

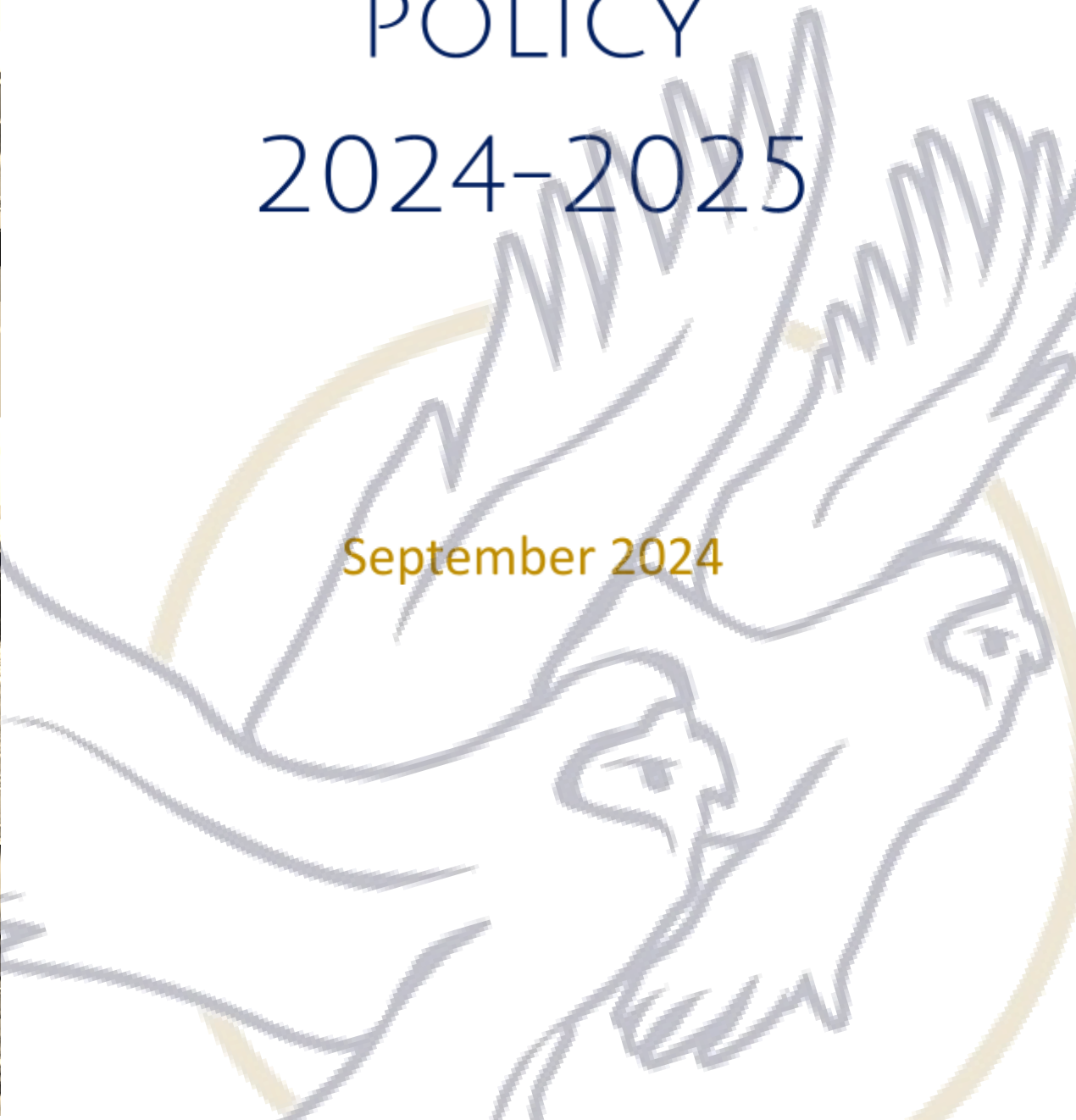


Bengeworth
Multi Academy Trust

Brilliant People • Better Schools • Bright Futures

SABBATICAL POLICY 2024-2025

September 2024



ACADEMY CONTEXT

Bengeworth Multi Academy Trust currently comprises of two first schools; Bengeworth CE Academy and Bretforton Village School. Bengeworth is a 3 form entry split site school with approximately 600 children on roll based in two separate buildings: Nursery, Reception and Year 1 at Burford Road and Year 2 to Year 5 at King's Road. Bretforton Village School is a single form entry rural school with approximately 60 children on roll.

