Parents’ Information Pack for University Staff

This guide has been designed to provide helpful information for employees of Newcastle University who are parents or about to become parents. Inside you’ll find quick guides to leave entitlements and benefits, a summary of special offers, information about childcare and other useful information.
University Policies

1. A quick guide to leave entitlements
Below we have summarised the leave and pay entitlements for our main parental policies. You must check the full policy for full terms and conditions.

Maternity Leave
The purpose of this type of leave is to allow expectant or new mothers to take time off work for the birth and care of the baby.
Maternity leave and pay entitlement depend upon length of service at the Qualifying Week (QW). The QW is defined as 15 weeks before the Expected Week of Childbirth (EWC).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Service at QW</th>
<th>Maternity Leave Entitlement</th>
<th>Maternity Pay Entitlement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More than 52 Weeks service</td>
<td>52 Weeks</td>
<td>18 weeks Full Pay (OMP) followed by 21 weeks lower rate SMP followed by 13 weeks unpaid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 26 but less than 52 weeks service</td>
<td>52 Weeks</td>
<td>6 weeks higher rate SMP (90% salary) followed by 33 weeks lower rate SMP followed by 13 weeks unpaid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 26 weeks service</td>
<td>52 Weeks</td>
<td>No OMP or SMP entitlement. Employees may be entitled to Maternity Allowance (check with Benefits Agency)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OMP Occupational Maternity Pay
SMP Statutory Maternity Pay
Full Policy: [www.ncl.ac.uk/hr/leave/maternity.php](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/hr/leave/maternity.php)

Adoption Leave
The purpose of this type of leave is to allow employees who have been matched with a child for adoption to take time off work to care for the child. Adoption leave and pay entitlement depend upon length of service at the date of an approved match for adoption. Employees must fit the eligibility criteria.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Service at approved adoption date</th>
<th>Adoption Leave Entitlement</th>
<th>Adoption Pay Entitlement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More than 52 Weeks service</td>
<td>52 Weeks</td>
<td>18 weeks Full Pay (OAP) followed by 21 weeks lower rate SAP followed by 13 weeks unpaid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 26 but less than 52 weeks service</td>
<td>52 Weeks</td>
<td>6 weeks higher rate SAP (90% salary) followed by 33 weeks lower rate SAP followed by 13 weeks unpaid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 26 weeks service</td>
<td>52 Weeks</td>
<td>No OAP or SAP entitlement. Adoption agency may be able to provide advice about other benefits.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OAP Occupational Adoption Pay
SAP Statutory Adoption Pay
Full Policy: [www.ncl.ac.uk/hr/leave/adoption.php](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/hr/leave/adoption.php)
Paternity Leave
The purpose of this type of leave is to allow eligible employees to take time off work following the birth of a baby or adoption of a child. Eligible employees would be one of the following; the baby’s biological father, or spouse or partner (including same sex) of the child’s mother.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Service at QW</th>
<th>Paternity Leave Entitlement</th>
<th>Paternity Pay Entitlement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More than 52 Weeks service</td>
<td>2 Weeks</td>
<td>1 week full pay followed by 1 week SPP or 90% of average weekly earnings if this is less.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 26 but less than 52 weeks service</td>
<td>2 Weeks</td>
<td>2 weeks SPP or 90% of average weekly earnings if this is less.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 26 weeks service</td>
<td>No leave entitlement.</td>
<td>No pay entitlement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QW 15 weeks before the expected week of childbirth
SPP Statutory Paternity Pay
Full Policy: www.ncl.ac.uk/hr/leave/paternity.php

Parental Leave
The purpose of this type of leave is to allow eligible employees to take unpaid time off work to look after a child or make arrangements for the child’s welfare. Leave can be taken up until the child’s 5th birthday or 18th birthday if the child is disabled or valid for 5 years after adoption until the child is 18.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Service</th>
<th>Parental Leave Entitlement</th>
<th>Parental Leave Conditions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More than 52 Weeks service</td>
<td>13 weeks (18 weeks of the child is disabled)</td>
<td>Leave must be taken in blocks of one week. Max 4 weeks in any one year.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Full Policy: www.ncl.ac.uk/hr/leave/parental.php

Leave to care for dependants
All employees are allowed “reasonable” time off to look after frail, disabled or ill dependants of any age. This may include accompanying a dependant to a GP or hospital appointment. A dependant is defined as a spouse, child, parent or person who lives in the same household.

