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# Guide to Employee Benefits

2023-24



Hills Road  
Sixth Form College  
Cambridge

# INTRODUCTION

The College values the contribution made by its employees and recognises that without your efforts, enthusiasm and commitment Hills Road would not be as successful as it is today.

The benefits detailed in this guide have been developed to help you feel valued, remain healthy, achieve a good work life balance and enjoy social time with your colleagues.

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# 1. FINANCIAL BENEFITS

## 1.1 CAREER AVERAGE PENSION SCHEME

The College offers two types of pension schemes that have similar benefits and employee contribution rates. They are:

- Teachers' Pension Scheme for teaching staff (TP)
- Local Government Pension scheme for support staff (LGPS).

As a member of staff you automatically join a pension scheme when you start at the College which means:

- you receive a guaranteed income in retirement which is index linked, and the option to take a tax-free lump sum;
- if you become too ill to work you may be able to receive your retirement benefits early and possibly with an enhancement to service;
- your pension can give your family an income in the event of your death before or after retirement;
- you may be able to boost your pension benefits by making extra contributions;
- you receive life insurance of three times your salary should you die in service.

For more information on the pension schemes please visit their websites at:

<https://www.teacherspensions.co.uk>  
<http://pensions.cambridgeshire.gov.uk>

## 1.2 PRE-RETIREMENT PLANNING

If you are approaching retirement you may wish to increase your awareness of the issues surrounding retirement and pension benefits by attending a pre-retirement workshop. The courses are aimed at helping you plan your retirement and cover leisure and managing change, healthy living, state benefits, financial planning etc. Please speak to the HR Department who can recommend a provider.

## 1.3 CAMSHARE

Sign up to our countywide car-sharing network, with strong links to the national Liftshare database. It is free and has been built and designed for every possible user. Whether you are a driver, passenger, or if you would simply be interested in finding an alternative way of getting about, then this is the site for you. For more information visit [www.camshare.co.uk](http://www.camshare.co.uk).

## 1.4 CYCLEScheme

The College operates the Tax-Free Cycles for Work Scheme. For staff who cycle regularly to work, you may be eligible to purchase a new bicycle and equipment under the Government's cycle scheme. This is a salary sacrifice scheme in which you could take advantage of reductions in your income tax, national insurance and VAT. The scheme consists of the College giving the staff member a twelve-month loan of the selected bike/ equipment. After that point, the staff member is entitled to buy the bike/equipment from the College for a Fair Market Value (around 5% of the RRP).

## 1.5 EV SALARY SACRIFICE

The College now offers an Electric Vehicle Salary Sacrifice programme through Octopus Energy. For further details please speak to Chris Lovisa, Director of Human Resources.

## **2. FACILITIES**

### **2.1 CAR PARKING**

If you come to work by car, you can request a permit to park in the free staff car park. The staff car park is at the back of College off Purbeck Road for which you will need a smart card or pin to work the barrier and a car-parking permit. Should you wish to make use of the College car park, please contact Human Resources for further details and to obtain your permit.

### **2.2 BICYCLE PARKING**

There is a staff bicycle park at the front of the College, to the right before you go through the archway and Centenary Gates. The combination to the lock is available from Reception or from the caretakers, whose office is situated next to the bicycle shed. There is additional bicycle parking for staff at the north side of The Colin Greenhalgh Building.

### **2.3 STAFF ROOM**

In April 2023 we opened our brand-new Study Centre here at the College. This includes a lovely new and very modern College Staff Room for you to enjoy. We also have a wonderful new Café located from the main quad which you can also make use of.

### **2.4 CATERING SERVICES**

Our catering facilities offer a range of foods, drinks and services at affordable prices. We have a new Café which is located in the Hub and will serve grab-and-go hot pastries, sandwiches, wraps, salads and confectionery. To make it quicker and easier for you to buy food and drink the College operates a cashless catering facility using your photo ID badge and WisePay. For more information please contact Rory Seddon, Director of Business and Finance.

### **2.5 LIBRARY ACCESS**

All members of staff are automatically added to the library's register of borrowers as they join the College. Your photo ID badge acts as your library card. The online Library catalogue allows you to search and reserve material.

Staff are not charged fines on overdue books but are asked to renew items as they become overdue. Library items should not be kept for long-term teaching use.

