



## STAFF DISCRETIONARY LEAVE

### RATIONALE

Staff may request leave, with or without pay, as they are entitled to in their relevant collective agreements (Collective Agreement and Adventist Individual Employment Agreement).

'Staff' refers to Teachers and Support Staff Employees of Waitakere SDA School.

The Staff Leave policy provides guidelines for applying for leave, and for approving leave applications that:

1. Are fair to everyone
2. Ensure that the school remains adequately and appropriately staffed throughout the year
3. Enable the school to meet its Charter obligations and NELP (National Education Learning Priorities) Guidelines.

### GUIDELINES

A staff member applies for leave by submitting the completed Leave Application form to the principal.

Type of leave	Administered by
Leave, with or without pay, for five days or less	Principal.
Other leave, for example, bereavement, sick, parental, etc.	Principal, according to the terms of the employment contract.
Leave, with or without pay, for more than five days but less than one month	Principal, School Board
Leave, with or without pay, for more than one month	School Board
Long term leave (note that long term leave is only available after three years' employment at the school).	School Board
Discretionary leave	Principal, using the criteria listed on the application form.

The Board of Trustees is empowered to make decisions on all staff discretionary leave. Decisions on discretionary leave are to follow agreed conditions in the current employment agreements as negotiated by NZEI or PPTA, the Caretakers and Cleaners Employment agreement, *the Support Staff Collective Agreement* and the relevant provisions of employment legislation.



There are many aspects of discretionary leave, which are outside the stated employment agreements and accordingly the following guidelines are to assist the Board of Trustees and staff in dealing with applications for discretionary leave.

1. The Board wishes:

- a. To consider discretionary leave applications in circumstances which will cause minimum interruption to academic social and physical learning needs of students as stated in the School's Strategic Plan.
  - b. To act as a good employer, abide by employment agreements and endeavour to maintain harmonious employment relations.
2. All applications for discretionary leave of absence other than for periods which in total do not exceed five days in any one school year are to be made in writing to the Presiding member of the School Board through the Principal (or the Teacher in charge in the Principal's absence).
  3. The minimum notice period the School Board must receive of an application for discretionary leave, except in the case of a year's discretionary leave of absence, will be two full calendar months prior to the commencement date of the leave.
  4. The longer the period of notice an applicant is able to give, the greater the opportunity the Board will have to consider arrangements necessary to ensure the children's education needs are met appropriately.
  5. In the case of a year's discretionary leave of absence being sought, the application must be submitted for approval no later than the September Board meeting of the year immediately before the school year for which the leave is sought. Because the Board's primary focus is the best outcome for children a full year's discretionary leave of absence must be the period from January to December.
  6. Each request for discretionary leave will be considered as an individual case, on its own merit. Any decisions so made must not be seen as a precedent for other applications.
  7. Staff must apply in writing in advice. The leader of learning and School Board will consider each request on its own merits and will take into account all factors including those listed below. Of primary concern will be the education of the learners at Waitakere SDA School.

FACTORS

- Reason for leave
- Relevance to learning role
- The potential benefit to learners at Waitakere SDA School
- Length of service of the staff member
- Contribution to the co-curricular and wider life at the school



- Impact on learners to the school
- The school's ability to find suitable cover
- The number of other staff also on leave

#### DISCRETIONARY LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR A PERIOD OF ONE COMPLETE NEW ZEALAND SCHOOL YEAR

The School Board will take account of all circumstances relating to an application for a complete year's discretionary leave of absence including but not limited to the following criteria:

- a) The Applicant having taught and worked at Waitakere SDA School for no fewer than three years.
- b) The Applicant's record of any previous leave having been given and previous professional development having been undertaken.
- c) That granting the discretionary leave will be in the interest of the School and/or the professional development of the Applicant. To this end, a report, detailing the benefits of the leave, will be required in writing by the commencement of the year after the leave.

#### DISCRETIONARY LEAVE OFF ABSENCE FOR PERIODS LESS THAN ONE YEAR (SHORT TERM LEAVE)

Consideration will be given to applications for short-term discretionary leave of absence for purposes such as study, secondment, relieving and representative sports and cultural activity.

The School Board will take account of all circumstances relating to an application for such short-term leave including but not limited to the following criteria:

- a) The Applicant's record of any previous leave having been given and previous professional development having been undertaken.
- b) That granting the discretionary leave will be in the interest of the School and/or the professional development of the Applicant.

#### DISCRETIONARY LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR PERIODS NOT EXCEEDING FIVE DAYS IN TOTAL IN ANY SCHOOL YEAR

The School Board delegates authority to the Principal to consider and where appropriate grant discretionary leave to staff for periods not to exceed five days in any one school year on compassionate grounds. Such applications shall be made to the Principal in writing and advice of the granting of such leave given to the next Board meeting.



OTHER DISCRETIONARY LEAVE

Nothing in this policy limits the facility for Staff to make an application in writing to the Employer for discretionary leave, with or without pay, in any circumstances not specified.

PRINCIPAL

22/2/2023

DATE

PRESIDING MEMBER

DATE

RATIFIED BY BOARD: 22-02-2023

NEXT REVIEW DATE: FEBRUARY 2026



## DISCRETIONARY LEAVE APPLICATION

### APPLICANT INFORMATION

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Last First M.I.*

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### LEAVE REQUEST

Period of Leave Applied For:		
Number of Days Absent:		
Leave Applied for as: (please tick one)	Leave with Pay	Leave Without Pay
Reasons for Leave:		

### DECISION

**(TO BE COMPLETED BY PRINCIPAL OR BOARD CHAIRPERSON)**

Decision Made By:	Principal	Board of Trustees
Leave is:	Accepted	Declined
Grounds for Decision		
Signed:		Date:

*(please check the staff Handbook for guidelines for Discretionary Leave)*