A group of people playing with toys

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PARISH NAME

Adoption Pack

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# Adoption leave information

Congratulations on your pending adoption. We wish you and your family all of God’s blessings through this special time!

Detailed below is information on things which you may find helpful before and during your adoption leave.

## Adoption Policies

In summary, the main adopter is entitled to 52 weeks adoption leave, regardless of how long they have worked for us. This can be from the day that the child starts to live with you, or up to 14 days before that. The secondary adopter can take paternity leave for 2 weeks, in line with our Paternity leave policy, which is enclosed with this pack.

Enclosed with this pack is the ‘Adoption leave Policy’ which goes into more detail about your adoption and will support you in making decisions about how and when you take your leave. The “Shared Parental Leave - Adoption” Policy has also been enclosed should you decide that you and your partner will share the adoption leave period. There are other policies attached which we will go into more detail further down this pack.

## Adoption Appointments

If you are the main adopter, you are entitled to paid time off for up to 5 adoption appointments. If you are the secondary adopter, you are entitled to unpaid time off for 2 appointments. You should let your line manager know the dates and times of your appointments, and if requested, provide proof such as an appointment letter or card.

## Documentation and Dates of leave

You should let us know as soon as possible if you are likely to be matched with a child for adoption. This will give us time to prepare for your adoption leave. You must tell us within 7 days of being matched with a child where possible including the date that you wish to start your adoption leave. You will also need to provide us a copy of the matching certificate or a letter from the adoption agency. This must be a UK agency.

Your HR representative will then write to you to confirm the details that you have given, and the date at which you are due to return from adoption leave. This will automatically be assumed to be 52 weeks, however if you wish to return earlier than this, you need to give 8 weeks’ notice of your revised return date.

## Payments

Assuming that you meet the relevant criteria to qualify for Statutory adoption pay (see the Adoption policy for the full criteria), then you will be entitled to 6 weeks Statutory adoption pay (SAP) at 90% of your earnings, and 33 weeks at the SAP rate set by the government. If your earnings are below the SAP rate, then you will receive 90% of this for the full 39 weeks. The remaining 13 weeks are unpaid.

Employees of PARISH NAME will receive enhanced adoption pay for the first 26 weeks of their maternity leave. In essence, your SAP will be ‘topped up’ for this period so that you continue to receive the same pay as before you started adoption leave.

Should you be entitled to a pay rise while you are still on adoption leave, this will be processed as normal.

If you decide not to return back to work after adoption leave, we reserve the right to ask you to return the enhanced pay element of your adoption pay. However, if you return to work for at least 3 months, then you will not be asked to pay this back.

If you do not meet the criteria to receive statutory adoption pay or occupational adoption pay, we will give you an SAP1 form which you can take to your local council to see if they can give you some financial support. Please note you will still be entitled to a year of adoption leave.

## Pension

While you are on adoption leave, we will continue to pay your employer pension contributions on your normal salary for the first 26 weeks of your leave. We will then make continue to make pension contributions based upon your normal pay for the next 13 weeks during your additional adoption pay period, and none for the final 13 weeks which is unpaid. If you are currently paying into your pension through your pay, you can decide whether to stop this temporarily or continue making payments. These deductions will be calculated on your actual gross pay each month. However, you should be aware that during the unpaid element of adoption leave, you will need to make arrangements with Finance in regard to whether you temporarily pause them or how you make can make these payments directly to your pension.

## Annual Leave Accrual

While you are on adoption leave, you will continue to accrue annual leave as normal. This is inclusive of any bank holiday accruals. We do not make payment for annual leave, so you will be advised to use up your annual leave for the current year, prior to your adoption leave. Then when you return from leave, any annual leave that you have accrued so far will need to be discussed with your line manager, so you can come to an agreement on how you will take this leave. Particularly if you return in September for example, you may wish to take most of your annual leave directly after adoption leave and return to work after this. You should come to an agreement with your line manager in regard to how you do this.

## Practical Advice and Support

### Freebies

If you are adopting a baby, there are various websites where you can get freebies. Below are just a handful, but a google search will reveal many more:

* + [Free Baby Stuff | Free Baby Samples | Born Gifted](https://www.borngifted.co.uk/shop/resource/Free-Baby-Stuff)
  + [Free Baby Samples & Baby Stuff | Magic Freebies (magicfreebiesuk.co.uk)](https://www.magicfreebiesuk.co.uk/free-stuff/s/free-baby-samples-and-baby-stuff)
  + [Get the Emma's Diary FREE gift packs full of free baby stuff | Emma's Diary (emmasdiary.co.uk)](https://www.emmasdiary.co.uk/about-us/gift-packs)
  + [Registration | Nestlé SMA (smababy.co.uk)](https://babyclub.smababy.co.uk/registration?&PPC&gad_source=1&gclid=EAIaIQobChMI8cSE7puaiAMVL5JQBh2o-DbPEAMYASAAEgKfgPD_BwE&gclsrc=aw.ds)
  + [Baby Freebies: All the Free Baby Stuff You Can Claim in the UK (couponqueen.co.uk)](https://couponqueen.co.uk/baby-freebies/)

### How to apply for child benefit

You can claim child benefit as soon as your child comes to live with you. You do not need to wait until they are officially adopted. Child Benefit is paid at the higher rate for your first child, and then at the lower rate for any additional children. This is paid until the child is 16 (or under 20 but still in approved education). The person who claims the child benefit, whether it is you or your partner, will receive credits towards their state pension if they are not working. There is a financial cap where the eligibility rules of child benefit change. To find out more about child benefit and how to apply click this link [Child Benefit: How it works - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/child-benefit)

# During Adoption Leave

Prior to starting adoption leave, you and your line manager should agree how and when you will keep in touch during your leave. This will just be an informal agreement between you both to check on your wellbeing and keep you up to date on any changes that have happened at work while you are off. You may prefer not to be contacted while you are on adoption leave, and that is also fine.

