	Depending on salary and average earnings: 6 weeks at 90% of full pay followed by 33 weeks lower rate SMP

SMP - Service for SMP is continuous service with the current employer only and is only payable if employed during the 8 week period 15 weeks before the expected week of childbirth, subject to the qualifying period.

Support Staff Application for Maternity Leave and Pay

Please read the maternity policy and the table, then complete and return the form below to the school office during or before the 15th week before your expected week of childbirth

Name:	
Payroll Number:	
Home Address:	
School Name:	

Expected Week of Childbirth (EWC)

The MATB1 certificate is available from your midwife from the 20th week of pregnancy onwards
(please tick)

- I enclose my MATB1 certificate with this form.
- I will forward my MATB1 certificate to the School as soon as possible and understand that I will not receive any maternity pay until I provide this.

Maternity Options

Please tick one option below. Refer to table overleaf.

A	C	D	F	G
First date of maternity leave: I understand this date can be altered and I must give at least 28 days' notice of the revised date maternity leave is to commence.				

B	E	H

I do not intend to return to work and thereby wish to formally terminate my contract of employment effective from:

- Date:
- The end of my maternity pay period

I have read and understand the maternity policy, which I have retained.

Signed:		Date:	
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Keeping in Touch Days

You are entitled to "keep in touch" with the workplace for up to a maximum of 10 days during your maternity leave without affecting your entitlement to statutory or contractual maternity pay. The exact arrangements for "keeping in touch" must be discussed with your Principal/Headteacher/Line Manager.

- I wish to discuss with my Principal/Headteacher/Line Manager arrangements for "keeping in touch" days.
- I do not wish to discuss arrangements for "keeping in touch" days but reserve the right to discuss this with my Principal/Headteacher/Line Manager at a later date during my maternity leave.

Authorising Signature

I confirm that an assessment to identify hazards that could be a risk to any new, expectant, or breastfeeding mothers has been or will be undertaken and I have discussed "keeping in touch" days with the employee if requested.

- I certify that I have seen the original MATB1 certificate

Signed:		Date:	
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NB. If you wish to continue to pay pension contributions for any period of unpaid maternity leave, please contact your local authority's Pensions Section for further information.

Please return this completed form to EPM as soon as possible to enable a response to be provided to the employee within 28 days of this form being returned to the School office.

