

St Peter's Church

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FAMILY FRIENDLY POLICIES

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Maternity Leave Policy & Procedure

Policy & Purpose

At St Peter's Church, we acknowledge the number of rights and entitlements surrounding maternity leave and we endeavour to ensure all women are given support and encouragement before, during, and on their return to work from maternity leave.

We aim to ensure an effective dialogue is implemented at all stages so that employees feel fully informed about their entitlements and the process to follow.

This policy deals mainly with the rights surrounding maternity leave and pay, but in some cases, you and your partner may be eligible for shared parental leave which gives you more flexibility to share the leave and pay available in the first year after birth. The details of shared parental leave are set out in our Shared Parental Leave (Birth) Policy. However, there is always a period of compulsory maternity leave which must be taken before any remaining leave can be shared with a partner or spouse.

In addition to your rights relating to leave and pay, it also confirms the arrangements around ante-natal care, your health and safety, and pregnancy related sickness and 'keep in touch' days.

All employees taking maternity leave are covered by this policy, including those on part-time contracts.

Definitions

The following terms are used within this policy:

EWC: The expected week of childbirth is the week, beginning on the Sunday, during which the baby's birth is expected.

MATB1: The maternity certificate, or form, which is provided to confirm a pregnancy and confirm the expected week of childbirth.

Qualifying week: The 15th week before the expected week of childbirth

Maternity Leave entitlement = 52 weeks broken down as follows:

- Ordinary maternity leave (**OML**) for a period of 26 weeks, including a 2-week period of compulsory maternity leave (or 4 weeks for factory workers)

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- Additional maternity leave (**AML**) for a further period of 26 weeks and starts immediately after OML.

Notification requirements

Please notify us as soon as possible of your pregnancy to enable us to ensure that, where appropriate, any reasonable steps are taken to safeguard the safety of yourself and your unborn child and that you are not subject to any unnecessary risks at work.

To qualify for maternity leave you will need to provide us with written notification by the qualifying week, or as soon as reasonably practicable after this, of the following information:

- you are pregnant
- your EWC, and
- the date you wish to start your maternity leave period, which can be any time from the 11th week before the EWC.

When received you need to give your MATB1 to your Line Manager – this should be provided by your doctor or mid-wife at around the 20-week stage.

Once you have notified your Line Manager of your intended start date of ordinary maternity leave, we will confirm, in writing, the date that we expect you to return to work after additional maternity leave has ended. This confirmation will be sent to you within 28 days of your notification.

An informal meeting will then be arranged with your Line Manager or a representative from our outsourced HR partner Cornerstone Resources Ltd to discuss your entitlements and the organisational processes involved. The meeting will include discussions on the following points:

- the amount of leave you can take and the payment arrangements.
- the information that we will need from you to process your maternity leave.
- time off for ante-natal appointments
- risk assessments to ensure your role does not pose a risk to your, or your baby's, health, and safety.
- your right to return after maternity leave to the same or a similar role.
- the opportunity to request flexible working and how a request should be made.

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Communication

To ensure good communication and a smooth transition in the time leading up to your maternity leave, and during the leave itself, you will be informed of the arrangements for covering your work and for remaining in contact whilst you are on leave. We will also try, where possible, to consult with you on how to cover your workload during your leave and whether any temporary reporting arrangements need putting in place.

We would like to keep you fully informed of any news or developments at work during your leave and will work to agree with you the most appropriate way to do this.

We will keep you informed of any recruitment exercises undertaken during your maternity absence.

Health and safety

We will assess any potential risk that your role poses to your health and safety, and the health and safety of your baby. A Health and Safety Risk Assessment will be undertaken, and action taken to eliminate any risk.

This may include adjusting your role or, if no adjustments can be identified that will reduce or remove the risk, you will be offered a suitable alternative role for the duration of your pregnancy. If alternative work cannot be found, we reserve the right to place you on furlough on full pay until you are no longer at risk. If necessary, where a risk remains, these arrangements will continue for a period of six months after the birth of your child.

Please speak with your Line Manager immediately if you are worried about your own health and safety at any time.

Time off for ante-natal care

You are entitled to paid time off during normal working hours to receive ante-natal care. Ante-natal care can include medical examinations, relaxation classes and parent-craft classes as advised by a medical practitioner. Time off will be provided for any time spent travelling to and from these appointments, including any waiting time.

Other than for the first appointment, you may be asked to provide an appointment card to your Line Manager to confirm the details of the appointment.

You will receive full pay for the time taken to attend these appointments.

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Pregnancy-related sickness

If you find yourself falling sick during your pregnancy, please report this under our Absence Policy. We will record any periods of pregnancy-related sickness absence from the start of your pregnancy until the end of your maternity leave separately from any other sickness records you may have.

Length of maternity leave

Subject to meeting the notification requirements set out above, you are entitled to 52 weeks' maternity leave in total, broken down as follows:

- Ordinary maternity leave (OML) for a period of 26 weeks, including a 2-week period of compulsory maternity leave (or 4 weeks for factory workers)
- Additional maternity leave (AML) for a further period of 26 weeks and starts immediately after OML.

Unless you notify us that you wish to take a shorter period, St Peter's Church will automatically assume you are taking your full entitlement to 52 weeks and will write to you to confirm your expected return date.

During periods of OML and AML, you remain entitled to receive your normal contractual terms and conditions of employment that you would have received had you not taken this leave, except for remuneration. This will include contractual benefits, subject to the terms of these benefits.

Commencing maternity leave

You can start maternity leave at any time from the beginning of the 11th week before the EWC until the date of birth. You are required to inform us of the date you intend to start leave however you may change this date so long as you provide at least 28 days' notice of this change. Any application for a date change should be made in writing to your Line Manager.

Compulsory maternity leave commences on the day after the childbirth occurs. Its purpose is to ensure that you have at least a two-week period of leave (or four weeks for factory workers) after the birth of your baby.