### **2.6 STAFF QUIET ROOM**

Should you wish to work away from your base room or staff room, staff have access to staff quiet rooms in which to work. There are two rooms located on the first floor of the Porters' Lodge. One has two computers and desk space and the other has some desk space. To access the staff quiet room you can use the master classroom key or ask Reception or the caretakers for a key to gain access.

### **2.7 PRAYER ROOM**

Hills Road Sixth Form College respects your rights to freedom of religious belief and makes available a multi faith prayer room for staff and students between 8.00am to 6.00pm every weekday; a prayer room will be allocated at the start of the Autumn term.

### **3. HEALTH AND WELL – BEING**

#### **3.1 COUNSELLING AND WORKPLACE SUPPORT**

The College provides impartial and non-judgmental counselling and workplace support to staff using qualified counsellors. Confidentiality is a priority and is discussed and agreed with each member of staff before they begin their sessions. Should you wish to speak to the College Staff Wellbeing Advisor, please email [www.staffwellbeing@hillsroad.ac.uk](mailto:www.staffwellbeing@hillsroad.ac.uk) or speak to a member of the Human Resources Team.

#### **3.2 SPORTS AND TENNIS CENTRE**

All employees are entitled to free use of the Hills Road Sports and Tennis Centre (which includes a fully equipped gym, four indoor and six outdoor tennis courts, a multi-purpose sports hall, an indoor cricket hall and a squash court) between the hours of 7.00am and 6.00pm Monday to Friday, including College holidays. Members' rates will apply at other times and days of the week. Staff are able to book facilities seven days in advance.

Due to the high demand for indoor tennis courts, staff can book one free indoor tennis session per week, seven days in advance. Any additional advance bookings will be charged at member rates. Staff partners and/or members of their immediate family are also entitled to member rates at the Centre. Please contact the Sports Centre on ext. 400 (internally) or 01223 500009 (externally) for more details. Alternatively, further information can be found on our website at [www.hillsroadsportscentre.co.uk](http://www.hillsroadsportscentre.co.uk).

#### **3.3 EYECARE VOUCHERS**

Regular Visual Display Unit (VDU) users (the majority of staff) are entitled to a free eye test. If you are a regular VDU user please see the Finance Manager for further details and a voucher. If you would like to search for opticians by post code you can do so by clicking on the following [link](#).

#### **3.4 BOTANIC GARDENS**

The College has an annual subscription with the Cambridge Botanic Garden that enables staff to use the garden free of charge, including on bank holidays and weekends. The tickets are available to be signed out at the Bursary. Please remember to return them after your visit so that others can also make use of them.

#### **3.5 DISCOUNTED ROOM HIRE**

Rooms within the College are available for hire. HRSFC members of staff receive discounted rates. Please email [roombookings@hillsroad.co.uk](mailto:roombookings@hillsroad.co.uk) for more information.

#### **3.6 AE DISCOUNT**

The College runs a substantial Adult Education (AE) programme for which staff members, their partners and/or members of their immediate family are entitled to a 20% discount. AE prospectuses are available at Reception or from the AE office, behind Reception. Further details can be found on the website [adultEd@hillsroad.ac.uk](mailto:adultEd@hillsroad.ac.uk) or by contacting Adult Education on extension 480 (internally) or 01223 278002 (externally).

### 3.7 COLLEGE WELLBEING COMMITMENT - STAFF

#### Introduction

Through its Wellbeing Commitment, Hills Road Sixth Form College aims to create an environment for its students and staff which enables all members of the College community to feel confident, healthy, safe, emotionally resilient and personally fulfilled. There are seven key strands to this commitment, which are explained below. Those in blue are detailed further in the document 'College Wellbeing Commitment - Students'.



