

Creating the very best school environments to enable pupils and staff to excel, fostering links with wider communities.



# Attendance Management Procedure

Responsibility for approval: Fusion Board  
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## 1.0 Purpose and scope

- 1.1 We recognise the value of our employees and are fully committed to their ongoing health and welfare. We are also committed to the promotion of health and well-being through a range of pro-active activities.
- 1.2 The primary aim of this policy is to improve attendance and to support the employee during genuine sickness absence in order to help facilitate a return to work as soon as possible.
- 1.3 This policy is based on good practice to ensure a consistent and effective approach to the management of sickness absence. The application of this policy will be fair, equitable, objective and will not discriminate either directly or indirectly on the grounds of an employee's protected characteristic(s).
- 1.4 This policy applies to all employees employed by Fusion. It does not apply to those employed by other organisations who are employed on other organisations' terms and conditions, casual workers or volunteers.

## 2.0 Principles

- 2.1 Managers must be actively involved in the management of their employee's attendance at work and are responsible for the implementation of this policy in a fair, consistent and supportive manner, taking advice and guidance as appropriate.
- 2.2 Every employee needs to take responsibility for achieving and maintaining good attendance and is expected to work together with their manager to resolve any attendance concerns.
- 2.3 All employees are required to follow the notification and reporting procedures regarding attendance at work. Entitlement to receive Statutory Sick Pay is dependent on the employee following the sickness absence reporting procedure.
- 2.4 Occupational Health is responsible for providing independent medical opinion. Occupational Health will work together with managers, employees and HR to identify practical solutions and propose reasonable adjustments in order to, where possible, resolve attendance concerns and facilitate a successful return to work.

## 3.0 Process

### Reporting sickness absence

- 3.1 On the first day of absence, the employee must contact their manager as soon as possible and no later than thirty minutes before their normal start time to confirm they are unwell and are not able to attend work. Their likely return date should also be discussed.
- 3.2 If the employee's manager is not available, the employee must contact another suitable person in the workplace to inform them of their absence details as above. The employee should always try to speak directly to their manager and only in exceptional circumstances should someone else telephone on their behalf. Text messages, emails or messages left with colleagues are not acceptable.
- 3.3 Where an employee fails to report for work and/or maintain appropriate contact during sick leave, the employee may be regarded as being absent without authorisation and formal action may be taken once every effort to contact the employee has been exhausted.

### Sickness Absence certification

- 3.4 For all absences over seven calendar days, employees will need to provide a medical certificate. If one is not provided, pay may be withheld until one is received. For absences under seven calendar days, the employee can self-certify their absence however the employer reserves the right to request a medical certificate if it is deemed necessary.

### Sick pay

- 3.5 Statutory Sick pay is payable provided the employee meets the following conditions:
- notify their manager on the first day of absence
  - provide a doctor's Statement of Fitness for Work (Fit Note) by the eighth day for absences over seven consecutive days
  - provide consecutive Fit Notes to cover the whole period of absence prior to the previous Fit Note lapsing, where there is a continuing sickness absence
  - undertake any examination that we may require by an approved medical practitioner, where prolonged or frequent absences occur.
- 3.6 It is the employee's responsibility to make any claims for benefits during any period that they are not entitled to Statutory Sick pay.

## 4.0 Keeping in touch

- 4.1 It is essential that during a period of sickness absence that contact is maintained between the employee and manager to:
- Determine/provide appropriate support and reduce any feelings of isolation from the workplace.
  - Review the expected duration of absence and any work commitments.
  - Identify what support could be put in place to assist an employee's return to work.
- 4.2 The employee must advise their manager or HR if their contact details change for the period of their absence in order for contact to be maintained.
- 4.3 Where an absence is longer than one week, the employee is responsible for ensuring that they make contact with their line manager at least every week. In the case of longer term absences the manager and employee may agree to vary the frequency of contact. If the employee is too unwell to make contact themselves, the manager should explore whether a family member or friend can keep in touch on their behalf on a temporary basis.

## 5.0 Return to work meetings

- 5.1 Upon any return to work the manager should discuss with the employee the reason for the absence, identify any assistance that may be needed in order to facilitate the employee's return to work and update them on what they have missed whilst they have been absent. This discussion should be recorded and retained in the employee personnel file.

