

# **STAFF HANDBOOK FOR CENTRAL TEAM STAFF**

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As part of our focus on diversity and inclusion, BDAT pledges that our policies will seek to promote equality, fairness, and respect for all staff and students. Our policies reflect the BDAT values of inclusion, compassion, aspiration, resilience, and excellence. By working closely with a range of stakeholders, such as our school, union, and HR colleagues, we have ensured that BDAT's policies do not unlawfully discriminate against anybody.

## **Introduction**

This guidance has been produced to provide you with information about some differences in working in the central office rather than in a BDAT academy.

Your basic terms and conditions of employment are in accordance with, and subject to the following:

- Offer letter.
- Contract of Employment.
- Any legislation affecting employment, discrimination, safety, and workplace procedures.
- Rules and regulations as contained in more detailed statements for example, the pension schemes.
- The organisation reserves the right to review, revise, amend or replace the contents of the guidance and introduce new policies from time to time to reflect the changing needs of the business. Following consultation, written notice of any variation will be given.

For details of our full employment policies/procedures please refer to <http://www.bdat-academies.org/bdat-business/bdat-policies/>. Please note the policies and procedures do not form part of your contract of employment and are not intended to be legally binding.

## **Annual Leave and Public Holidays**

For details of your annual and public holiday entitlement please refer to your Contract of Employment.

All annual leave requests should be made in writing to your line manager; staff should then await confirmation before making any firm holiday arrangements. Once confirmation is received from your line manager all employees must complete the standard leave request form, which should be counter-signed by your line manager. Please note that requests by text will not be considered.

Term time only employees, or those with a substantially term time only contract, are expected to take leave during school holiday periods and not seek holiday during term time.

Holidays must be agreed with your line manager as early as possible. Where possible, the Trust will try to accommodate individual preferences for holiday dates, but the needs of the business may have to take precedence, particularly where short or inadequate notice is given.

Holidays will be considered on a first come first served basis. It is expected that a discussion takes place amongst team members with regard to annual leave to be taken before holidays are

confirmed with your line manager. This is to ensure that operational efficiency and staffing levels are maintained throughout the year.

The holiday year runs from 1st September to 31st August. Leave for employees joining after the start of the leave year accrues at the rate of one twelfth of the annual entitlement for each complete calendar month of service. Leave for employees who terminate their employment during the leave year is calculated on the same basis. If, however, the annual leave entitlement has been exceeded, a deduction calculated on the same basis will be deducted from the final salary payment.

Holiday pay in lieu of accrued leave will be paid only on termination of employment and will normally be subject to a maximum of 10 working days. It is our policy to encourage you to take all of your holiday in the current holiday year. Employees may carry forward up to a maximum of five days leave, **with the prior agreement** of their line manager.

It is expected that all year-round staff will take a minimum of 15 days annual leave plus any accrued leave from the previous year by 30 May annually. Exceptionally, should a member of staff have a special occasion and seek to take more than three continuous weeks holiday in the period 1 June – 31 August they should apply to the CEO through their line manager for exceptional consideration as early as possible.

BDAT also recognises the eight statutory Bank Holidays in addition to basic annual leave entitlement, unless already included in the entitlement as per your contract of employment.

Your holiday pay will be at your normal basic rate.

### **Discretionary Purchase of Leave**

The Trust operates a policy of granting all centrally employed employees at least six weeks' (30 days) paid holiday entitlement each year. It is recognised, however, that some employees may wish to take longer or shorter periods of holidays and for this reason the Trust operates a policy of allowing centrally based employees to "buy" or carry over some holiday entitlement, subject to certain conditions.

For employees who do not wish to use all their holiday allocation in one year, the employee is able to carry over up to 5 days holiday to the next year with the prior agreement of their line manager. It is not possible to carry leave over more than 1 year or accumulate more than 5 days. Any additional untaken holiday will be forfeited by the employee.

