



**Tudhoe Learning Trust**

# **Attendance Management**

**Policy and Procedure**

**Approved by:** Trust Chief Executive Officer

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## Contents

Introduction.....	1
Objective.....	2
Absence Strategy Principles.....	2
Absence Management Procedure.....	3
Further Information.....	3
Appendices	
Appendix 1    Sickness Absence Management Form	

## Introduction

The Trust recognises the contribution that its employees make to ensuring that children receive a high-quality education and a safe learning environment. It further recognises that employees wish to make a consistent contribution to the work of their school, but that, from time to time, they will become ill and be unable to attend work.

The Attendance Management Policy and Procedure is to minimise the detrimental impact of avoidable absence due to sickness from a financial and operational perspective.

This policy applies to all Trust employees irrespective of whether they are employed on a permanent or temporary contract or work part-time. Head Teachers of Schools within the Trust are responsible for the operational management of sickness absence policy.

In applying this policy, the Trust will not unlawfully discriminate in respect of any of the protected characteristics as defined under the Equality Act and specified below:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership

The operation of this Policy will be kept under review and such changes will be made as deemed appropriate.

All information will be handled sensitively and used only for its proper purpose. However, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed as information might have to be disclosed where an issue results in formal proceedings.

## **Objective**

The strategy has been designed with fairness in mind ensuring that staff are protected where unavoidable absence happens, but schools are incentivised to effectively manage their workforce to create a culture where avoidable absence is eradicated through clear consistent competent and collaborative people management. Some schools have persistent short-term absenteeism affecting almost all staff and some school's absence can be attributed to only a small proportion of the workforce. In all cases both long term absence and short-term absence is extremely detrimental financially and operationally. This strategy seeks to protect those employees who attend regularly against the negative impact of covering for staff who are absent and recognises the additional strain that this adds to already over-stretched resources.

## **Absence Strategy Principles**

- Identify and recognise the different impact of absence in certain roles i.e. Class Teachers, Office Managers and Premises Managers being most challenging to cover (particularly at short notice) and requiring "supply" to which there is a direct financial cost attached. Roles such as Teaching Assistants have an impact on operational effectiveness and outcomes but don't necessarily need to be covered by supply. So, in all cases there will be an impact on children's experience, school data and additional burden on remaining staff but not all absences will attract a financial cost.
- To address an identified unsustainable level of sickness absence.
- To incentivise schools to address absence issues effectively and in collaboration with the Trust.
- To protect staff where unavoidable absence occurs and reduce avoidable absence and its impact on those staff remaining.
- To promote improved employer branding and culture.
- To provide an opportunity for the possibility for some return on monies allocated to sickness absence cover.

## Absence Management Procedure

1. All staff must provide as much notice as possible when they are unwell and unable to attend work - preferably before 8am on the first morning of absence.
2. Where possible staff must provide an indication of how long they think they will be absent as well as a specific reason for the absence. All information will be treated with strict confidence.
3. Staff must ring into school and speak to the Headteacher, the Deputy Headteacher or Trust HR (01388 811765). Texting or leaving a message with a colleague is not acceptable and will disqualify the employee from sick pay benefits.
4. HT / DHT / HR will provide Office Managers with the relevant information to record the absence on the school's monthly timesheet, this will then be added to Arbor by the HR team. All absences must be recorded for all staff without exception regardless of duration or reason by 10am on the first day of absence to allow for monitoring centrally.
5. The Headteacher will complete the attached form that will document the absence, ensure all elements are considered and authorise a claim to be made from the Absence Fund. It is the HT responsibility to take ownership of the absence as line manager.
6. If the absence exceeds a week the Head will discuss with HR an appropriate strategy to manage the absence to include a more long-term cover plan using existing staff or the use of a third-party agency (supply), reasonable adjustments to reduce the likely length of the absence or any other measure of support to shorten the period of disruption in addition to scheduling either a SAR or RTW meeting where trigger points have been met.
7. No claims will be paid where absence is less than three days.
8. Heads must ensure that Return to Work meetings are held after every absence and Sickness Absence Review meetings are conducted for all staff whose attendance exceeds the agreed trigger points set out in our sickness absence management policy (2 occurrences in any 3 month period or a total of 10days in the rolling year. The rolling year is the preceding 12mths at any given point in time). Return to work (RTW) / Sickness Absence Review (SAR) meetings should be viewed as a normal part of school life where an employee has been absent by being conducted for everyone who has had an absence competently, in a meaningful way and formally documented. The purpose of the RTW meeting is to ensure the employees fitness for work, understand the current position and enable the opportunity to make any adjustments necessary to meet any employer duty of care obligation. SAR meetings are a legally compliant and fair way of managing an absence from work and bringing it to conclusion with either a return to work or a permanent exit. Advice and support to carry out RTW/SAR meetings should be sought from the HR Manager where any contention exists, where there is any situation out of the ordinary or where absence within school has exceeded a sustainable level.
9. Cover for maternity leave will be considered where there is a real financial cost associated with covering the absence.

## Further Information

If you would like any further information or advice in relation this procedure, please contact the Trust HR Manager on 01388 811 765 or [office@tudhoelearningtrust.co.uk](mailto:office@tudhoelearningtrust.co.uk)



## Tudhoe Learning Trust

### Sickness Absence Management Form

Please complete this form for all sickness absences for all staff regardless of duration or reason.

Absentee Details				
Name		Designation	Headteacher	
			Deputy Headteacher	
			Teacher	
			Teaching Assistant / HLTA	
			Lunchtime Supervisor	
			Cleaner	
			Premises Manager	
			Caretaker / Kitchen staff	
			Office Manager / Admin	
			HR / Finance	
Family Support				
Manager Details				
Name		Designation	Headteacher	
			Deputy Headteacher	
			HR Manager	
			Office Manager	
Absence Detail				
First day of absence (date):	Telephone call rec'd	Reason for Absence	Likely duration of absence (if known)	
2 <sup>nd</sup> day				
3 <sup>rd</sup> day				
4 <sup>th</sup> day				
5 <sup>th</sup> day				
Trigger met? SAR scheduled (2 occurrences in 3mths or total 10 days in rolling year)				
Return to work meeting:				
Absence exceeds 1 week call HR discuss longer term cover plan		Form emailed to HR		
Name of Supply Agency		Name of candidate		
Estimated cost of absence		Payment authorised:	Yes / No	

**Completed forms will be held by the Head Teacher**