## Keeping in Touch (KIT) days

You are allowed to work up to 10 KIT days during your adoption leave. You do not have to, and equally we do not have to provide them. This will be for you and your line manager to discuss. These can be training days, or just days that you want to meet your line manager to discuss your return to work etc.

If you and your partner decide to have shared parental leave, then you will be allowed 20 KIT days between you, to distribute how you wish.

You will be paid your normal rate of pay if you work a KIT Day. If you work a KIT Day during the period of your leave that is already at full pay, then you will not receive an additional day’s pay on top of that, as you cannot earn more than usual whilst on adoption leave. If you decide to work your KIT Day during the period which is at SAP rate, then you will receive the difference between a normal day’s pay and the SAP rate, to give your full daily rate. If you are in your unpaid adoption leave period, then you will receive full pay for each KIT Day that you work. Alternatively, you could agree with your line manager to bank these days as “lieu” time, to be used when you completely return from adoption leave.

## Support

Postpartum depression can also happen when you are adopting a child. It's a common problem, affecting more than 1 in every 10 women. It can also affect partners. It's important to get help as soon as possible if you think you might be depressed, as your symptoms could last for months or get worse and have a significant impact on you, your baby/ child and your family. Your first step is to speak to your GP who will be able to support you with medication or therapy. You should also ensure that you let your family know so that they can provide support to you. To understand more about postpartum depression, the symptoms and how to get help please visit this website: [Postpartum Depression in Adoptive Parents - Post-Adoption Depression](https://www.postpartumdepression.org/postpartum-depression/adoption/)

You also have the option of using Health Assured’s services for support with counselling, money issues, health checks, wellbeing resources and videos.

# At the end of Adoption leave

## Return to work process

You may decide to take the full 52 weeks adoption leave that you are entitled to.

However, you may decide that you wish to return earlier. If so, then you must give us 8 weeks’ notice, in writing, of your intention to return to work earlier than your original adoption leave end date.

Around 4 weeks before your return to work, your line manager will organise a meeting with you to discuss the details of your return. You may wish to use a KIT Day for this.

You may wish to return on a phased return, look at possible flexible working options, or may just wish to discuss how the first few weeks of your return will look.

You may also wish to discuss practical arrangements such as how you will manage childcare around your working hours.

## What job you will return to

If you return to work prior to your 26th week of adoption leave, then you are entitled to return to the exact same job that you were doing before you started adoption leave.

If you return after this period, then you are entitled to return to a similar job with a similar status.

In the event that a restructure or redundancies are made during your adoption leave, you will be kept informed of any changes that might affect your role. However, you should bear in mind, that you have more favourable protection from redundancy for 18 months after the adoption. Therefore, if your role is made redundant while you are on adoption leave, you are prioritised for any suitable vacancies that arise.

## Flexible working

We have a flexible working policy which you can refer to for more details. In summary, you are entitled to apply for flexible working from your first day of employment. You can make 2 flexible working requests in one year, which is helpful if your needs change throughout the year.

You will need to complete a form that is available from HR and send it to both HR and your line manager. We must then decide on your application within 8 weeks of receiving this. We will try to do this much more quickly than this for your peace of mind.

In terms of what flexible working “looks like”, it can be whatever you feel would work for you. For example:

* A reduction in hours
* Compressed hours (working your normal hours in 4 days, instead of 5)
* Later start times, or earlier finish times
* A change to your normal working pattern (different hours each day to accommodate childcare arrangements)

You can discuss the options with your line manager and HR before or after putting in your flexible working request.

## Time off for dependants

On page 19 of the staff handbook, there are details about taking time off to care for dependants. If your child is ill or your childcare provider is unable to care for your child on a given day, then you have the option of taking unpaid time off to organise childcare cover for them. We anticipate that this would likely only be for a day at a time. You can agree with your line manager to take this time as annual leave, or TOIL rather than having it unpaid.

## Parental leave

If you need more time off work, then by law you are entitled to 18 weeks unpaid leave per child until their 18th birthday. Leave with a previous employer is counted in this 18-week period. You can only take a maximum of 4 weeks leave per year and can only do this in blocks of 1 week or more. However, if your child is disabled, then you can take this in one day blocks. You will need to give 21 days’ notice of your request to take Parental leave. You can read more about this in our Parental leave policy.

## Carer’s Leave

If your child is disabled, then you are also entitled to 1 week unpaid leave each year to care for them. This can be taken in half day blocks and must be agreed with your line manager. You should give notice to your line manager of your request, equivalent to twice as many days as the period of leave requested or 3 days, whichever is greater. You can read more about this in our Carer’s Leave Policy.

## Childcare

Prior to returning to work, you may be investigating childcare arrangements for your child.

Working parents may be able to get free childcare if the household income is more than £9,518 per year, and less than £100,000 per year.

Subject to eligibility, if your child is:

* 9 months to 2 years old - you may be able to get 15 hours per week of free childcare for 38 weeks of the year. From September 2025 this is increasing to 30 hours per week for 38 weeks of the year. You can spread this out across the full 52 weeks if you use less childcare each week.
* 3 to 4 years old - you may be able to get 30 hours per week of free childcare or early education, subject to eligibility.

To check your eligibility and set up your free childcare click this link and follow the steps provided [Get free childcare if you're working: step by step - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/get-free-childcare-if-youre-working)