## 6.0 Trigger Points

- 6.1 Managers should ensure an accurate record is kept of absence from work due to ill health and the trigger points below should be used to determine when absence from work is beginning to have an impact either on the service/school and/or colleagues. All absences due to ill health (including pre-arranged absences for planned procedures) are counted towards trigger points.

<b>Trigger Point 1</b>	3 or more single days of absence and/or 3 periods of absence in any rolling 3 month period
<b>Trigger Point 2</b>	6 or more single days of absence and/or 6 periods of absence in any rolling 12 month period
<b>Trigger Point 3</b>	8 or more days of absence in any rolling 12 month period
<b>Trigger Point 4</b>	Any other discernible pattern

## 7.0 Absence meetings

### First Absence meeting

- 7.1 When a trigger point is reached, the line manager should hold a first absence meeting with the employee who may be back at work or still absent at this time. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss with the employee their attendance at work and agree reasonable and practicable support in order to facilitate an improvement in attendance. This meeting should be viewed as an early, informal supportive intervention.
- 7.2 A record of the meeting should be made and any actions and required improvements noted. A second absence meeting should also be arranged, usually set within 8 to 12 weeks of the first meeting.

### Absence Review meeting (s)

- 7.3 An absence review meeting will be arranged to review the employees attendance during an absence management process. The purpose of the meeting is to review the employee's attendance and ensure that measures implemented remain supportive and effective, supporting the employee to return to work or sustain their attendance.
- 7.4 Absence review meetings should consider the following points:
  - whether there has been sufficient improvement to close the process; or
  - a further Absence Review Meeting is required; or
  - that there has been insufficient improvement and the absence is no longer sustainable, therefore the matter will be referred to a Formal Absence Hearing.
- 7.5 Where the process is closed following this meeting the employee will be advised that if they exceed any of the trigger points again within the following 12 months from the last day of absence, the process will recommence at the Absence Review Meeting stage.

### Absence Hearing

- 7.6 If an employee's absence record has not improved despite appropriate targets being set and support provided, a Formal Absence Hearing should be held in order to consider whether an employee is able to fulfil their contractual obligation to carry out the job for which they are employed and whether continued employment is appropriate.
- 7.7 The manager will need to provide a summary report which should include the reasons for absence(s), an up to date medical opinion from Occupational Health, what adjustments have been implemented, the impact of the absence(s) on the school/service and or colleagues and the support measures that have been considered.
- 7.8 Where it is determined that a Formal Absence Hearing is to be convened, the Manager, will notify the employee in writing giving reasonable notice, stating the details of the Formal Absence Hearing with a copy of the absence report.
- 7.9 The Chair of the hearing will ensure that all relevant information presented at the hearing by the manager and the employee will be considered. The outcomes may include:
  - to issue a warning – either first written, or final written warning with a review period of up to 12 months
  - adjournment while further medical information/reasonable adjustments are looked into with a date set to reconvene.
  - dismissal with notice on full contractual pay, pro rata to the hours worked, with adjustments as necessary for any national benefits received such as Statutory Sick Pay. During the notice period, employees will be expected to engage in any redeployment process.
- 7.10 Confirmation of the decision will be provided in writing to the employee within five days.
- 7.11 If the decision is to dismiss the employee, the appropriate period of notice should be issued in accordance with the employee's contract of employment. Where a final written warning or dismissal with notice is the outcome, the employee must be informed of their right of appeal and where to send the appeal.

## 8.0 Appeal

- 8.1 An employee may appeal against a decision stating the full grounds of their appeal and any other relevant information, within ten working days of receipt of the letter. The appeal will be dealt with impartially and wherever possible without unreasonable delay.
- 8.2 An Appeal Committee will be convened to hear the appeal. The employee will have a minimum of five days' notice to allow for preparation.
- 8.3 The decision will be confirmed in writing to the employee within five days. An appeal is not a re-hearing of all of the facts but to determine if the original decision was reasonable given the circumstances. The process ends with the decision of the Appeal Committee.