

HR12 – Parental Leave Policy

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Owner:	Michael Catlin	Job Title:	Head of People & OD
To be issued to:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Board of Management <input type="checkbox"/> All Staff <input type="checkbox"/> ET/SLT <input type="checkbox"/> Head Office Managers <input type="checkbox"/> Head Office Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Finance <input type="checkbox"/> Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Asset <input type="checkbox"/> ICT		<input type="checkbox"/> OD <input type="checkbox"/> Compliance <input type="checkbox"/> All Care & Support <input type="checkbox"/> C&S Managers (RM, OM, CSM) <input type="checkbox"/> C&S Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Contractors <input type="checkbox"/> Agency Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Unite the Union <input type="checkbox"/> Employee Voices Group <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>Only when relevant</u>	
Method of Delivery:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Learn Pro <input type="checkbox"/> Board Portal <input type="checkbox"/> Line Manager to Share (e.g. Agencies)		<input type="checkbox"/> Policy Owner to Notify (e.g. Contractors) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>Only when relevant</u>	
Stakeholder Consultation Completed			
<input type="checkbox"/> Board of Management <input type="checkbox"/> All Staff <input type="checkbox"/> ET/SLT <input type="checkbox"/> Head Office Managers <input type="checkbox"/> Head Office Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Finance <input type="checkbox"/> Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Asset <input type="checkbox"/> ICT		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OD <input type="checkbox"/> Compliance <input type="checkbox"/> All Care & Support <input type="checkbox"/> C&S Managers (RM, OM, CSM) <input type="checkbox"/> C&S Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Contractors <input type="checkbox"/> Agency Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unite the Union <input type="checkbox"/> Employee Voices Group <input type="checkbox"/> Other:	

Version Control

Date	Owner	Version	Reason for Change
Feb 2024	Michael Catlin	1	Cyclical Review

Summary of Changes

Section	Change
1.0	Updated to reflect current values.
2.0	Updated to include all relevant legislation i.e. Maternity and Parental Leave Act
7.1	Updated to reflect additional flexibility, in line with the legislation wording.
7.4	Expanded wording scope to include Head Office staff.
Appendix	Updated wording to reflect policy updates.

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1.0 Ark's Values

Arks values are true to the core purpose of the organisation and the services we deliver. They determine our behaviours towards one another and what we should expect in our relationships with one another. Working within the following values will guide and help us deliver our vision and mission of Ark being an organisation where everyone is equal:

Trust

We have confidence in our people to deliver excellent services and trust in them to do so. We will develop trusting and honest relationships and our customers will feel assured that they can rely on us to deliver.

Respect

We treat everyone fairly and we listen. We are respectful of each person with whom we come into contact and expect our people to respond professionally and treat others as they would wish to be treated.

Understanding

We will operate with empathy and compassion and approach each situation with an open mind. We will question and challenge to ensure we achieve the right outcomes for customers and our people.

Equality

We believe everyone is equal and expect our people to create positive experiences where everyone feels valued and included.

Integrity

We will do the right thing and take responsibility for our actions. We will work together to uphold the highest standards of behaviour and practice.

2.0 Purpose

Ark recognises that parents have a joint responsibility for the care and upbringing of their children and that work, and parenthood can create conflicting pressures. Parents need time with their children and time to create a supportive home in which their children can thrive. This policy encourages a culture of flexible working to assist staff to balance family and work commitments.

3.0 Policy Statement

This policy informs Ark employees who are parents of their rights and responsibilities in relation to parental leave. Parental leave is expressly for the purpose of allowing parents to spend quality time with their children and assist in balancing this with work commitments.

4.0 Scope

This policy applies to all Ark employees who have qualifying caring responsibilities for children under the age of 18.

5.0 Legal/Regulatory Framework

The relevant legislation relating to parental leave and pay is:

- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Employment Relations Act 1999
- Maternity and Parental Leave etc. Regulations 1999
- Employment Act 2002
- Work and Families Act 2006
- Children and Families Act 2014

6.0 Responsibilities

6.1 Board of Management

Ark's Board of Management is responsible for consideration and approval of this policy.

