



INSPIRING EXCELLENCE TOGETHER

Children First Learning Partnership Shared Parental Leave Policy

V1

The Shared Parental Leave Policy in respect of the Children First Learning Partnership has been discussed and adopted by the Directors Board

Chair of Board

Mrs N Chell

Responsible Officer

CEO – Mrs A Rourke

Agreed & ratified by the Directors

21.05.2026

To be reviewed

May 2027

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This information can be made available in a range of formats and languages including Braille and large print.

If this would be useful, please contact the Headteacher.

1.0 Scope of policy

The policy applies to all employees but does not form part of the contract of employment or any other contract to provide services and can be amended from time to time in consultation with the recognised trade unions.

The policy does not apply once you have left our employment or agency workers, consultants, self-employed contractors or volunteers.

This policy has been implemented following consultation with our recognised Trade unions.

Decisions will be made in line with the scheme of delegation.

2.0 What is Shared Parental Leave (ShPL)?

If you are an eligible parent, Shared Parental Leave (ShPL) allows you to share the care of your child during the first year after birth, adoption, or surrogacy.

If you are a primary caregiver (birth parent, mother, or primary adopter), you can shorten your maternity or adoption leave entitlement, and the remaining unused leave creates a 'pot' of shared parental leave. This shared parental leave can be divided between you and your partner.

Both parents may also be entitled to Shared Parental Pay if eligibility criteria are met.

3.0 Who is eligible to take shared parental leave?

You have to be either:

- the primary caregiver (birth parent/ mother / primary adopter)
or
- the partner (child's father, spouse, civil partner or partner of the primary caregiver, including same sex).

The below outlines the eligibility criteria for each person to meet.

Your Role	Your eligibility criteria	Your partner's requirements
Primary caregiver (birth parent/ mother/ primary adopter)	Employed by the trust continuously for 26 weeks by the end of the 15th week before	Employed or self-employed for 26 of the 66 weeks before childbirth or placement*,

	childbirth or placement*, remain in employment until the week before ShPL, main responsibility for childcare, entitled to statutory maternity or adoption leave, comply with curtailment and notice requirements	average weekly earnings of at least the maternity allowance threshold for any 13 of those 66 weeks, main responsibility for childcare
Partner of primary care giver	Employed by the trust continuously for 26 weeks by the end of the 15th week before childbirth or placement*, remain in employment until the week before ShPL, main responsibility for childcare, comply with ShPL notice and evidence requirements	Employed or self-employed for 26 of the 66 weeks before childbirth or placement*, average weekly earnings of at least the maternity allowance threshold for any 13 of those 66 weeks, primary responsibility for childcare, entitled to statutory maternity or adoption leave, pay or maternity allowance, comply with curtailment requirements

* for overseas adoptions, at the end of the week in which you received official notification.

We appreciate this can be complex to determine eligibility so have a look at the Gov.uk website which will help you and your partner.

[Shared Parental Leave and Pay: How it works - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

[Plan your Shared Parental Leave and Pay - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Prospective parents in a surrogacy arrangement may be eligible for Shared Parental Leave upon becoming parents, provided they intend to apply for a parental order when the child resides with them (if one parent is genetically related) or adopt the child (if there is no genetic relationship) and meet the stated criteria above.

4.0 How much shared parental leave is available if eligible?

Up to 50 weeks ShPL which must be taken within 52 weeks of birth or placement, for parents to share. It can only be taken in complete weeks but can begin on any day of the week.

ShPL can be taken as:

- complete weeks only but can begin on any day of the week.
- a continuous period which is a period of several weeks without a break, or
- discontinuous periods which are 2 or more periods of ShPL with breaks in where there is a return to work in between.

Table 1 shows 3 examples how ShPL is created in a maternity situation

Table 1.

2	6	13	26	39	52
Ends maternity leave after 6 weeks	Up to 46 weeks of ShPL available				
Ends maternity leave after 26 weeks			Up to 26 weeks of ShPL available		
Ends maternity leave after 39 weeks				Up to 13 weeks of SPhL available	

5.0 When can shared parental leave start?

ShPL can begin as follows:

- Primary caregiver: After the mandatory two weeks leave following your child's birth/adoption placement.
- Partner: Immediately after the child's birth/placement. **Note:** You may use paternity leave/parent support leave before or after this, if eligible.
- From the date on your booking notice or variation notice (unless a discontinuous leave period requested cannot be accommodated).

6.0 When do I need to tell my Headteacher that I want to take shared parental leave?

Both parents should liaise with their respective employers as early as possible as there are specific notifications to give.

6.1 Curtailment Notice: The primary caregiver needs to give notice to shorten their maternity or adoption leave to create ShPL.

Once given, it can't be revoked (before maternity/adoption leave ends). Exceptions are if: you/ your partner are no longer eligible, the other parent passes away or you gave the notice before the birth or placement (in which case you can revoke up to 6 weeks after, however, you can't then serve another one).

6.2 Opt-in Notices: An opt-in notice confirms your entitlement and intention to take ShPL (required at least 8 weeks before the intended leave date). One opt-in notice is for the primary caregiver and one is for a partner/spouse.

