We will always endeavour to support employees with compassion and in practical as well as pastoral ways.

# **Caring for dependants**

All employees have a legal right to leave without pay, should any necessary action be required in relation to a dependent. “Dependent” is defined as spouse/civil partner, child, parent, person who lives in the same household but is not a tenant, lodger, boarder or employee and 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.

A reasonable amount of time off without pay will be allowed where there is an unexpected interruption in normal care arrangement for a dependent; annual leave may also be used. The purpose of the time off is to enable alternative arrangements to be set up, with the normal expectation that employees will return to work on the next working day. Where an employee is called to deal with an incident involving a child for whom they are parent or legal guardian at a time when the child is normally at school, a reasonable amount of time off without pay will be allowed, annual leave may also be used. The normal expectation will be that the employee will return to work on the next working day.

In emergency situations relating to the immediate family (spouse/partner, children, parents, parents-in-law), informal arrangements will be made to allow employees to take compassionate leave to enable them to cope with immediate practical difficulties and to set up any arrangements that might need to be made.

# **Other domestic emergencies**

Generally, it is expected that staff make their own arrangements to meet day-to-day domestic problems that may arise. The expectation will normally be for this to be unpaid or for annual leave to be taken, however there will be more serious occasions that cannot be predicted which may leave employees in need of more time or assistance. In these cases employees should speak to a [manager/insert job title] who may exercise discretion as to whether limited time off with pay might be appropriate. These provisions are available to all staff, regardless of length of service.

Requests for compassionate or dependants’ leave will not be unreasonably refused and may be able to be accommodated in the immediate/short term within the Flexible Working policy provisions. For bereavement leave and parental leave please refer to relevant policies.

# **Sudden severe illness**

Where an immediate dependant must attend hospital unexpectedly or requires care at home, a reasonable amount of unpaid leave will be given to enable alternative arrangements to be managed; annual leave may also be used.

# **Consultant, medical and dental appointments**

It is expected that all medical and dental appointments will be made outside of normal working hours. It is recognised that employees should be given reasonable time off to attend NHS/Consultant appointments that cannot generally be easily arranged or changed; however, it is expected that the time taken will be made up.

# **Other arrangements**

In addition to the provisions above, line managers will try to provide as much flexibility as is reasonable where individuals are dealing with particularly difficult domestic circumstances. For example, compassionate leave may be supplemented by some unpaid or annual leave, or an extended period of unpaid leave. Work patterns may also be amended temporarily to assist the individual to meet such responsibilities.

**Procedures for taking leave**

The employee must inform their line manager of their need to take leave at the earliest opportunity, giving notice wherever possible. The reason for absence and the likely duration should also be provided. The employee should contact their line manager again if the absence is likely to continue beyond their first day.