There are two incidences in which the maternity leave period is triggered automatically:

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- Where childbirth occurs before the OML would otherwise commence. If this occurs, please notify us, in writing as soon as is reasonably practicable after the birth, of the date on which you gave birth. Your maternity leave period will begin automatically on the day following the date of the birth.
- Where you are absent from work, wholly or partly due to your pregnancy, after the beginning of the fourth week before the EWC. If this occurs, please notify us, in writing as soon as is reasonably practicable, that your absence from work is wholly or partly due to your pregnancy and the start date of this absence. In these circumstances, St Peter's Church may require that your maternity leave period begins on the day following the first day of such absence.

Once you have notified your Line Manager that your OML period has been triggered due to premature absence or premature childbirth, we will confirm, in writing, the date that we expect you to return to work after the AML period has ended. This confirmation will be sent to you within 28 days of your notification.

Shared parental leave.

You may be entitled to take shared parental leave and you should refer to our shared parental leave policy for further information on entitlements, eligibility and notice requirements.

Maternity pay entitlement

Dependent upon your length of service, you may be entitled to receive statutory maternity pay (SMP). If you do not qualify for such a payment, you may, dependent upon your circumstances, be eligible to receive state maternity allowance. In these circumstances, we will provide you with the form SMP1 within seven days of determining that you do not qualify.

You will qualify for SMP if you meet the following criteria:

- you have been continuously employed with us for at least 26 weeks by the qualifying week.
- your average weekly earnings are not less than the lower earnings limit relevant for national insurance purposes, during the 'relevant period'.
- you are still pregnant at the 11th week before the EWC or have given birth by that time and
- you have complied with the relevant notification requirements.

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If you qualify for SMP the period for which SMP may be paid is called the maternity pay period. The maternity pay period may start at any time from the start of the 11th week before the EWC and can continue for up to 39 weeks, even if you do not intend to return to work. This is paid as follows:

- the first 6 weeks will be made at the rate of 90 per cent of your average earnings.
- then up to 33 weeks at the Standard Rate of SMP or 90 per cent of your average weekly earnings (whichever is lower).

Your normal weekly earnings are calculated based on an average of your gross earnings for national insurance during the 'relevant period'. This will include, for example, any payments relating to overtime, commission, and bonuses. The 'relevant period' is the period ending on the last normal pay day before the qualifying week and starting with the normal pay day which is at least eight weeks earlier. The exact calculation of weekly earnings will depend on whether you are paid monthly, weekly or at other intervals. Further advice on how your normal weekly earnings will be calculated can be obtained from Cornerstone HR Consultancy

Where your gross earnings are increased by a pay rise, and this increase takes effect from the start of the relevant period and before the end of the AML period, this increase will result in a recalculation of your SMP. As a result of this recalculation, you may be entitled to a retrospective increase or may subsequently qualify to receive SMP.

Keeping in touch (KIT) days

We would like you to keep in touch with us during your maternity leave and you may, by mutual agreement, work for up to 10 days during your maternity leave period without losing statutory payments for that week or ending your entitlement to leave. This cannot include the compulsory maternity leave period. Payment for KIT days will be discussed and agreed in advance of these being worked.

KIT days are not compulsory on either you or St Peter's Church but can be a great opportunity for:

- You to adjust yourself back into the workplace.
- Your line manager to update you with any changes to the workplace
- You and your line manager to identify any training needs you may have
- You to attend team meetings, conferences, etc

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For this purpose, any work carried out on any day, even just an hour's work, is deemed to constitute "a day's work". Any days' work done under this provision will not have the effect of extending the total duration of the maternity leave period.

You will be paid at your normal basic rate of pay for the time spent working on a Keeping in Touch Day and this will be inclusive of any maternity pay entitlement

Terms and Conditions during OML and AML

All the terms and conditions of your employment remain in force during OML and AML, except for terms relating to pay. In particular:

- any benefits in kind, including your life insurance and healthcare scheme shall continue
- annual leave entitlement shall continue to accrue - as these holidays cannot be taken whilst you are on maternity leave, it is important for us to discuss and agree the arrangements for the taking of these holidays.

In addition, provided you satisfy the relevant qualifying conditions, you will be entitled to return to the job in which you are employed to do (if returning after OML) or one of equivalent status (if returning after AML), with protected rights to pay, conditions and benefits.

If your role is made redundant during maternity leave, you will be offered a suitable alternative role, where one exists.

You also will be protected from being subjected to a detriment, disadvantage, unfair treatment or dismissal because of pregnancy, maternity leave, etc;

Stillbirth and miscarriage

If you experience a miscarriage before 24 weeks of pregnancy, you will no longer be entitled to take maternity leave. It is anticipated that an employee may need some time off work in these circumstances, and this will usually be taken as sick leave, during which St Peter's Church sickness absence policy will apply.

If you suffer a stillbirth after 24 weeks of pregnancy, your entitlement to maternity leave and pay will not be affected and you will still be able to take the time off, and receive pay, as planned. From 6 April 2020, parental bereavement leave is also available for employees who suffer a stillbirth. You can read more information on this entitlement in our separate policy on Parental Bereavement Leave.

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Returning to work

Unless you state otherwise, it will be automatically assumed that you will return to work at the end of your full 52 week leave period. We ask that you contact us shortly before your return so that we may make effective plans for your return. However, there is no obligation on you to do so unless you wish to change the date of your return, in which case you must give us eight weeks' notice.

If you qualify for shared parental leave and wish to return early from maternity leave for this purpose, you must also give us eight weeks' notice. You can find more information on this in our shared parental leave policy.

You may be invited to attend an informal meeting with your Line Manager to discuss any arrangements regarding your return to work. This is likely to take place approximately two weeks before your return.

If you decide that you do not wish to return to work after your maternity leave, you are required to give us notice of your resignation. Your notice period to resign is set out in your contract of employment. Where you choose to resign without returning to work, St Peter's Church will require repayment of any contractual maternity pay more than your statutory entitlement that you have received during maternity leave.

If you are unable to return on the agreed date due to sickness, please inform your Line Manager immediately.

Flexible working

St Peter's Church recognises that women returning from maternity leave may wish to undertake some form of flexible working. We would ask that any flexible working request should be made in line with the process set out in the Flexible working policy.