All requests are subject to agreement with line manager.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Service</th>
<th>Leave entitlement</th>
<th>Pay entitlement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More than 3 years service</td>
<td>Max 2 days per year</td>
<td>Usually entitled to paid leave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 3 years service</td>
<td>Max 2 days per year</td>
<td>Unpaid leave.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Full Policy: www.ncl.ac.uk/hr/policy/leave/special/

Emergency leave
All employees are entitled to Emergency Leave to deal with an unexpected incident, such as a fire, burglary, unexpected breakdown in childcare arrangements, or incident involving a dependant.

All requests are subject to agreement with line manager.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Service</th>
<th>Leave entitlement</th>
<th>Pay entitlement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More than 3 years service</td>
<td>Max 2 days per year (1 day at a time)</td>
<td>Usually entitled to paid leave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 3 years service</td>
<td>Max 2 days per year (1 day at a time)</td>
<td>Unpaid leave.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Full Policy: www.ncl.ac.uk/hr/leave/special.php
Flexible working arrangements

**Flexitime**

Flexitime is open to staff on grades A to E and is operated on an entirely discretionary basis, depending upon the requirements of a particular service.

Full Policy: [www.ncl.ac.uk/hr/benefits/flexitime.php](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/hr/benefits/flexitime.php)

**Right to request flexible working**

Parents of children up to and including the age of 16 (or 18 if disabled) have the right to request flexible working arrangements, so long as they have at least 26 weeks service and have not made another request to work flexibly during the past 12 months. For example, you may wish to reduce your working hours, or your start and finish times. Changes to working patterns are a change to terms and conditions of employment and are therefore usually permanent.

Full Policy: [www.ncl.ac.uk/hr/benefits/flexible-working.php](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/hr/benefits/flexible-working.php)

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2. **Benefits**

**Childcare Vouchers**

Newcastle University, in conjunction with Computershare, has introduced a system whereby part of your salary can be exchanged for childcare vouchers, as part of its family friendly initiative. Within specified limits, these vouchers are non-taxable and exempt from National Insurance contributions and therefore represent a saving for employees who use them to purchase childcare.

Website: [www.ncl.ac.uk/hr/benefits/childcare-vouchers.php](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/hr/benefits/childcare-vouchers.php)

**NU Options**

NU Options is a package of special offers, discounts and corporate rates which are available to our employees. We’ve chosen a few that might be of interest to parents. NU Options are updated regularly so check the website for the most recent offers.

**NOTE: to take advantage of these offers you will need your University Smartcard**

- **Blue Reef Aquarium, Tynemouth**: Discount on admission price for adults and children.
- **Centre for Life**: Discount on admission price for adults and children.
- **Stepney Banks Stables**: 10% discount on non-member rates, annual fees and birthday parties.
- **Tumble Tots (Newcastle)**: 20% discount off first 16 weeks membership.
- **Kielder Lodge Holidays**: 10% discount off the brochure price, subject to terms and conditions.

Website: [www.ncl.ac.uk/hr/benefits/nu-options/index.php](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/hr/benefits/nu-options/index.php)
3. Childcare

While Newcastle University does not provide childcare or nursery facilities, there are several nurseries located on or close to the campus, including Childsplay - www.childsplaynursery.org.uk and Northumbria University Nursery - http://www.nursery.northumbria.ac.uk/. All local authorities now provide Families Information Services which provide free, quality and impartial information on the full range of childcare services and resources.

