



## Shetland Islands Council—Education Service

### Request for Leave of Absence

*Form SAL 5/A*

### Guidelines for Head Teachers

As the senior manager in the school and a Budget Responsible Officer (BRO) of the council you have a duty to ensure that resources allocated to you are used appropriately.

You are also responsible for the learning and teaching that takes place in your school and must “champion” the pupils’ experience in all classes. Under De-veloped School Management (DSM) the decision-making on granting leave of ab-sence rests with you up to a certain level thereafter the Head of Education can grant additional days. These guidelines are designed to assist you in making the correct decisions.

#### Form SAL 5/A

This form must be used by all staff in your school requesting leave of absence. The front page is completed by the person requesting leave and submitted to you for approval. Please note that itinerant teachers and instructors are required to receive permission from the “base” school head teacher and agree the proce-dure to inform all schools affected.

#### Reasons for Absence Request

**Compassionate Leave** The purpose of a Compassionate Leave Policy is to have a facility for recognising and dealing with exceptional circumstances where special leave may be required, often at short notice, and where the annual leave entitlement of the individual concerned may be inadequate or inappropriate to the circumstances. Staff may apply for Compassionate Leave if they need to be absent from work in circumstances not covered by the provisions for sick leave, annual leave, paternity or maternity leave. Compassionate leave is not an entitlement but applications should be sympathetically considered in the light of individual circumstances. For the purposes of the Compassionate leave policy, a year will be a calendar year, running from 1 January to 31 December.

1 Head Teachers should be responsible for deciding on compassionate leave applications for periods of up to FIVE working days or in special cir-cumstances equivalent to FIVE working days, e.g. over a two week period. Teachers will not lose pay for non-working days, (i.e. week-ends and holi-days).

Where, because of special circumstances, more than five days have been requested, Head Teachers should first consult with the Personnel Section before contacting the Head of Education.

Application for compassionate leave should, whenever possible, be made in advance in writing to the Head Teacher. Where a Head Teacher wishes to approve compassionate leave greater than these provisions such leave shall be unpaid unless otherwise authorised by the Head of Education in consultation with the Personnel Section.

In all cases the Head of Education may request supporting evidence. If not forthcoming, this may be regarded as sufficient reason to decline the compassionate leave request. The Head of Education is advised to consult the Personnel Department before refusing any application for compassionate leave.

### ***Categories for Approval***

#### Illness of a Partner, Relative or Dependant

Compassionate leave of up to five days should be granted to help staff cope with the illness of a partner, close relative or dependant. Compassionate leave should be allowed in order to deal with the initial emergency but not for providing long-term nursing care. If leave is required to attend someone who is seriously ill either at home or in hospital, supporting medical evidence (if obtainable) should be produced as soon as practicable.

Where longer-term nursing is required, compassionate leave with pay may be extended by up to a further 5 days leave to enable staff to make suitable arrangements.

#### Partner, Relative or Dependant in Hospital

Although there may be exceptional cases, compassionate leave is not normally intended to cover cases where a partner, relative or dependant is in hospital. Special consideration should however be given to an application where, for example:

- (a) A young child is admitted to hospital, parental presence is called for and assistance is required with other family members.
- (b) In cases involving critical or terminal illness.

#### Care of a Partner, Relative or Dependant on Discharge from Hospital

Compassionate leave may be granted to allow staff to look after a partner, close relative or dependant to allow after-care immediately following discharge from hospital. This should be to allow staff to make arrangements for more permanent after-care.

## Bereavement

Applications for compassionate leave with pay on bereavement, should be dealt with promptly and sympathetically and statements should be accepted without verification at this distressing time.

(a) Staff may be granted up to 5 days leave (No less than 2 days leave may be granted if requested) for the death of:

- (i) A spouse/partner with whom the member of staff lives.
- (ii) A father, mother, brother, sister or child.
- (iii) A grand-parent, stepfather, stepmother, stepbrother, stepsister or stepchild.
- (iv) A father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law or daughter-in-law.
- (v) A more distant relative provided that:
  - the person concerned acts as the executor of the estate; or
  - the deceased normally resided with them; or
  - there is no one else who could reasonably be expected to take charge of the funeral arrangements.

(b) In cases of exceptional hardship, for example, where long distances (out with Shetland) or difficult journeys are involved, up to two additional days may be granted.

(c) In other circumstances up to 1 day's leave to attend the funeral of more distant relative/friend/or work colleague may be allowed. NB: where the person is attending the funeral on behalf of the Council/Department, as an official duty, then compassionate leave procedures are not appropriate.

## 2. ***Other Leave with Pay***

You have to use your professional judgement here. Leave with pay must demonstrate a benefit to the education service or the council in general. Possible examples: involvement in sport at international level; membership of national committee of a national organisation; Children's Panel activities; Scottish Executive working group, time off to attend non-regular forces' Training camps. (This list is not exhaustive and is just provided as an indication of the types of leave that may be requested).

Note that attendance at Trade Union conferences for elected representatives and jury service are statutory and not discretionary

## 3. ***Other Leave without Pay***

You will have to use your professional judgement and discretion here— possible examples: own/family wedding; fishing boat launching/naming ceremony; participation in a commercial event.