Grievances related to maternity rights.

St Peter's Church grievance procedure may be used if you are dissatisfied with any decision made in respect of your maternity rights.

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Paternity Leave Policy and Procedure

Policy & Purpose

St Peter's Church acknowledges that there are a number of rights surrounding paternity leave and we endeavour to provide help and assistance to you if you wish to use your right to take paternity leave. This policy outlines paternity leave entitlements and how employees should arrange this period of leave.

Eligibility

Paternity leave following the birth of a child.

Paternity leave is available to you, regardless of gender, for the purpose of caring for a child, or supporting the child's other parent following the birth or adoption of a child, where either:

- you are the child's biological father.
- your partner is having a baby, adopting or having a child through surrogacy
- you are the mother's husband or partner or one partner in a couple who are both entitled to apply for, and propose to apply for, a parental order for the child
- have been employed and performed work for your employer for a minimum period of 26 weeks by the end of the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth (EWC) or in the case of adoption, the week in which you are notified by the adoption agency or local authority that you have been matched with a child
- will be or expect to be responsible for the child's upbringing, where you are the father, or expect to be mainly responsible for the child's upbringing where you are the mother's husband or partner but not the father of the child
- have given the required notice of your intention to take leave
- have not previously taken shared parental leave for the same child.

When can paternity leave start?

Paternity leave lasts for a fixed period of one week or two consecutive weeks. You may not take individual days or separate weeks as paternity leave.

Paternity leave can start on the date of the child's birth or adoption placement, or a later date of your choosing. However, it must end within 56 days (8 weeks) of birth or placement, or within 56 days of the first day of the Expected Week of Childbirth (if the child was born early).

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If the same pregnancy results in more than one child being born, or more than one child is adopted in the same arrangement, the entitlement to paternity leave does not increase and only one period of leave can be taken.

Notification requirements

Paternity leave following the birth of a child.

You will need to advise St Peter's Church of your intention to take a period of paternity leave during or before the 15th week before the EWC, unless not reasonably practical. Your Line Manager must be informed, in writing, of:

- the week your baby is expected to be born.
- whether you intend to use one- or two-weeks' leave
- the date you wish the leave to begin.

As soon as reasonably practicable after birth, you must notify us of the actual date of birth in writing.

A signed declaration stating you intend to utilise a period of paternity leave to care for a child or provide support to the mother of the child and that you meet the eligibility criteria for the leave, may be requested. Where requested, this should be provided to your Line Manager.

If wish to change the date of your paternity leave after giving notice, you must provide an additional written notice requesting a variation to the leave. This notice must be provided at least 28 days in advance of the new start date of the leave period.

Paternity leave following the adoption of a child.

You will need to advise St Peter's Church of your intention to take a period of paternity leave within seven days of the date the matching notification is given to the child's adopter. Where this is not reasonably practicable, the notification must be provided to St Peter's Church as soon as possible. Your Line Manager must be informed, in writing, of:

- the date the matching notification was given to the child's adopter
- the expected date of placement
- whether you intend to use one or two weeks' leave
- the date you wish the leave to begin.

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Paternity pay entitlement

You may be entitled to receive statutory paternity pay (SPP) from St Peter's Church for the period of paternity leave. SPP is paid at a specific rate set by the government each tax year, or at 90 per cent of your average weekly earnings during the relevant period, whichever is lower. For details of the current SPP rate, please contact your line manager or the www.gov.uk website.

To meet the eligibility criteria for SPP, average weekly earnings for the relevant period must be equal to or higher than the specific lower earnings limit set by the government each tax year.

The relevant period is:

- the period of eight weeks which ends immediately before the 14th week before the EWC (in birth cases) or
- the period of eight weeks which ends immediately before the week where the matching notification was given to the child's adopter (in adoption cases).

Dependent on your individual circumstances, you may be entitled to receive additional financial support. You should visit your local social security office (Department for Work and Pensions) to receive further information on this.

Contractual benefits

All terms and conditions of employment remain in force during paternity leave, except the terms relating to pay.

Returning to work

You have the right to come back to the same job role. The act of requesting or taking paternity leave will not cause you to suffer any disadvantage in the workplace.

St Peter's Church recognises that following the birth or adoption of a child means you may wish to undertake some form of flexible working. We would ask that any flexible working request should be made in line with the process set out in the Flexible working policy.

Should you not want to return to work following Paternity Leave, you should discuss with your line manager, as early as possible. Resignation should be notified, in writing, as set out in your employment contract. Following notification of your resignation, St

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Peter's Church agreement is needed to withdraw this. Any payments of statutory paternity pay will not be altered by your resignation.

Shared parental leave.

Following paternity leave, you may be entitled to take further periods of leave under the shared parental leave scheme. Full details on shared parental leave, including how to apply, can be requested from your line manager.

Once a period of shared parental leave has been taken in respect of a child, paternity leave cannot be taken for the same child.

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Adoption Leave Policy & Procedure

Policy & Purpose

At St Peter's Church, we acknowledge the number of rights and entitlements surrounding adoption leave and pay and we endeavour to ensure all employees given support and encouragement before, during, and on their return to work from adoption leave.

If you are matched for adoption with a child, you may be entitled to either adoption leave or paternity leave. One parent cannot take both periods of leave, and it is up to you and your partner to decide who is the main adopter and so will take adoption leave. The main adopter's partner may be entitled to take paternity leave. You may also wish to refer to our Paternity Leave policy.

Main adopters are entitled to a total of 52 weeks' leave and this policy detailed all your rights and obligations should you be matched for adoption. We would ask that you notify us as soon as possible of your situation so that we can ensure you are fully aware of all your entitlements and obligations.

Time off for adoption appointments

You are entitled to time off to attend adoption appointments in the period between notification of a match and the date of placement. For single adopters or the main adopter in a joint adoption, you are entitled to paid time off to attend up to five appointments, with a maximum of six and a half hours per appointment. The adopter's partner in a joint adoption will be entitled to unpaid time off to attend up to two appointments.