POLICY AIMS

The aims of the Sabbatical policy are:

- to provide clarity to staff about career break/ sabbatical options within the Trust
- to confirm the criteria of a successful request for a career break / sabbatical
- to ensure employees understand how pay and pension would be affected if a career break / sabbatical was taken

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the Trust Board to:

- implement a career break / sabbatical offer to staff with an associated process for application
- consider the delegation of decision making with regard to sabbatical leave

It is the responsibility of the CEO to:

- consider any request made by a member of staff to take a career break / sabbatical in line with the guidelines contained within the policy
- conduct any meetings with staff in order to discuss the proposed sabbatical

For the term of this policy, the Board of Trustees has delegated responsibility to the CEO to lead in all decisions regarding staff requesting a career break / sabbatical. In turn, this responsibility may be delegated to the Headteacher for each setting. School Governors may be involved in discussions but any final decision will rest with the CEO.

CRITERIA AND PROCESS FOR APPLYING FOR SABBATICAL LEAVE

There is no statutory right to take a career break or sabbatical, but many larger employers or those in the public sector may offer such breaks, at their discretion.

Bengeworth Multi Academy Trust will consider any request made by their employees.

An employee's eligibility for a career break will be based on:

- Being employed by Bengeworth Multi Academy Trust (or within another Trust or LA if a joining academy) for a continuous period of seven years at the date of application;
- Having a satisfactory performance, conduct, health and attendance record (with individual circumstances taken into account);
- A confirmed intent (i.e. written and signed) to resume their career within the next 12 months;
- Given enough notice, e.g. a minimum of three months' notice depending on role;
- No disciplinary, capability or complaint matters outstanding;
- No known outstanding or arising work commitments which would affect the preferred date of commencement.

A meeting will be held with applicants to gain an understanding of why and for how long they would want unpaid time off, and to determine what impact their absence may have on the Trust with any possible suggestions of how their duties could be covered.

Once established, other options could be considered by referring to the following policies:

Flexible Working Policy:

Would temporarily reducing hours or changing a work pattern help?

Annual Leave Policy:

An employee can normally request to purchase up to three additional week's annual leave (pro-rata for part-time employees) in any leave year. Requests to purchase more than 111 hours can be approved but require the authority of the CEO of the Trust.

Ordinary Parental Leave Policy:

Eligible employees in both birth and adoption situations who have at least one year's continuous service with WCC/WCF or Bengeworth Multi Academy Trust can take up to 18 weeks' ordinary parental leave at any time up to the child's 18th birthday.

A maximum of four weeks' ordinary parental leave can be used during a particular year. Ordinary parental leave must be taken in full week blocks (there is more flexibility if your child has a disability). Ordinary parental leave is unpaid.

If those options do not fit the reasons for the request but eligibility criteria are met, a discussion can be had regarding what the terms and conditions of a career break would mean to ascertain if the applicant would still wish to pursue it.

The Line Manager / Headteacher / CEO may at that point have reasons why they cannot support the application by referring to any of the points in the eligibility criteria. In this instance, the CEO will fully consider the application based on their discussion with the applicant, and will arrange to meet again with the applicant, by an agreed date, to confirm their decision.

Before making a final decision, the CEO may ask for expressions of interest for any existing part time staff to temporarily increase their hours to cover that role. If this request can be supported, the CEO would prepare a Business Statement for the Governing Body giving full reasons why and how this can be supported, and what the extended impact would be for the wider team.

It is the responsibility of the CEO to:

- ensure that there are no outstanding loans or funded training implications and that any outstanding annual leave is taken before the commencement of the sabbatical leave period;
- send a confirmation letter to the applicant, with a copy to the HR Team, and ensuring the return of a signed copy of their acceptance to the terms of the agreement;
- note deadlines to adhere to by ensuring the employee keeps in touch, i.e. employee is requested to contact manager 3 months prior to their agreed return date as detailed under the "Return to Work" section of the letter as they may need to be written to remind them of possible consequences if they do not;
- ensure the return of Trust equipment/property and agree how they will communicate whilst on their career break / sabbatical;
- inform Payroll of the sabbatical period;
- Confirm the impact of this leave on pensionable service with HR.

POLICY AWARENESS

All teachers, governors and support staff will have access to a copy of the policy on each setting's network. All candidates will be made aware of the policy and will be provided with a copy if requested.

Board Approval September 2024
Review date – September 2025

Bengeworth

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Bengeworth Multi Academy Trust

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