### Families Information Services for the North East Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Authority</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Contact Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle Upon Tyne</td>
<td>Newcastle Families Information Service</td>
<td>☎ 0191 277 4133 &lt;www.newcastlefis.org.uk&gt; <a href="mailto:fis@newcastle.gov.uk">fis@newcastle.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northumberland</td>
<td>Families Information Service</td>
<td>☎ 0800 023 4440 or 01670 624889 &lt;www.northumberland.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=1926#Contact&gt; <a href="mailto:fis@northumberland.gov.uk">fis@northumberland.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Tyneside</td>
<td>North Tyneside Families Information Service</td>
<td>☎ 0345 2000 108 &lt;www.northtyneside.gov.uk/browse.shtml?p_subjectCategory=484 <a href="mailto:fis@northtyneside.gov.uk">fis@northtyneside.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Tyneside</td>
<td>South Tyneside Children’s Information Service</td>
<td>☎ 0800 783 4645 &lt;www.southtyneside.info/article/8022/Families-Information-Service&gt; <a href="mailto:fis@southtyneside.gov.uk">fis@southtyneside.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gateshead</td>
<td>Family Information Services</td>
<td>☎ 0191 433 5118 &lt;www.gateshead.gov.uk/Education%20and%20Learning/Preschool/FamilyInformationServicesDirectory/home.aspx&gt; <a href="mailto:fis@gateshead.gov.uk">fis@gateshead.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunderland</td>
<td>Sunderland Families Information Service</td>
<td>☎ 0191 520 5505 &lt;www.familiesinfoservice.com/&gt; <a href="mailto:fis@sunderland.gov.uk">fis@sunderland.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durham</td>
<td>Durham Family Information Service</td>
<td>☎ 0800 917 2 917 &lt;www.countydurhamfamilies.info/kb5/durham/fsd/home.page&gt;       <a href="mailto:fis@durham.gov.uk">fis@durham.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darlington</td>
<td>Darlington Families Information Service</td>
<td>☎ 0800 917 2121 <a href="http://darlington.fsd.org.uk/kb5/darlington/fsd/home.page">http://darlington.fsd.org.uk/kb5/darlington/fsd/home.page</a>       <a href="mailto:fis@darlington.gov.uk">fis@darlington.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hartlepool</td>
<td>Families Information Service Hartlepool</td>
<td>☎ 01429 284284 <a href="http://hartlepool.fsd.org.uk/kb5/hartlepool/fsd/home.page">http://hartlepool.fsd.org.uk/kb5/hartlepool/fsd/home.page</a>       <a href="mailto:fis@hartlepool.gov.uk">fis@hartlepool.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlesbrough</td>
<td>Middlesbrough Family Information Service</td>
<td>☎ 01642 354200 &lt;www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/fsd&gt; <a href="mailto:childcare@middlesbrough.gov.uk">childcare@middlesbrough.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockton-on-Tees</td>
<td>Stockton Families Information Service</td>
<td>☎ 01642 527225 &lt;www.stockton.gov.uk/citizenservices/learning/fis/&gt; <a href="mailto:fis@stockton.gov.uk">fis@stockton.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redcar &amp; Cleveland</td>
<td>Redcar &amp; Cleveland Family Information Service</td>
<td>☎ 0800 073 8800 &lt;www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk/rcbcweb.nsf/web+full+list/7a7ca68e3b26754b8025788c0050f222?opendocument&gt; <a href="mailto:fis@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk">fis@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Types of Childcare

A childminder provides flexible daycare in their own home for other people’s children. They are self-employed people who negotiate their own fees and any special arrangements. They must be registered and inspected in accordance with the Children Act 1989 if they look after children under 8 years of age, for more than two hours or more per day for reward. The Registration and Inspection duty is undertaken by OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education).

A private day nursery offers full or part-time daycare for children aged 0-5 years. All private day nurseries caring for children aged 0-5 must be registered and inspected (as above). Charges vary, as does the style of care.

A pre-school playgroup provides care and education in a safe, friendly environment. Children from the age of 2 years 6 months to 5 years can play, learn and mix with other children. Sessions are usually held in church halls or community centres, but are sometimes on a school site. Pre-school playgroups must be registered and inspected (as above). Charges vary. Playgroup charges cover basic running costs, refreshments, equipment and staff wages. The Early Years Service can subsidise the cost of a place for low income and other “children in need”.

A parent and toddler group caters for children from 0-5 years. These services are not required to register but all children must be accompanied by a parent or carer. Groups often meet in church halls, community centres or health centres. They provide a place for adults and children to mix socially and play together safely. A small charge is made to cover running cost and refreshments.

An out of school scheme offers care and play for children aged 5-12 years after school and during school holidays. Some schemes have staff who collect children from local schools if not held on the premises. All clubs must be registered and inspected if they run for 2 hours or more per day. Charges vary across the country and in accordance with what is provided. Out of school schemes are registered with OFSTED.

A nanny offers care for your child in your own home. Trained nannies will have a recognised childcare qualification such as NNEB or BTEC Nursery Nursing. Nannies do not have to register with OFSTED unless they work for 3 or more families. A nanny can live in the family home or come to work daily. The salary will depend upon qualifications, age, experience and what is expected within daily routine.