Where the time is paid, you will be paid at your normal hourly rate for this time.

If the main adopter's partner wishes to attend more than two adoption appointments, he/she should speak to his/her line manager who will consider the request at their discretion.

St Peter's Church may require you to provide evidence of the appointment, in the form of a document (an email is acceptable) showing the date and time of the appointment and that it has been arranged by the adoption agency.

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Eligibility for adoption leave and pay.

There are different eligibility rules for Adoption leave and pay.

You are entitled to adoption leave from day 1 of employment with St Peter's Church however, adoption leave is not available where a child is not newly matched for adoption, for example when a step-parent is adopting a partner's child/children.

You must also have notified the adoption agency of agreement to the placement and of agreement to the date of the placement. You must also meet the notification requirements, as set out later in this policy document.

Only one period of leave is available irrespective of whether more than one child is placed for adoption as part of the same arrangement. However, if an additional child is adopted later as a separate agreement, then you could qualify again for a separate period of adoption leave.

As well as meeting the notification requirements, to be eligible for Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP) you must:

- have been continuously employed by your employer for at least 26 weeks by the week you were matched with a child
- earn on average at least £120 a week (before tax)
- provide proof of the adoption or surrogacy

Ordinary and additional adoption leave

You can take up to 52 weeks of Statutory Adoption Leave. This leave is divided into two categories, 'ordinary' and 'additional'. Each is for 26 weeks, with additional adoption leave following on from ordinary adoption leave. If you are eligible for ordinary adoption leave you will also qualify automatically for additional adoption leave.

During both ordinary and additional adoption leave the employment contract continues and you are entitled to retain your normal terms and conditions of employment, except wages or salary (unless your contract of employment provides otherwise). However, in most cases, you will be entitled to Statutory Adoption Pay during some of this period.

In addition, provided you satisfy the relevant qualifying conditions, you will be entitled to return to the job in which you are employed to do (if returning after OAL) or one of

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equivalent status (if returning after AAL), with protected rights to pay, conditions and benefits.

Commencement of adoption leave

Your Adoption Leave can start on the date the child starts living with you or up to 14 days before the expected placement date. Adoption leave can start on any day of the week.

Notification requirements

You are required to give us notice, in writing, of your intention to take adoption leave within seven days of being notified by the adoption agency that you have been matched with a child, unless this is not reasonably practicable. You must inform us of:

- the date the child is expected to be placed with you
- the date you want the adoption leave to start
- How much leave you would like to take

You should provide the "matching certificate" from the adoption agency. The certificate will include basic information on matching and expected placement dates.

You are able to change your mind about the date on which you want your adoption to leave to start providing you inform us at least 28 days in advance, unless this is not reasonably practicable.

We will write to you to notify you of the date on which you are expected to return to work if the full entitlement to adoption leave is taken, within 28 days of the date on which you notified us of your intention to take leave, or, if you have varied the date originally chosen to start adoption leave, within 28 days of the date on which adoption leave began.

Adoption pay

If you want to be paid SAP, you must provide us with 28 days' notice, unless the time between the child being matched and placed is less than that. If you qualify for SAP this will be paid for the first six weeks at 90% of your normal weekly earnings in the eight-week period up to the date of notification of a match, with the remainder paid at the earnings-related limit or the statutory rate, whichever is lower. SAP will be paid in the same way as your wages would be paid if you were not on leave. If you do not

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qualify for such a payment, you may, dependent upon your circumstances, be eligible to receive allowances from the appropriate government departments.

Shared parental leave and pay.

You may be entitled to opt in to shared parental leave, sharing up to 50 weeks of leave and up to 37 weeks of pay (subject to availability). If you think you would like to take shared parental leave instead of adoption leave, please see the Shared Parental Leave Policy for more information.

Keeping In Touch days

We would like you to keep in touch with us during your adoption leave and you may, by mutual agreement, work for up to 10 days during your adoption leave period without losing statutory payments for that week or ending your entitlement to leave. Payment for KIT days will be discussed and agreed in advance of these being worked.

KIT days are not compulsory on either you or St Peter's Church but can be a great opportunity for:

- You to adjust yourself back into the workplace
- Your line manager to update you with any changes to the workplace
- You and your line manager to identify any training needs you may have
- You to attend team meetings, conferences, etc

For this purpose, any work carried out on any day, even just an hour's work, is deemed to constitute "a day's work". Any days' work done under this provision will not have the effect of extending the total duration of the adoption leave period.

You will be paid at your normal rate of pay for a KIT day and this will be inclusive of any adoption pay entitlement.

Returning to work

Unless you state otherwise, it will be automatically assumed that you will return to work at the end of your full 52 week leave period. We ask that you contact us shortly before your return so that we may make effective plans for your return. However, there is no obligation on you to do so unless you wish to change the date of your return, in which case you must give us eight weeks' notice.

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You may be invited to attend an informal meeting with your Line Manager to discuss any arrangements regarding your return to work. This is likely to take place approximately two weeks before your return.

If you decide that you do not wish to return to work after your adoption leave, you are required to give us notice of your resignation. Your notice period to resign is set out in your contract of employment. Where you choose to resign without returning to work, St Peter's Church will require repayment of any contractual adoption pay more than your statutory entitlement that you have received during adoption leave.

If you are unable to return on the agreed date due to sickness, please inform your Line Manager immediately.

Shortly before your return to work, we will be in touch with you to arrange an informal meeting with your Line Manager. The aim of this meeting is to discuss your return and to ensure it is as smooth a transition back to work as possible.

Disrupted Adoption

A disrupted adoption occurs when:

- You are notified that the placement will not take place;
- The child is returned to the adoption agency after placement; or
- The child dies after placement.

In the unfortunate event that your adoption leave has started but has been disrupted, your entitlement to adoption leave and pay will continue for a further eight weeks from the end of the week the disruption occurred. The eight-week period would be reduced if your entitlement would have ended earlier in the normal course of events.