### **Conditions for buying additional annual leave**

In order to enable central staff to take additional holiday, the Board operates a discretionary annual leave entitlement, where with specific approval and meeting the needs of the company, employees may buy up to 10 additional calendar days per annum.

The conditions for employees to buy holiday are as follows:

- The Trust's holiday year runs from 1<sup>st</sup> September to 31<sup>st</sup> August
- The maximum amount of additional annual leave that any employee may "buy" in any one holiday year is 10 days.
- An employee who wishes to buy holiday entitlement must apply in writing to the Chief Executive Officer through his/her line manager stating the length, dates, and reason for the application. A request may be forwarded by the CEO for consideration by the Trust board.
- Applications for buying additional holiday entitlement must be received no later 30th June in respect of the following holiday year. This is to enable Trustees to consider at the final board meeting of the year.
- The Trust reserves the right to refuse an employee's application to buy or carry over holiday. In respect of a request to buy holiday, it may be necessary to refuse an employee's request for operational or technical reasons related to his/her job.
- Where an application has been received and approved, the employee will be notified in writing and the appropriate change to his/her pay notified to him/her. The employee will then be given one week to confirm in writing that he/she wishes to go ahead. Provided written confirmation of this is received from the employee, the new rate of pay will be applied against the employee's monthly salary across the whole of the following calendar year (i.e., across the 12 monthly pay instalments).
- If an employee who has applied to buy holiday fails (following notification from the employer of the adjusted rate of pay) to provide written confirmation within one week that he/she would like to go ahead with the arrangement to buy or sell holiday leave, the application will be cancelled.
- Additional holiday leave granted under this scheme must be taken within the holiday year, on the dates stated, in respect of which the application was received. If, having bought additional holiday, the employee fails to take it before the end of the relevant holiday year, the leave will be lost altogether. In these circumstances, no compensatory payment or salary adjustment will be made.

## **Guidelines for Time off in Lieu (TOIL) and Exceptional Working from Home (EWFH)**

### **Introduction**

#### **Core office hours**

All full-time staff are contracted to work 37 hours per week, with a minimum 30-minute lunch break every day. All staff are expected to work 7.5 hours Monday – Thursday and 7 hours on a Friday, between the times of 8.00am – 5.00pm. If you chose to come in at 8am and work until 4pm this is fine, alternatively you can choose your own start time such as 9am- 5pm or 8.30-4.30pm (or any pattern in between) if it fits with the needs of the business and providing your contractual hours are being worked.

In addition, from time-to-time staff may be required to attend CPD sessions to help staff development or team building. Examples of this are the staff annual conference or training sessions like the MAT OFSTED review session. These may take the form of twilight or breakfast meetings. To be clear these should not be taken as TOIL as they are staff CPD. Travel for CPD, or training should also not be classed as TOIL.

The BDAT board recognises that staff may, on occasions, be required to work evening or extended hours to meet the needs of the business. This provision and expectation are built into all staff contracts.

BDAT operates a system of Time off in Lieu (TOIL) to allow staff to manage their working hours beyond their normal working day. In the majority of instances any out of hours or additional work requests should be planned and built in to staff workload as should the TOIL arrangements linked to these requests.

It is important to recognise that TOIL should only be accrued in exceptional and pre-agreed circumstances. TOIL may not be built up routinely, for example, by lengthening working days to build up TOIL. TOIL is an exceptional arrangement and is not a staff entitlement.

#### **TOIL for Staff – Executive Team**

For Trust Executive Team leaders (as with school leaders) there is an expectation that from time to time they will be required to work longer than contractual hours, particularly during busy periods. There is also a recognition that at certain points of the year workload may be less. Senior leaders are expected to manage their own working patterns.

Senior leaders are expected to work reasonable additional hours during busy periods to carry out their normal duties to meet the needs of the business.