An au pair is usually a foreign student who lodges with a family and provides care for your child up to 5 hours per day. They are usually 17-18 year olds with no formal childcare training, their work is governed by the Home Office. An au pair would expect approximately £50 per week. You also provide the au pair with accommodation and all meals.

A mother’s help will look after your child in your own home. They may not be trained in childcare and will usually take on some household tasks. A mother’s help can live in the family home or come to work daily. They are usually paid an hourly rate which is negotiable. Mother’s helps are not registered.
Crèches offer short term, informal provision for young children, while parents concentrate on other activities such as shopping, learning or leisure. Crèches which are open for more than two hours a day and more than six times a year do need to be registered.

4. Finding a School
A list of local state (free) schools in the Newcastle area can be found on the Newcastle City Council website www.newcastle.gov.uk/

If you live outside of Newcastle you will need to contact your local authority for a list of local schools. You can find your local authority by visiting www.gov.uk/find-your-local-council

There are also some independent (fee-paying) schools in the area. The costs between these schools can vary considerably. A list of independent schools can be found at www.isc.co.uk

It is recommended that you research and make enquiries regarding which schools you would like to apply to, but applications for state schools are considered on where you live.

Schools in the UK are divided up as follows:

**Early Years**
Aged 3-5 years

**Three Tier System**
First schools - for pupils aged from 4 to 9
Middle schools - for pupils aged from 9 to 13
High schools - for pupils aged from 13 to 18

**Two Tier System**
Primary schools - for children aged from 4 to 11
Secondary schools - for children aged from 11 to 18

**Special Schools**
Special schools - for all age ranges

Some secondary and high schools will include a **Sixth Form**. This is for students aged 16-18 years old.

**Special Educational Needs**
A pupil is defined as having Special Educational Needs (SEN) if he or she has a learning difficulty that requires special educational provision to be made for him or her. Most schools should include information about their SEN provision in their prospectus. There are also SEN schools in the wider area. You can find more at the Newcastle City Council website.

**League Tables**
The league tables provide information on the achievements of pupils in local schools and how they compare with other schools in the area and in England as a whole. The information contained in league tables provides only part of the picture of each school’s overall achievements. The tables should, therefore, be considered alongside other information such as Ofsted reports (see below), school prospectuses and Governors’ Annual
Reports. Maintained schools must provide parents with prospectuses and Governors’ Annual reports on request.

**Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted)**
Ofsted inspect all schools in England. They also inspect childminders. Schools are inspected approximately every 6 years, so you should ask for the Annual or Governors report direct from the school.
The reports can also be obtained from the Ofsted website (www.ofsted.gov.uk). The purpose of these inspections is to report not just on the academic achievements (like the league tables), but also on how the pupils are taught, how well the school is led and managed, how it has improved since the last visit, areas for improvement, etc.

5. **Other useful resources**
Here are some resources and links which we hope you might find useful. These are not exhaustive!

**NCT (also known as the National Childbirth Trust)** is UK’s leading charity for parents: www.nctpregnancyandbabycare.com/home.

**Netmums** is the UK’s fastest-growing online parenting organisation with over half a million members, mostly mums: www.netmums.com/in/newcastle.
The official UK government website for citizens providing information about benefits, education and much more: www.gov.uk.

**Newcastle City Council** www.newcastle.gov.uk/

10 **free places to visit in and around the city**
Here are some of our favourite things to do in and around Newcastle. Great for families and best of all, they are free!
1. Great North Museum: Hancock, Discovery and Hatton
2. NewcastleGateshead Quayside (Millennium Bridge, Baltic, Sage and Bessie Surtees’ House. Markets on Sunday)
3. Laing Art Gallery
4. Newcastle City Library
5. Leazes and Exhibition Parks
6. Pets Corner, Jesmond Dene
7. Bill Quay Community Farm, Gateshead
8. Saltwell Park, Gateshead
9. Shipley Art Gallery, Gateshead
10. Arbeia Roman Fort, South Shields
There are loads of brilliant free places to visit across the region, including miles of fabulous beaches. You can find out more at:
www.visitnewcastlegateshead.co.uk.
www.visitnorthumberland.com
www.visitsunderland.com
www.visitcountydurham.com
www.newcastlegateshead.com/things-to-do/attractions/family-fun