Surrogacy and adoption rights

If you are an intended parent in a surrogacy arrangement who intends to apply for, or has already applied for, a Parental Order you may be entitled to either adoption leave and pay or paternity leave and pay. One parent cannot claim entitlement to both periods of leave and pay, and it is up to you to decide which you wish to claim (subject to eligibility).

You will be entitled to take unpaid time off to accompany the surrogate mother to up to two antenatal appointments of up to six and a half hours per appointment.

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You are entitled to adoption leave from the start date of your employment. This will be for a total of 52 weeks, split in to two periods of "ordinary" and "additional" adoption leave of 26 weeks each.

You are required to give us notice, in writing, of your entitlement to take adoption leave by the 15th week before the expected week of birth. You must also notify us of the actual date of birth as soon as is reasonably practicable after birth.

You should provide documentary evidence - a statutory declaration. This document will state that you have obtained, applied for or intend to apply for a Parental Order in respect of the surrogate child and, where not received, this is expected to be made.

If you have begun a period of adoption leave in respect of a child before approval of a Parental Order, and you are subsequently notified that the application is refused, your adoption leave period will end eight weeks after the week of that notification or the end of the adoption leave period, if that is earlier.

Dual approved prospective adopters and adoption leave

If you are a dual approved prospective adopter, a local authority foster parent who has a child placed with you with an expectation to adopt that child in accordance with section 22C of the Children Act 1989, you may be entitled to either adoption leave and pay or paternity leave and pay. One parent cannot claim entitlement to both periods of leave and pay, and it is up to you to decide which you wish to claim (subject to eligibility).

You are entitled to adoption leave from the start date of your employment. This will be for a total of 52 weeks, split in to two periods of "ordinary" and "additional" adoption leave of 26 weeks each.

Only one period of leave is available irrespective of whether you go on to adopt the same child or children placed with you under section 22C. However, if an additional child is placed with you under section 22C at a later date as a separate agreement then you could qualify again for a separate period of adoption leave.

You can choose to start your adoption leave on the date of the child's placement (whether this is earlier or later than was expected), or on a predetermined fixed date up to two weeks before the placement of the child and no later than the date of placement. Adoption leave can start on any day of the week.

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You are required to give us notice, in writing, of your intention to take adoption leave within seven days of being notified of the child's placement by the local authority in accordance with section 22C, unless this is not reasonably practicable. The notice must specify:

- the date the child is expected to be placed with you; and
- the date you want the adoption leave to start.

If you have begun a period of adoption leave in respect of a child placed with you under section 22C, and this placement does not proceed to a formal adoption, your adoption leave period will end eight weeks after the child is removed or the end of the adoption leave period, if that is earlier.

Dependent upon your length of service, you may be entitled to Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP). If you qualify for SAP this will be paid for the first six weeks at 90% of your normal weekly earnings in the eight-week period leading up to the date of notification, with the remainder paid at the earnings related limit or the statutory rate, whichever is lower. SAP will be paid in the same way as your wages would be paid if you were not on leave. If you do not qualify for such a payment, you may, dependent upon your circumstances, be eligible to receive allowances from the appropriate government departments.

Any entitlement to Enhance Adoption Pay, will be as defined earlier in this policy.

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Shared Parental Leave (Birth and Adoption) Policy and Procedure

Policy & Purpose

St Peter's Church acknowledges the rights and entitlements surrounding Shared Parental Leave (SPL) and we endeavour to ensure all employees given support and encouragement before, during, and on their return to work from any periods of Shared Parental Leave.

Shared parental leave may be taken in the case of both births and adoptions. This policy uses the word 'parent' to describe employees in both birth and adoption circumstances.

If you wish to take shared parental leave you should inform your line manager at the earliest possible opportunity so that your entitlement can be reviewed with you. Due to the flexibility of the shared parental leave system, it is essential that you understand the procedural requirements involved in taking such leave.

As an outline the key features of shared parental leave (SPL) are:

- eligible employees will be able to bring maternity leave to an early end and share the remaining leave entitlement with their partner
- eligible employees will have a certain amount of flexibility to decide which parent takes leave and when, including being on leave at the same time
- the maximum amount of leave to be shared is 50 weeks
- leave may be taken in minimum blocks of one week
- eligible employees may make up to three requests for leave, including any changes to previously booked leave
- a request for a continuous period of leave becomes fixed
- a request for discontinuous leave is subject to agreement with St Peter's Church

Eligibility requirements for SPL

To take SPL, both you and your partner must meet certain eligibility criteria. You must:

- be the mother, father, or main adopter of the child, or the partner of the mother or main adopter
- have 26 weeks' service at the end of the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth (EWC)

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- have a partner who meets the “*employment and earnings test*” – in that they have in the 66 weeks before the EWC, worked for at least 26 weeks and earned on average at least £30 a week in any 13 weeks.
- share the primary responsibility for the child with the other parent at the time of the birth
- have made the required notifications in respect of their entitlement and have provided the necessary declarations and evidence
- be working for St Peter’s Church until the week before any leave is taken.

Amount and timing of SPL (Birth and Adoption)

The total amount of SPL is 52 weeks of leave, less any time spent on maternity or adoption leave. This excludes paternity leave, which is a standalone entitlement.

If the mother is entitled to statutory maternity/adoption pay or maternity allowance but not maternity/adoption leave, the maximum number of weeks of shared parental leave to be taken is the remainder of 52 weeks minus the number of weeks’ of pay received.

If you are the mother, you are not able to share the period of compulsory maternity leave entitlement of two weeks (or four weeks if the mother works in a factory environment). This is a statutory requirement enabling the employee to recover from the birth and is to be taken exclusively by her. Correspondingly, adopters may share a maximum of 50 weeks’ leave.

Shared parental leave can only be taken in minimum blocks of one week; it is not possible to take a day’s shared parental leave. The minimum amount that can be taken is one week.

Entitlement to Shared Parental Pay (ShPP)

Shared Parental Pay (ShPP) can be paid to both parents for a maximum of 39 weeks in total. This includes any weeks in which statutory maternity or adoption pay was received, and the timing of pay will be decided between the parents.