*Adapted from 'Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing – a whole school and college approach',  
Public Health England and Children and Young People's Mental Health Coalition' 2015*

#### Leadership and Management

Commitment to the strategy by the senior leadership team is essential to ensure practices in support of emotional health and wellbeing are embedded in all aspects of the College's work. This is evidenced in a number of ways, including:

- creating and sustaining a supportive, nurturing ethos throughout the College
- advocating the holistic needs of staff within the context of wider strategic planning
- regularly undertaking research into effective support and improvement strategies, particularly for those suffering from poor mental health, and incorporating relevant references and actions within policies and development plans
- seeking to create a culture in which people feel more able to disclose mental health problems and address them productively at an early stage
- ensuring key personnel have responsibility for staff wellbeing and for developing relevant expertise in this area, identifying issues and making referrals
- demonstrating capacity for continued improvement, for example, by developing partnerships with other colleges, external agencies and the community



- ensuring robust systems are in place for monitoring and evaluating the strategy's effectiveness.

## **Ethos**

The environment in which staff spend a high proportion of every week will inevitably affect their physical, emotional and mental health and wellbeing. Key features of the Hills Road ethos include:

- shared values, trust and mutual respect
- strong, supportive relationships which help to engender a sense of belonging
- an enjoyable, challenging and stimulating environment in which to work and study
- equality of opportunity and valuing of diversity
- open and honest communication enabling concerns to be identified and addressed at an early stage.

## **Staff Development and Support**

The College seeks to improve the quality of working lives and to prevent work associated ill-health (this includes physical, mental and social health) and recognises that colleagues' personal and professional development and the way in which their roles are organised contribute to their overall wellbeing at work. Features of the College's wellbeing culture include:

- effective recruitment, staff development and training
- clear and effective communication of roles, responsibilities and expectations
- ensuring all staff have access to the College's staff development programme which includes a range of activities to promote good work-life balance
- the recognition of skills and the encouragement of personal and professional development
- implementing policies designed to improve working lives such as those relating to work-life balance, flexible working, family leave and absence management
- recognising and assessing work-related stress and, when appropriate, implementing support mechanisms to reduce anxiety and prevent harmful stress
- access, if appropriate, to specialist support and advice including that provided by HR officers, counsellors and occupational health specialists
- ensuring safety at work by rigorously implementing health and safety policies and procedures
- effective management of change including the enhancement of coping strategies and the creation of a flexible working environment
- implementing effective return to work procedures following staff absence.

## **Curriculum**

Our aim is to ensure that all teaching, learning and support activities take place within an environment that:

- promotes mutual respect and inclusiveness
- discourages discrimination and inequity and promotes positive behaviours
- is characterised by open and honest communication and successful relationships

## **Targeted Support**

The College seeks to identify staff at risk of experiencing poor mental health at an early stage so that issues do not escalate. These individuals are offered a range of support measures, where appropriate, including:

- access to trained counsellors, either arranged internally or externally, with requests managed via the staff wellbeing advisor
- access to specialist services obtained through partnerships with external agencies
- access to drop in and longer-term wellbeing support provided by the College Wellbeing Service
- the provision of clear and consistent information about the opportunities available to discuss personal issues and emotional concerns; paying due regard to appropriate protocols, for example in relation to confidentiality

*For full details of the Whole College Wellbeing Commitment please also see the document 'College Wellbeing Commitment – Students'*

## 4. PAY AND LEAVE

The College operates generous sickness, pay and leave schemes that go beyond the minimum statutory requirement. A brief breakdown of some of these policies are detailed below. To read the full policies please visit the Policies Section on SharePoint.

### 4.1 SICK PAY

The College recognises that from time to time an employee may be prevented from attending work through ill health.

Provided the appropriate conditions are met, a member of staff absent from duty because of illness (which includes injury or other disability) shall be entitled to receive sick pay as follows:

TEACHING STAFF	
During the first year of service	Full pay for 25 working days, and after completing four calendar months service, half pay for 50 working days
During the second year of service	Full pay for 50 working days and then half pay for 50 working days
During the third year of service	Full pay for 75 working days and half pay for 75 working days
During fourth and subsequent years	Full pay for 100 working days and half pay for 100 working days
SUPPORT STAFF	
During the first year of service	1 month's full pay and (after completing 4 months' service) 2 months' half pay
During the second year of service	2 months' full pay and 2 months' half pay
During the third year of service	4 months' full pay and 4 months' half pay
During fourth and fifth years of service	5 months' full pay and 5 months' half pay
After 5 years' service	6 months' full pay and 6 months' half pay

The full Staff Sickness Absence and Ill Health Policy and Procedure is available to view in SharePoint.