Please note that we reserve the right to request further evidence of eligibility, (to be provided within 14 days of our request) such as:

- the name and address of your partner's employer (or a declaration that they have no employer).
- a copy of: the birth certificate (or declaration if not yet issued), matching certificate, official notification, or parental order (if it has been granted) in the case of surrogacy.
- and/or other documentary evidence from the adoption agency.

6.3 Booking Notice: The final step is giving a booking notice. This form is to give the relevant notice (at least 8 weeks before the ShPL start date) period required for the dates you want to take leave. In most cases, you will provide this at the same time as the opt-in notice. Your Headteacher will consider your request and provide a response in writing within 14 calendar days.

You are entitled to put in up to 3 'booking notices' to take time off.

Forms are available with this policy.

7.0 Can I take time off in separate weeks?

The time off under this provision can be taken either as:

8.0 Can I change my ShPL requests?

You can change or cancel the dates of any shared parental leave booked if you provide written notice at least eight weeks before the date the variation is due to take effect.

If you vary or cancel your request, including notice to return to work early, it will usually count as a new notification, reducing your right to book/vary leave by one. Exceptions include situations where the child is born early or if we request the date to be changed, with your agreement. Any variations will be confirmed in writing by your Headteacher.

To change ('vary') or cancel the dates of any shared parental leave booked, you must give:

- 8 weeks' notice
- a 'notice to vary leave' notification (forms are available)

Remember: each eligible parent has up to 3 opportunities to either:

- book a block of shared parental leave ('booking notice') or
- change the dates of booked shared parental leave ('notice to vary leave')

9.0 Statutory Shared Parental Pay (SShPP)

You may be entitled to take up to 37 weeks SShPP whilst taking ShPL. SShPP is paid at a rate set by the Government for the relevant tax year and you will either get that or 90% of your average weekly earnings, whichever is lower.

The amount of weeks available to be paid will depend on the amount by which the primary caregiver shortens their maternity/adoption pay period or maternity allowance period. Similar to the shared parental leave, it is essentially creating a 'pot' of shared parental pay out of the unused 'statutory pay' for other types of family leave (maternity /adoption).

SShPP may be payable during some or all of SPL, depending on the length and timing of the leave.

To claim SShPP, you must meet the eligibility requirements for leave and the following conditions:

- The primary caregiver must have been entitled to statutory maternity/adoption pay or maternity allowance and must have cut short their pay/allowance period.
- You must intend to care for the child during the week SShPP is payable.

- Your average weekly earnings for the eight weeks leading up to and including the 15th week before the child's due date/matching date must be at least the lower earnings limit for national insurance contributions.
- You must remain employed with us until the first week of SShPP begins.
- You must give proper notice for ShPL and at least 8 weeks' notice at least 8 weeks before receiving any SShPP, preferably as part of the ShPL notice.

Notice must include:

- Start and end dates of maternity/adoption pay or maternity allowance.
- Total SShPP available, amount intended to be claimed by you and your partner, and expected claim dates.
- Signed declaration confirming information accuracy, meeting criteria for SShPP, and agreement to inform the organisation if eligibility changes.

Accompanied by a signed declaration from your partner confirming:

- Agreement to your SShPP claim and processing.
- If primary caregiver, reduction of maternity/adoption pay or allowance.
- Immediate notification if eligibility conditions change.

The previously mentioned forms for leave cover the declarations and notice required for SShPP.

10. What are Shared Parental Leave "in Touch" (SPLIT) days?

SPLIT days are intended to facilitate a smooth return to work for you when returning from shared parental leave. You and your Headteacher can agree on up to 20 days SPLIT days during the SPL period without bringing your period of SPL to an end or impacting on your right to claim ShPP for that week.

SPLIT days are useful for you to:

- Keep up to date with work
- Go to work related activity or training sessions
- Work part of a week to help the team

However, SPLIT days are optional. We have no expectation that you will undertake work and similarly you have no right to demand this. Any agreed work must be with prior mutual agreement.

Part days will count as one SPLIT day. You will receive normal contractual hourly pay for any SPLIT hours worked but this must not exceed a standard working day. Headteachers can agree with you when the payment of when SPLIT days will take place which can either be in the next available payroll month or when your ShPP has run out.

If a SPLIT day occurs during a week when you are receiving ShPP, you will receive your ShPP for the week in which you work a SPLIT day, but any ShPP paid will be offset against any payments made for hours worked.

The ShPL period will not be extended by the number of SPLIT days worked.

After 20 SPLIT days have been worked the current rules will continue and you will lose a week's ShPP for the week in which the 21st day of work is done as well as end of your ShPL period.

11. Further Advice

If you need any further information about any aspect of this policy, please initially speak to your Headteacher. HR Providers can also provide additional clarification and advice in respect of this policy.

12. Reviewing the Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually unless there is a requirement to do so before due to legislative or best practice changes.

13. Community Impact Analysis

We consider carefully how the decisions we make affect people who share different protected characteristics (race, disability, sex, gender re-assignment, religion, belief, sexual orientation, age, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity).

The Community Impact Analysis, available to support our family leave policies, highlights the inclusive, equitable and responsive approach we take to supporting the diverse needs of our workforce, whilst fostering a supportive working environment for parents.

The completed community impact analysis to support this policy is available on request.

14. Version History

Version	Author (s)	Reason for Change	Date
1.0	SCC	New suite of separate family leave policies (reimagined people policies)	31.03.2026