To be eligible to receive ShPP, you must:

- have been continuously employed for at least 26 weeks up to and including the “qualifying week” (the 15th week prior to the expected week of childbirth or placement for adoption)

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- have average earnings not less than the lower earnings limit calculated over the eight weeks prior to the qualifying week
- comply with the notification requirements.

All ShPP is paid at the lower of the standard rate or 90 per cent of the employee's normal weekly earnings.

Notification requirements

Opting in to SPL and ShPP

At least eight weeks before you intend to start your SPL, you must provide St Peter's Church with the following information on a form which is available from Peter Jordan.

- your name and the name of your partner / the other parent
- the start and end dates of maternity/adoption leave (or pay if you are not entitled to leave)
- the total amount of shared parental leaves available
- the expected week of childbirth/placement (or the actual date of birth/placement if this has taken place)
- a non-binding indication of how you and your partner think they will split and take shared parental leave.

If you are the mother, you must also provide a signed declaration confirming that you meet the eligibility requirements for taking leave and produce a signed declaration from the other parent confirming:

- his/her name and address
- that he/she meets the eligibility requirements
- that he/she consents to the employee taking the amount of leave it has been notified they intend to take
- that he/she permits St Peter's Church to process his/her information
- that immediate notification will be made if any of the eligibility requirements cease to be met.

Ending Maternity / Adoption Leave

Maternity/adoption leave must be ended if you want to take shared parental leave. The mother/main adopter must inform St Peter's Church that maternity/adoption leave will be ended by putting this in writing (**a Curtailment Notice**), at the same time as the notice of entitlement is provided. The curtailment notice will give eight weeks'

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notice of leave (or pay if the employee is not entitled to leave) being brought to an early end.

A curtailment notice is usually binding and can only be withdrawn in the following specific circumstances:

- where it is discovered in the eight weeks following the notice that neither the mother/adopter nor their partner has any entitlement to shared parental leave or pay
- in the event of the death of the partner
- if the notice was given before the birth, and the mother revokes her maternity leave curtailment notice in the six weeks following the birth.

Notice of curtailment must be provided to Jobcentre Plus if the mother is not entitled to maternity pay but instead received maternity allowance.

Notifying St Peter's Church of your dates for SPL and ShPP

Having opted for SPL you will need to give a period of leave notice telling us the start and end dates of your leave. An indication of leave dates will have been given in previous notices, but a period of leave is not fixed (unless stated to the contrary) until a period of leave notice is submitted. This can be given at the same time as your opt-in notice, or it can be given later, as long as it is given at least eight weeks before the start of your leave.

You can give up to three period of leave notices, which will include any notices to amend a period of leave already booked. The date that leave will start should be given unless the period of leave notice is given before the birth of a child, in which case the start date may be expressed as, for example, 'two weeks' after the birth, to last for 'four weeks'.

You should also indicate in this notice whether you intend to take ShPP for the period of leave.

There may be circumstances where we permit more than three period of leave notices to be submitted, for example, where we ask you to change the period of leave already booked.

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It is important that you provide all the relevant information according to the set timelines. If it is not followed, we are not able to guarantee that the leave will be granted.

Changing the dates or cancelling your SPL

You can change the dates for a period of leave by giving us at least eight weeks' notice before the original start date and the new start date.

You can cancel a period of leave by notifying us in writing at least eight weeks before the start date in the period of leave notice.

A notice to cancel or change a period of leave will count as one of your three period of leave notices, unless:

- the variation is at our request
- we agree otherwise
- it is made because of the child being born earlier or later than the expected week of childbirth.

These notice provisions are waived in the event of an early birth and your leave will start the same length of time after the birth as it would have started had the baby not come early. In this case, notice should be given as soon as reasonably practicable.

Confirmation of SPL and ShPP

If you request one continuous block of leave in a period of leave notice, you are entitled to take this period of leave and we will confirm the dates to you in writing.

However, if you request more than one period of leave i.e., discontinuous blocks of leave in one period of leave notice, we will decide whether this can be accommodated. This period of leave needs to be for a minimum 1 week. Your line manager will arrange a meeting with you at which the request will be discuss with you. If we cannot agree the period of leave straight away, there will be a 2 week discussion period.

If no agreement can be reached within two weeks of the period of leave notice being submitted, the default provisions will apply which means you are able to withdraw the request any time up to the 15th day after it was made.

If the request is not withdrawn, you can take the leave in one continuous block to start on the first date of leave specified in the notice. Alternatively, the leave can be taken

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in one block on a new date notified by you within 5 days of the end of the 2 week discussion period (19 days in total).

Evidence of entitlement

For us to verify the information you have provided; you may be required to produce evidence of entitlement.

In respect of SPL / ShPP following a birth, you will need to provide:

- a copy of the child's birth certificate
- and the name and address of the other parent's employer.

Where you are unable to provide a birth certificate because it has not yet been issued, you will be required to sign a declaration to that effect which also includes the date and location of the child's birth.

In respect of SPL / ShPP following adoption, within 14 days of our receipt of your notice of entitlement in relation to an adoption, you may be required to produce documents from the adoption agency which show the following:

- the adoption agency's name and address
- the date you were notified of being matched with the child
- the expected date of placement
- and the name and address of the other parent's employer.

Where requested, the information above must be provided within 14 days.

In the situation where the other parent is not employed, a declaration must be signed to this effect.

'SPLIT' days – (Shared Parental Leave 'In Touch' days)

We would like you to keep in touch with us during your SPL leave and you may, by mutual agreement, work for up to 20 days during your SPL without losing statutory payments for that week or ending your entitlement to leave. These are called SPLIT days. Payment for SPLIT days will be discussed and agreed in advance of these being worked.

SPLIT days are not compulsory on either you or St Peter's Church

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You will be paid at normal rate for work on a SPLIT day. Any work done on one day will count as one SPLIT day.

Your entitlement to 20 SPLIT days is not affected by your entitlement to 10 KIT days during maternity or adoption leave.