## 4.2 MATERNITY

Depending on your length of service and provided appropriate conditions are met, all pregnant members of staff are entitled to the following:

- Paid time off to attend antenatal appointments;
- On-site parking every day;
- 52 weeks' maternity leave. This is made up of 26 weeks' Ordinary Maternity Leave (OML) and 26 weeks' Additional Maternity Leave (AML);
- Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) entitlement;
- For staff with at least one year's continuous service at the beginning of the 11th week before the expected week of childbirth, pay as follows:
  - Weeks 1-4 at full pay (inclusive of SMP)
  - Weeks 5-6 at 9/10 pay (inclusive of SMP)
  - Weeks 7-18 at half pay without SMP deduction unless half pay plus SMP exceeds full pay
  - Weeks 19- 39 SMP only
  - Weeks 40-52 unpaid
- Up to 10 days' paid work during maternity leave without affecting their right to SMP.

The full maternity leave scheme is detailed in the Family Leave Policy which is available to view in SharePoint.

## 4.3 ADOPTION

If you are legally adopting a child up to the age of 16 you are entitled to the same pay and leave as mothers taking maternity leave. The adoption pay and leave are more than the statutory minimum. The Statutory Adoption pay (SAP) would be available for employees adopting a child aged 17 and 18.

The full adoption leave scheme is detailed in the Family Leave Policy which is available to view in SharePoint.

## 4.4 PATERNITY/MATERNITY SUPPORT LEAVE

Depending on your length of service and provided appropriate conditions are met, colleagues are entitled to the following:

- Reasonable paid time off to attend antenatal appointments, scans etc;
- 2 weeks' full pay of Ordinary Paternity Leave (OPL) to be taken within 56 days of the birth of your child to which the College takes a flexible approach. The College extends this arrangement to a person who is nominated by the mother and who will have or expects to have responsibility for the child's upbringing and who will be the main provider of support to the mother at the time of birth.

This could be another relative or close friend.

- Up to 26 weeks' Additional Paternity Leave (APL), depending on your partner's circumstances.

The full paternity/maternity support leave scheme is detailed in the Family Leave Policy which is available to view in SharePoint.

## **4.5 SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE**

Shared Parental Leave (SPL) enables eligible parents to choose how to share the care of their child during the first year of birth or adoption. Eligible staff may be entitled to take up to 50 weeks SPL. Shared Parental Pay (ShPP) may be payable during some or all of SPL.

The full Shared Parental Leave Scheme is detailed in the Family Leave Policy which is available to view in SharePoint.

## **4.6 SPECIAL LEAVE**

Special or compassionate leave may be granted for a number of reasons including:

- moving house
- graduation
- study leave
- marriage
- religious ceremonies
- job interviews
- jury service
- armed forces duties
- public service (eg. governors meeting, prison visitors, magistrates etc)
- union duties

Additional leave, with or without pay, may be granted in special circumstances at the discretion of the College.

## **4.7 SABBATICAL**

The College understands that some staff may wish to take time out from work to pursue a professional and personal development in order to enhance career opportunities and their contribution to the College, while maintaining security of employment. It is recognised that such breaks can benefit both the College and the member of staff. Therefore, employees with at least five years' continuous employment may wish to be considered for a sabbatical. The College will consider applications that meet the eligibility criteria. Such leave will be unpaid. Full details can be found in the Sabbatical Policy in SharePoint.

## **4.8 FLEXIBLE WORKING**

The College recognises that employees may need to work flexibly to ensure a good work-life balance and to support their well-being. All employees with 26 weeks' continuous service have a legal right to request flexible working and the College will give due consideration to requests received. This legislation is due to change to become a day 1 right from the start of your employment. Applications are carefully reviewed considering both the request and the needs of the College and all possible reasonable options.

The full Flexible Working Policy is available to view in SharePoint.

## **4.9 ANNUAL LEAVE**

Full year support staff (52-week contract) are entitled to the following annual leave (pro rata for part time staff):

- |                                   |                   |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Minimum leave                     | - 24 working days |
| After 5 years' continuous service | - 27 working days |

Up to 5 days' annual leave not taken during the leave year may be carried forward into the next leave year. For further details on your annual leave entitlements please refer to your contract of employment or speak with Human Resources.

## Human Resources Team

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