6.2 Executive Team

Ark's Executive Team is responsible for ensuring that this policy is reviewed in accordance with Ark's schedule for review of policies, or sooner if required.

6.3 Operational Management Team

Ark's Operational Management Team is responsible for review of the policy, and for ensuring that relevant measures are put in place to implement its requirements.

6.4 Managers

Ark Managers are responsible for the effective implementation of this policy when supporting employees who wish to use parental leave.

6.5 All Staff

Ark employees who have qualifying caring responsibilities for a child under the age of 18, and, who wish to use parental leave are required to familiarise themselves with this policy to ensure they understand what their entitlement to parental leave is and to ensure they comply with the requirements as laid out within this policy.

7.0 Parental Leave

Parental leave is unpaid time off that can be used to support staff who have caring responsibilities for children under the age of 18.

7.1 Entitlement

Employees can take up to 18 weeks unpaid parental leave for each child until the child's 18th birthday. A maximum of 4 weeks may be taken in any 1 year and these must usually be taken in blocks of one week. Where the child is disabled, parental leave may be taken in individual days.

7.2 Eligibility

You are eligible for parental leave if you meet the following criteria:

- At the time of the leave, you have, or expect to have, formal parental responsibility for the child;
- You are using the leave to care for a child.
- You have one year's continuous service with us at the date you wish your leave to start.
- The child is under the age of 18 during the period of leave.
- You provide the correct notification as set out in this policy and you comply with any request to produce evidence of your entitlement to parental leave.

7.3 Requesting Parental Leave

When requesting parental leave you must give us at least 21 days written notice of the date on which you wish parental leave to start and must specify an end date. The form in appendix 1 must be used to request this.

7.4 Postponement

If the department/service would be overly disrupted, then Ark may postpone a period of parental leave and work with you to agree a mutually agreeable date within 6 months of the original date requested.

Parental leave that has been requested immediately after childbirth or placement for adoption will not be postponed.

7.5 Return to Work

If you take a period of leave lasting 4 weeks or less, you will return to the same job.

Where the leave is more than 4 weeks (because it followed on from other statutory leave such as additional maternity or additional adoption leave) you will be entitled to return to

the same job or, where that is not reasonably practicable, a similar job which is suitable and appropriate for you in the circumstances.

7.6 Terms and Conditions

During parental leave you will not be eligible to receive pay or other benefits however you must comply with all other terms and conditions of employment.

As parental leave is unpaid this may impact on your pension contributions. Please speak with the payroll team for further information on this.

8.0 Learning & Development Requirements

No learning & development requirements have been identified in relation to this policy.

9.0 Related Policies & Procedures

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- HR23 Adoption Policy
- HR 25 Flexible Working Policy
- HR 25a Flexible Working Procedure

10.0 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

No potential equalities issues have been identified in relation to the development of this policy, and consequently an EIA has not been completed.

11.0 Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)

No potential data protection issues have been identified in relation to the development of this policy, and consequently an DPIA has not been completed.

12.0 Stakeholder Consultation

In developing this policy, the following groups were consulted:

- Ark Board of Management.
- Ark Executive Team.
- Ark Operational Management Team.
- Unite the Union.
- Ark Policy and Procedure Review Group.

13.0 Monitoring and Review

13.1 Monitoring

Ark's Executive and Operational Management Team will monitor implementation of this policy on an ongoing basis.

13.2 Review

This policy will be reviewed within 5 years from the date of approval by our Board of Management, in accordance with Ark's policy review framework.

Appendix 1

Application for Parental Leave

Employee Name:

Employee Number:

My first day of parental leave will be:	
My last day of parental leave will be:	
I confirm I have given 21 days' notice to take a period of parental leave.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Please list all previous periods of parental leave for this child:	
I confirm that I am the child's natural or adopted parent or have parental responsibility.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
I declare that I will be taking time off work to look after or decide for the good of the child.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Line Manager	
I can confirm I have agreed the period of leave requested above.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
I can confirm I have postponed the period of leave requested above:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If postponed, please state the reason:	
The dates of the postponed leave are as follows:	Start Date: End Date:

Employee Signature:	Date:	
Line Manager Signature:	Date:	