Terms and conditions during SPL

You will continue to receive all contractual benefits (except for salary) during SPL. For clarity, your holiday entitlement will continue to accrue during SPL in the same way as if you were not absent. Prior to taking your leave, a discussion will take place between you and your line manager regarding arrangements on taking annual leave around your shared parental leave.

Returning from SPL

If you wish to change the date on which you planned to return to work after SPL must give eight weeks' notice of the original end date and the new end date, whichever is earlier. It is helpful if you give this notice in writing,

After SPL, provided the total amount of leave taken by you (including maternity leave) does not exceed 26 weeks, you are entitled to return to the same job on the same terms and conditions of employment as if they had not been absent.

If you decide you do not want to return to work you should give notice of resignation in accordance with your contract.

Flexible working

St Peter's Church recognises that when returning from SPL you may wish to undertake some form of flexible working. We would ask that any flexible working request should be made in line with the process set out in the Flexible working policy.

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Unpaid Parental Leave Policy and Procedure

Policy & Purpose

St Peter's Church acknowledge the rights around providing parental leave to its employees who are both natural parents and adoptive parents. Parental leave is available to eligible employees who wish to take time off work to spend with their child, for example, to accompany the child during a planned stay in hospital, or to go on holiday with the child.

It is possible to take a period of parental leave immediately after adoption leave, maternity, or paternity leave.

Any statutory parental leave is unpaid leave.

Length of parental leave

If you are eligible, you will be entitled to take a total of 18 weeks' leave in relation to each child until the child is 18 years of age. No more than four weeks can be taken in relation to each child in one year.

You can only take leave in blocks of one week or multiples of one week. However, if your child is disabled, leave may be taken in blocks of one day, part of a week counts as a week so that if a full time employee takes three days' parental leave and then returns to work, one week is taken away from the 18 weeks.

A year is defined as a period of 12 months beginning on the date on which you first, or more recently, became entitled to take parental leave in respect of the child in question and each successive period of 12 months beginning on the anniversary of that date.

Any parental leave taken while working for another employer counts towards the 18-week entitlement. If you have taken parental leave during previous or concurrent employment, you are obliged to provide details to your line manager.

Entitlement

You must meet certain eligibility criteria to take statutory parental leave, as follows:

- you must have at least one year's continuous employment with St Peter's Church counted from the date that parental leave would start
- you have or expect to have parental responsibility for the child

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- your child is under 18 years of age
- you take the leave before your child's 18th birthday
- you provide St Peter's Church with evidence of eligibility when requested.

The following evidence may be requested from you in order to assess your eligibility for parental leave:

- that you have or expect to have parental responsibility for the child in relation to whom leave will be taken
- the child's date of birth (in respect of natural parents)
- the date of adoption placement (in respect of adoptive parents)
- the child's entitlement to Disability Living Allowance (if appropriate) to permit you to take leave in blocks of one day rather than one week.

Requesting Parental Leave

If you wish to take Parental Leave, you must give a minimum notice period of 21 days before the leave is due to start and you must give notice of the exact day on which you wish leave to start and end. In the case of fathers who want to take parental leave straight after a baby is born, or prospective adoptive parents who want to take parental leave straight after a child is placed with them for adoption, 21 days' notice of the expected week of childbirth or the expected week of adoption must be given.

When St Peter's Church receives notice of intention to take parental leave, we may ask for evidence of eligibility as set out above.

There may be occasions when, due to Church requirements, St Peter's Church are not able to grant the leave and need to ask you to postpone a period of parental leave. Examples of occasions we may need to postpone your leave include:

- Taking leave during a peak period
- A number of employees on leave at the same time
- You are working on a time critical project
- We are not able to find cover

Leave will not be postponed where it is to be taken on the birth of a child or on the placement of a child for adoption. Where leave is to be postponed, we will discuss the reasons for the postponement with you and confirm in writing the newly agreed dates of leave. Leave will not be postponed for a period longer than six months from the start date of the leave originally requested or will not postpone parental leave if the postponement would result in the leave being taken after the child's 18th birthday.

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If we are not able to approve your request or need to postpone it, we will endeavour to confirm this in writing no later than 7 days after the application for the parental leave.

Before taking parental leave

Shortly after we have received a notification from you that you wish to take parental leave, a meeting will be arranged between you and your Line Manager. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss:

- your entitlement to parental leave
- the requirements to give appropriate notice
- arrangements to cover your duties in your absence
- your right to return to work
- opportunities for flexible working
- the nature of any appropriate contact during parental leave
- the fact that parental leave is unpaid.

During parental leave

Your normal terms and conditions will apply during parental leave except for in relation to pay.

We will make arrangements for your duties to be covered for the duration of your leave. We would like to be able to keep you up to date with any developments at work that may affect you or any social events that occur and will agree this with you prior to any leave.

Returning to work

If you are returning after an isolated period of parental leave lasting four weeks or less, or after a period of parental leave lasting four weeks or less which consecutively followed another period of statutory leave which did not include any period of additional maternity leave, or additional adoption leave, you are entitled to return to the job in which you were employed to do before the absence.

If you are returning to work after a period of parental leave lasting more than four weeks, or after a period of parental leave lasting four weeks or less, which did consecutively follow a period of additional maternity leave or additional adoption leave, you are entitled to return from leave to the job in which you were employed

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before the absence or, if that is not reasonably practicable, to another job which is both suitable and appropriate for him/her in the circumstances.

Return to the same job will mean that seniority, pension rights and similar rights are not affected. Terms and conditions will not be less favourable than those which would have been applied if you had not been absent.

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Time off for Dependants Policy and Procedure

Policy & Purpose

St Peter's Church acknowledges the right for you to take a reasonable amount of time off work to deal with emergencies involving your dependants. We understand that emergencies and unforeseen matters arise involving dependants and this policy sets out St Peter's Church stance on allowing you to take time off for this purpose whilst ensuring the organisation is not unduly impacted.

The term 'dependent' is prescribed in law as:

- a spouse/civil partner
- child
- parent
- person who lives in the same household but is not a tenant, lodger, boarder or employee.
- those who reasonably rely on you for the provision of care or for assistance if they fall ill. This could be, for example, an elderly neighbour.

