

## KEEPING IN TOUCH DAYS

### Operational Arrangements for Teachers and Associated Professionals

#### Background

The provisions for maternity and adoption leave and pay for teachers and associated professionals are set out in the SNCT Handbook of Conditions of Service (Part 2: Section 7: Family Leave).

Within that section, the provisions dealing with Keeping in Touch (KIT) Days are as follows:

“During both Maternity Leave and Adoption Leave the employee is allowed up to ten days at work with normal pay as Keeping in Touch Days, without bringing the Maternity Leave or Adoption Leave to an end. Normal pay will be an amount inclusive of Statutory Maternity Pay, Statutory Adoption Pay or Maternity Allowance, as appropriate. These days do not have to be consecutive and can be used for training or any other activity which enables the employee to keep in touch with the place of employment. Keeping in Touch Days can only be taken following agreement between the employer and employee on both the activity and timing.”

The following sections set out in more detail the operational arrangements to be applied for maintaining contact and utilising Keeping in Touch days during maternity and adoption leave for teachers and associated professionals employed by Dundee City Council.

#### Maintaining Contact

There is benefit for both employer and employee in maintaining contact during periods of maternity or adoption leave. Prior to the commencement of leave a meeting should be arranged between employer and employee (typically teacher and HT) to discuss how contact should be maintained. This should result in a clear understanding of the nature and occasions/frequency of contact. Where employees have home access to e-mails this might be the most mutually convenient means of communication. Otherwise, contact by letter or phone should be agreed.

Matters on which information should be communicated include the following:

- Vacancies and promotion opportunities, including secondments and acting appointments;
- In-service and other CPD opportunities;
- Prospective or actual changes in the workplace or in the Council more generally which may have an impact on the employee;
- School calendar of events, when available.

#### Keeping in Touch Days

KIT days are formal arrangements to allow employees to undertake work of some kind during maternity or adoption leave. The foremost purpose is to keep the employee in touch with what is happening in the workplace. While a KIT day could simply be used for the person to undertake their normal work, it is considered that the

preferred and most purposeful use will be for attending training activities or staff/team meetings.

The following are recommended as examples of good practice in this regard:

- Attending INSET days as set out in the school calendar;
- Team teaching with the teacher covering the leave, particularly in the weeks preceding the date of return;
- Attending CPD events/activities, including participating in annual review discussions;
- Attending staff, departmental or team meetings;
- Work shadowing a colleague or liaison with a colleague (eg for teaching a new course or a new stage after return).

Where an employee holds a promoted post it is not recommended that the employee should resume those duties in a KIT day nor break the contract of the employee who is undertaking the post of responsibility. However, work shadowing or liaison as described above would be considered particularly useful in these circumstances.

The provisions allow for up to 10 KIT days in any period of maternity or adoption leave. A provisional plan of the number of days and the activities to be undertaken should be discussed and agreed between the employer and employee (again, typically teacher and HT) taking account of the views of both parties. Where an employee works for part of a day that will nevertheless be counted as a KIT day (ie as one of the available ten days). It is acknowledged that circumstances may change, as may knowledge of suitable dates/activities, and it will be open to both parties to review arrangements in light of such developments. The agreement reached on the intended utilisation of KIT days should be recorded and retained by both parties.

It should be noted that an employee cannot be required to take up the use of KIT days.

It should also be noted that reasonable contact during leave to discuss such issues as the return to work would not constitute “work” and would not count towards the 10 days.

### **Payment for KIT days**

An employee undertaking KIT days will be paid normal contractual pay, which will be an amount inclusive of Statutory Maternity Pay, Statutory Adoption Pay or Maternity Allowance, where these are still being paid at the time of the KIT day being worked. The payment will be on a whole day basis or an hourly rate basis according to whether attendance at work is for a whole or part day. Claims for payment should be made on the appropriate form available from the school office or Education Department.