



Tudhoe Learning Trust

Existing Sickness Absence Management Policy, Procedure & Toolkit Overview

There already exists a robust Policy that seeks to address the issue of sickness absence in school. The Policy forms part of all staff's terms and conditions of service and compliance with the Policy qualifies enhanced sick pay benefits.

“All employees have a responsibility to ensure that they comply with the Policy and any subsequent processes that are developed to support it”

Core Principles

The sickness absence policy seeks to achieve a caring approach [to the management of sickness] with clear, fair procedures:

- ensuring effective absence management
- effective service delivery; and a
- commitment to improving the health of the workforce

The negative effects of unsustainable sickness absence are:

- ineffective service delivery
- increased costs
- pressure on colleagues

The potential outcomes where an improvement in attendance cannot be achieved are:

- alternative employment sought
- termination of employment

Monitoring

Data will be gathered through management information systems for recording and reporting sickness absence. This information is to be reviewed in school to identify the impact of sickness and used to develop any further mechanisms to address significant issues. Reports of the impact of measures will be made regularly to Governors.

Training

Sickness absence procedures (including expectations and obligations) to be covered as part of new staff induction processes.

Expectations and Obligations	
Headteachers	Employees
<p>Continuously review sickness absence levels of employees and take action needed to prevent and reduce it, taking into consideration all circumstances of each case.</p> <p>Ensure that everyone they manage understands the rules and procedures and are aware of their responsibilities in relation to sickness absence.</p> <p>Determine when to take appropriate action in line with this policy and procedure.</p> <p>Ensure that regular contact with absent employees is maintained.</p> <p>Undertake return to work discussions on each and every occasion of sickness absence.</p> <p>Comply with sickness absence reporting and recording requirements.</p> <p>Identify support where appropriate to facilitate employee's attendance and ensure the employees understand the level of performance and attendance required.</p> <p>Develop an atmosphere which encourages high attendance, including ensuring employees are aware that their individual contribution to the school is acknowledged.</p> <p>Keep employees informed of the sickness absence rate within the school and be prepared to discuss and follow up sickness absence issues with employees.</p> <p>Comply with their responsibilities for Health and Safety at Work.</p> <p>Take action where employees identify their sickness absence as work related by completing the Corporate Accident/Incident/ill-Health Report Form and resulting actions taken.</p> <p>Take action in cases of reported work related stress, completion of the stress questionnaire and action plan should also be considered - this can be found in the School's Stress Management Policy, Procedure & Toolkit.</p> <p>Not set or expect work from employees whilst they are absent from work due to sickness.</p>	<p>Attend work when fit to do so unless on authorised leave</p> <p>Notify their Head Teacher of sickness absence in person before their usual start time/prior to the start of the day. Employees genuinely unable to telephone personally should arrange for someone to call on their behalf. If their Head Teacher is not available, they should contact another nominated person within the school team. If the sickness absence is work related they should inform their Head Teacher of this.</p> <p>Maintain contact with their Head Teacher during sickness absence, unless the Head Teacher agrees other arrangements.</p> <p>Attend appointments with the Occupational Health Service when required. Release of information from the Occupational Health Service to Head Teachers following an employee's clinical assessment will be subject to appropriate clinical and professional conduct guidelines.</p> <p>Advise the Head Teacher of the potential effect of any medication which they are using on their capability in the workplace.</p> <p>Comply with their responsibilities for Health and Safety at Work</p> <p>Ensure they seek and receive medical advice and treatment in order to facilitate a return to work.</p> <p>Not undertake any work/activities, related to or outside of their work, incompatible with their illness or that may delay recovery.</p>

If a problem with the reporting process is anticipated, for instance because the employee lives alone and feels that on occasion this may be an issue in reporting sickness, then alternative arrangements should be agreed in advance by the Head Teacher.

If an employee becomes sick during the working day then for operational and health and safety reasons, they must speak with their Head Teacher, or if they are not readily available, another nominated person, before leaving work.

The completion of a 'Return to Work Interview/Sickness Declaration' form by the employee is required after every sickness absence. The school accepts the information provided on this form, which is completed at the Return to Work interview, as a self-certification form. All employees (including those working part time) must provide a fit note for any absence exceeding 7 consecutive calendar days, whether or not these are working days. If a Head Teacher considers that the reasons given for the absence are inadequate and has sufficient evidence to support this, payment may be refused for the period in question.

Employees may have a condition or an impairment that they wish to keep confidential. They are not obliged to disclose these unless it is a condition, which might endanger colleagues, pupils or themselves. In such cases the condition or impairment must be disclosed. In choosing not to disclose information, employees must understand that, when considering appropriate action, the Head Teacher can only take into account the information available to them.

Employees are encouraged to advise Head Teachers if they consider workplace practices are causing or exacerbating sickness levels. Where employee absence is presented as work-related, for example in a return-to-work interview, the Head Teacher should investigate this, taking advice as necessary from Human Resources.

Where an employee believes that their sickness absence has been caused by work, they must tell the Head Teacher of this. The Head Teacher must investigate, taking advice as appropriate from Human Resources.