The policy also sets out areas of flexibility that we may adopt to support employees.

Employees will not be subject to detriment for taking time off for dependants.

Entitlement

You are entitled to take a reasonable amount of unpaid time off to act in relation to unforeseen events involving a dependant. It is not possible to define what a reasonable amount of time is because this will depend on the specific circumstances in question. The same event may require varying amounts of time off for different people, or even the same person if it happens more than once on different occasions.

The right to time off extends only to that needed to make arrangements in the event of an emergency. Therefore, it is anticipated that no more than one or two days will be appropriate on each occasion. Arrangements to cover any time off needed in excess of this as a result of an emergency will need to be discussed with your line manager.

Events covered by this policy.

An unforeseen emergency, for the purposes of this policy, can cover various events in your life, for example:

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- to help when a dependant falls ill, gives birth or is injured or assaulted (including mental illness or injury)
- to make arrangements for the provision of care for a dependent who is elderly, ill or injured
- to take a dependant to hospital
- when a dependant dies
- to cope with the unexpected breakdown of arrangements for caring for a dependent
- to deal with an incident involving a child of the employee which occurs unexpectedly during school hours or in circumstances where the school has responsibility for the child.

Time off for emergencies not involving a dependant e.g. a flood at home, is not covered by this policy.

Notification

You must contact you line manager, as soon as is reasonably practicable, to inform them of your need to take time off for dependants. If you are working at the time the need arises, you must make reasonable efforts to inform your line manager in person of the need to finish work. If your line manager cannot be located, you should contact a Trustee. If you are out of work when the need to take time off arises, you should notify your line manager by telephone or, in exceptional circumstances where a telephone call is not appropriate, by text or email.

The reason for your absence/the need to leave and the expected duration must be provided. Failure to do this may result in disciplinary action being taken against you.

Your line manager may ask you for evidence of the need to take time off.

Employees who use time off for dependants for reasons other than that for which the statutory right is intended may be subject to disciplinary proceedings.

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Parental Bereavement Leave Policy and Procedure

Policy & Purpose

We hope that none of our team ever needs to utilize this policy. However, in the sad event that it is needed, you are entitled to 2 weeks Parental Bereavement Leave for a child under the age of 18, including still birth after 24 weeks of pregnancy.

Eligibility

Parental bereavement leave is available from day one of employment.

It is available to you following the loss of a child under the age of 18.

This right applies to parents, adoptive or prospective adopter, intended parents under surrogacy and someone looking after the child in their own home for the last 4 weeks, plus their partners - but not a paid carer.

In addition, parents who suffer a stillbirth after 24 weeks of pregnancy are entitled to take parental bereavement leave.

Length of leave and how it may be taken

A total of two weeks may be taken as parental bereavement leave and you may choose to take leave as a single block of one or two weeks, or two separate blocks of one week.

Leave can be taken at any time within 56 weeks of the bereavement and may start on any day of the week.

If you have suffered a stillbirth after 24 weeks of pregnancy, you are still entitled to take your full entitlement to maternity and paternity leave, provided you were eligible to take maternity or paternity leave in the first place, in addition to parental bereavement leave. Parental bereavement leave cannot be taken at the same time as maternity or paternity leave.

Where more than one child dies or is stillborn, you are entitled to two weeks of parental bereavement leave in relation to each child.

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Letting us know

We understand that this will be such a difficult time for you and that letting us know might not be a priority at first. We want to support you as much as possible during this time.

If leave is to be taken within the first 56 days of the bereavement, you don't need to give us notice but we ask you to please let your Line Manager know either on the day you are due to start work or as soon as you are reasonably able to. And also to let us know when the leave will start and whether you will be taking one or two weeks.

If leave to be taken later than the first 56 days since the bereavement, we ask you to provide one week's advance notice of taking parental bereavement leave to your Line Manager to let us know when the leave will start and whether you will be taking one or two weeks.

You can cancel a period of leave that you have already told us about, if the period of leave has not already started. If you wish to cancel a period of leave which was to begin within the first 56 days of the bereavement, you can cancel it by letting us know by your normal start time on the day that leave was originally due to start.

To cancel leave which was to begin later than 56 days after the bereavement, you should let us know no later than one week prior to the intended start date.

You can also change the start date of leave by following the above process.

Payment during leave

You will qualify for statutory parental bereavement pay during leave if you meet the following criteria:

- You have been continuously employed with us for at least 26 weeks by the week prior to the week in which the child has passed away
- Your normal average weekly earnings are not less than the lower earnings limit relevant for national insurance purposes
- You are still employed by us on the date the child has passed away.

If you meet the above criteria you are entitled to a payment at the rate set by the Government at the time the leave is taken or 90% of your normal earnings whichever is less. This period of paid leave may be extended at the Church's discretion.

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In order to receive statutory parental bereavement pay, you must provide us with notice of this and the following information within 28 days, or as soon as is reasonably practicable, of the first day of parental bereavement leave:

- The child's name
- The date of the bereavement or stillbirth

We will then confirm your eligibility.

Terms and conditions during leave

During parental bereavement leave, you remain entitled to receive your normal contractual terms and conditions of employment that you would have received had you not taken this leave, with the exception of pay. This will include contractual benefits, subject to the terms of these benefits.

Right to return

Upon your return to work, you are entitled to return to the same job, with the same terms and conditions, in which you were employed before your absence unless:

- the period of leave you have taken is more than 26 weeks when added to any other period of statutory leave including maternity, paternity, adoption leave etc in relation to the same child and
- it is not reasonably practicable for you to return to the same job.

On your first day back to work, your Line Manager will set time aside to hold an informal meeting with you to discuss any arrangements regarding your return to work and any additional support we may be able to offer you.

Counselling

Care for the Family, along with other organisations and charities, offer support and advice, as well as a befriending service, to parents who have lost a child. We encourage you to look at their website if you feel you would like to talk to someone about your loss:

<https://www.careforthefamily.org.uk/family-life/bereavement-support/bereaved-parent-support>