While it is not expected TOIL should be used to compensate for occasional additional hours accrued, where significant out of hours commitments are required (such as evening or weekend work to meet business needs), TOIL may be accrued and taken back at times which meet the needs of the business. It is expected that senior leaders will manage their own working patterns.

#### **TOIL for Staff – Officers/Assistants**

For Trust officers, overtime and out of hours commitments will be the exception to the norm. BDAT operates a system of Time off in Lieu (TOIL) to allow staff to manage their working hours beyond their normal working day. These should be pre-agreed with the line managers in advance.

The expectation is that when staff are required to cover an evening meeting for example, they will also agree with their line manager the appropriate hours and time to take back as TOIL. This is to ensure that TOIL is taken back at times which will meet the requirements of both the business and employee. Where possible any out of hours commitments will be planned and agreed between the line manager and employee as early as practicable. Unplanned and accrued additional hours will not be agreed as TOIL unless pre-authorised by your line manager.

#### **Principles governing the use of TOIL**

##### **Requesting TOIL**

TOIL should only be built up when staff are working outside the core office at the request of their line manager. TOIL should be agreed in advance with your line manager and notified to the CEO PA/Office Manager to record on SAM. Where possible, rather than building TOIL, staff should always aim to take TOIL on the same working day where possible by adjusting their hours e.g., if asked to start early, try to finish early.

If as a member of staff wants to routinely adjust their hours for example for childcare purposes, this can be done and should be through a flexible working request rather than a routine TOIL sheet. These should be submitted to their line manager in the first instance.

- When an employee identifies additional hours which might justify TOIL, he/she should raise this with his/her Line Manager in advance of the requirement to work them. TOIL will normally only be granted if agreed in advance with the relevant manager.
- Time off accumulated through TOIL arrangements must be equal to time actually worked.
- TOIL should be taken as soon as practicably possible after it has been accrued. If this is not possible it must be taken within two months of accrual.
- TOIL accrued and not redeemed as outlined will be considered lost and no monetary compensation will be offered. TOIL not taken within two months of accrual will be lost.
- Managers should ensure that employees are given reasonable opportunities to take any accrued TOIL within the approved period.
- Managers must keep a proper account of additional hours worked.
- Approved TOIL requests are to be notified on the appropriate form and submitted to the CEO PA/Office Manager to record on SAM.
- The operation of TOIL depends on mutual trust. Any suspected abuse of TOIL will be treated as a disciplinary matter.
- If employees feel that their workload is not manageable or reasonable without working additional hours, this should be discussed as soon as possible with your line manager. If the additional hours are sporadic or required for a limited period of time only, then a change of working pattern may be agreed including the authorisation of TOIL. If it is for a period longer than a month, then the manager will work with the employee to review workload and commitments.

### **Exceptional Working from Home**

BDAT operates a central admin office to ensure the central team operate as a collective body to cover and support each other as required. While an officer may support a particular team or function, all BDAT office contracts are clear there is an expectation staff may be required to take on additional duties to support the smooth running of all Trust business. Central co-location is seen as an essential mechanism to provide open communication and flexible and agile working across teams on a daily basis.

Working from home is an exceptional benefit which our school colleagues do not have and staff working routinely from home at the centre means that they may not be available to support schools during core hours.

All WFH requests should be submitted to your line manager at least three days in advance. These should be then agreed with the PA to CEO / office manager to ensure office cover.

Please note working from home should not be used when staff are unwell – in these cases staff who are not well enough to come to the office should be taking the time as sick. It also should not be used for routine jobs like typing up minutes. If staff need a quiet space to work from there are normally meeting room spaces available and the expectation is that these are utilised before asking to work from home.

Routine working from home should be addressed under the Trusts flexible working policy. Again, if as a member of staff, you want to routinely change your working location, this should be submitted as a flexible working request, however, please note that all staff have signed contracts which clearly state the Trusts expectations that work will be undertaken in the Trust office or in schools.