

## Frequently Asked Questions – Maternity Pay

### 1. What is the process for claiming maternity pay reimbursement from Southwark?

**At the end of a teacher's period of maternity pay** (this is the point at which the teacher no longer receives Statutory Maternity Pay, not necessarily when the teacher returns to work), schools can claim reimbursement of maternity pay from the LA. This reimbursement will now be made in one payment, and can be claimed by following the steps below

**Step 1:** Complete the Maternity calculator (which accompanies this letter) by filling in all of the yellow boxes in the "Maternity Calculator" tab, using data from the teacher's payslip issued the month BEFORE maternity/adoption leave was taken to fill in salary/pension details. The figure for the salary must be the teacher's basic salary before any additional payments etc.

**Step 2:** Scan a copy of the;

- MATB1 documentation
- The letter from the Head to the teacher detailing start and end dates of the maternity period
- A copy of the payslip issued to the teacher/system pay report from the month BEFORE maternity/adoption leave was taken

**Step 3:** Send the completed Maternity Claim Calculator and the scanned copies of the documents to [schoolsfinance@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:schoolsfinance@southwark.gov.uk)

**Step 4:** The reimbursement will be made in one payment, covering the whole maternity period.

Where schools are experiencing significant cash flow problems, maternity reimbursements may be able to be claimed during the maternity period. In all other circumstances one payment will be made to schools at the end covering the whole period

Year-end accruals have been automatically on the "Accruals" tab in the workbook. These figures should be used in your schools year end return to account for maternity accruals.

### 2. What if the staff member does not return to work?

If the member of staff does not return to work, submit the claim at the end of the period which Southwark makes contributions towards the cost i.e. after 27 weeks if the staff member is a teacher, or 18 weeks if a non-teacher.

### 3. Has the Southwark Maternity Scheme changed?

The Southwark Maternity Scheme **has not changed in its content**. The process by which schools re-claim maternity pay from the LA has been changed, reducing the amount of administration required by schools and the LA.

As per the previous arrangements, the amounts reimbursed are based on the cost to schools in paying teachers Occupational Maternity Pay (OMP) and Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP).

Using the Maternity Claim Calculator, schools can work out how much funding they will receive as reimbursement against the cost of a member of staff taking maternity/adoption leave.

### 4. Why has the process for re-claiming maternity pay been changed?

The way in which the process is carried out has been altered to improve efficiency for both schools and the LA. This followed discussions at the School Bursar Group meetings and School Finance Briefing sessions, for the need for improvements in the process

The following improvements have been made

- Schools now only need to complete the template once at the end of the maternity period (as opposed to monthly throughout).
- Only one claim is now required, rather than monthly submissions
- The number of required supporting documents has been reduced – payslips are no longer required covering the whole maternity period
- The new template will automatically calculate the total amount of maternity reimbursement due to the school. This will give schools a greater level of certainty regarding how much money will be reimbursed, assisting schools in their financial planning.

### 5. Who is entitled to maternity leave/pay?

Maternity leave must be granted to members of staff expecting babies. Women are entitled to 26 weeks “ordinary maternity leave” and 26 weeks “additional maternity leave”.

SMP must be given to members of staff who earn more than £107 per week and have worked for the school continuously for 26 weeks up to and into the 15<sup>th</sup> week before the week the baby is due. If these conditions are not met, no maternity pay need be distributed.

In addition to this, some members of staff will be entitled to OMP. This is a payment made on top of SMP and is detailed in an individual’s contract.

Southwark Council runs a maternity scheme where, during the year, funds are distributed to schools where a qualifying member of staff takes maternity or adoption

leave. This is designed to cover the cost of the member of staff whilst they are on leave.

## **6. Who qualifies for the Southwark Maternity Scheme?**

The LA will reimburse the school for the cost of the period of maternity/adoption leave absence for the following categories of staff that are classroom based;

- Deputy Head (with classroom responsibilities)
- Teachers
- Special schools' support assistants
- Learning support assistants (for specific statemented pupils only)
- Nursery nurses

## **7. What supporting documents are required?**

Previously, schools had to provide;

- A copy of the letter sent to the individual employee notifying entitlements and the conditions surrounding maternity/adoption leave absence
- Copy of MATB1/Adoption documentation
- Copy of monthly payslips showing OMP, SMP and on-costs (for every month where leave is taken)
- Copy of monthly pay reports (for every month where leave is taken)
- Maternity Claim template, detailing amounts of SMP, OMP, National Insurance rates and pension contributions.

The new requirements are;

- A copy of the letter sent to the individual employee notifying entitlements and the conditions surrounding maternity/adoption leave absence
- Copy of MATB1/Adoption documentation
- Copy of ONE payslip (The final payslip BEFORE the teacher goes on maternity or adoption leave)
- Maternity Calculator (to be sent in at the END of the maternity period).

## **8. How much is SMP?**

SMP is calculated as being 90% of the member of staff's average weekly earnings for the first 6 weeks of maternity leave.

For weeks 7 - 39, SMP is calculated as the lower of 90% of the member of staff's average weekly earnings and £135.45.

Schools can recover 92% of their SMP costs directly from HMRC.

## **9. How much is OMP?**

Where schools must pay OMP, it is based on the member of staff's salary and the job that they are doing.

For teachers:

- **Weeks 1 - 9:** OMP will be the amount designed to top up the individual's SMP earnings to 100% of their normal weekly salary.
- **Weeks 10 - 27:** OMP is calculated as 50% of their normal weekly salary.

For "Other" members of staff (as detailed in Q4)

- **Weeks 1 – 6:** OMP will be the amount designed to top up the individual's SMP earnings to 100% of their normal weekly salary.
- **Weeks 7 - 18:** OMP is calculated as 50% of their normal weekly salary.

### **10. How long is the maternity pay period?**

The maternity period begins the Sunday before the member of staff's leave begins. The maternity period ends on either the Sunday before the member of staff returns to work, or the Sunday 27 weeks after the maternity leave was commenced (whichever is earliest).

### **11. Why do you need to know the salary of the member of staff taking maternity leave?**

We need this information because the amount of maternity pay an individual will receive is based on the salary they earn.

### **12. How much can schools claim from Southwark via the Maternity and Adoption Leave Policy?**

In weeks 1 - 6, schools can claim the 8% SMP not claimed via HMRC as well as 10% of the member of staff's weekly salary which makes up the OMP top up.

In weeks 7 - 9, schools can claim back the 8% SMP not claimed via HMRC as well as the OMP amount which tops up the individual's earnings from £135.45 to 100% of their normal weekly level.

In weeks 10 – 27, schools can claim back the 8% SMP not claimed via HMRC as well as the OMP amount of 50% of their normal weekly level.

### **13. How do you calculate the amount to reimburse schools?**

The amount reimbursed to schools is based on the cost of a member of staff taking maternity/adoption leave.

It is calculated using the following formula;

$$A + B + C - D$$

Where;

- A = Statutory Maternity Pay
- B = Occupational Maternity Pay
- C = Oncosts

D = 92% of SMP recoverable from HMRC

#### **14. How is the Southwark Maternity and Adoption Leave policy funded?**

Currently, funding for Southwark's maternity scheme is taken from the DSG and is included in "budgets held centrally but allocated to schools throughout the financial year".

In 2013-14, after the implementation of the School Funding Reform DSG budgets previously held centrally (such as the maternity scheme) will be delegated to schools in the first instance. Schools may agree to continue the scheme, under exception 1, de-delegate the funding and have Southwark continue to reimburse schools as members of their staff take maternity or adoption leave. Alternatively schools may choose to retain these funds, and instead manage the maternity leave burden themselves.