(LOCAL AUTHORITY) - FOSTER CARE LEAVE POLICY

(Local Authority name) values the contribution to the community made by our Foster Carers and the commitment of staff who provide foster care for children. Foster Care Leave is paid time off to help you if you are applying or training to be a Foster Carer and when you are an approved Foster Carer in order to meet the needs of a foster child in your care. Wakefield Council has a commitment to the promotion of Foster Carers and the valuable role they play in supporting vulnerable children.

Foster Care Leave is available for fostering children through the Local Authority or other recognised fostering agencies and normally does not apply to the short or long term care of children who are family members. However, Foster Care Leave may also be available to members of staff where children of very close relatives would otherwise have to be fostered or go into Local Authority care for a period of not normally less than 6 months.

This policy offers our employees up to a maximum of 20 days paid Foster Care Leave in a 12 month period. The maximum entitlement will be granted only in exceptional circumstances where an employee has, applied to be a Foster Carer, received training and had a child permanently with them, all within 12 months. Typically, it is expected that an employee could apply for up to 10 days paid leave within a Leave year when being placed with a child.

Fostering Leave can include:

* Up to 5 days leave during their assessment for approval in becoming a Foster Carer.
* An additional 5 days leave during the approval process or when they are caring for a foster child, e.g. for meetings, training or unforeseen emergencies relating to their fostering role, i.e. to accommodate an emergency placement.
* Up to 10 days leave at the start of a planned permanent placement.

This leave can be taken as single days, a block or in hours.

If you require Leave for Foster Care, applications should be made using the Special Leave Application Process and Procedures. You will also be required to provide relevant documentation in evidence of the arrangement.