



Staff Absence and Sickness Policy

Version History

Version	Date	Responsible	Changes
2020/10	Jan 2020	JMB	Incorporate STEP changes
2021/03	March 2021	JMB	Changes for consistency and include SSP guidance for COVID-19

Cambusbarron Village Nursery

Staff Absence and Sickness Policy

Cambusbarron Village Nursery is committed to improving the health, wellbeing and attendance of all employees. We value the contribution our employees make to our success. So, when any employee is unable to be at work for any reason, we miss that contribution. Our Staff Absence and Sickness policy explains:

- What we expect from managers and employees when handling absence.
- How we will work to reduce levels of absence.

Short Term Sickness Absence

Where an employee is developing an unacceptable absence record, the manager will meet with the employee to review their attendance and agree the improvements that have to be made, together with appropriate timescales. An unacceptable absence record will cover not only frequent short term absences but also instances where there is an unacceptable pattern of absences e.g. the employee is always absent on a Monday.

The aim of this meeting is to facilitate an improvement in the employee's attendance and identify any medical issues that may be affecting their ability to attend work.

Such a meeting may result in a further review over a given period over which a substantial improvement may be sought. Failure to attain and sustain the standard may result in disciplinary action being taken in accordance with the Company's Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure.

Long Term Sickness Absence

The management of employees on long-term sickness absence is designed to balance the needs of the individual and the Company and to ensure that the Company and the employee remain in regular contact.

Long-term sickness absence, as a general guide, refers to those employees who are absent from work for more than 4 weeks. The nature of the illness however will determine the most appropriate management route. For example, an employee with a broken limb (which is a self-limiting condition) and an employee with a chronic underlying medical condition would benefit from differing approaches by the company.

Where an employee has an ongoing medical issue that is affecting their ability to attend work (or to carry out their full range of duties), the employee may be referred to a Company doctor and if necessary a report will be requested from the employee's own doctor.

The purpose of the referral is to identify the nature of the employee's condition, the likely impact on their work duties and any reasonable adjustments that the company can make to support their return to work. For example, a temporary or permanent change in duties, change in hours, phased return to work etc. The company will give genuine consideration to reasonable adjustments with the aim of balancing the needs of the employee and the Company.

In exceptional circumstances, the employee may be visited at home or in hospital and the Company will handle such visits with sensitivity and discretion.

The manager will remain in regular contact with employee during any prolonged period of sickness absence to monitor their progress with a view to agreeing solutions for their return to work in conjunction with their GP and Company doctor.

The full circumstances of the employee's situation will be taken into account. Those with a serious illness or disablement will continue to be treated sympathetically in accordance with the Company's policy.

Whilst the Company will endeavour to hold jobs open for staff on long-term sickness absence, this may not always be possible. Every effort will be made however, to place them in a suitable alternative job upon their return to work.

Notification of Incapacity to Work

If an employee is unable to attend work for reasons of sickness he/she should telephone the manager as soon as possible but no later than 1 hour before the normal start time to advise them of the situation, the nature of the sickness and its likely duration. Such notification is to be made personally (or if unable to do so, then by a relative, neighbour or friend). It is the employee's responsibility to keep the manager advised of the status of their illness and to provide the appropriate sickness certification.

Evidence of Incapacity

Absence of up to seven calendar days: For any period of absence lasting up to seven calendar days, the employee should fill out a self-certification form on return to work. Please see Appendix for a Self Assessment and Return to Work Form.

Absence of more than seven calendar days: If an absence has been (or is known that it will be) longer than seven days then the employee must submit to the Company a certificate from their doctor (a "Statement of Fitness for Work" or "Medical Certificate") stating he/she is not fit for work and the reasons why.

If the doctor provides a certificate stating that the employee "may be fit for work" he/she should inform the manager immediately. The Company will discuss with the employee any additional measures that may be needed to facilitate a return to work, taking into account the doctor's advice. This may take place at a return to work interview. If appropriate measures cannot be taken, the employee will remain on sick leave and the Company will set a date to review the situation.

Payments

Employees are entitled to Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) during absence as a result of sickness or injury, provided they meets the criteria laid down in government SSP regulation. Subject to the employee complying with this Staff Absence and Sickness Policy, particularly in relation to notification and the completion of self-certificates, the Company will pay statutory sick pay for eligible employees.

If the employee's illness is related to coronavirus (following a COVID-19 diagnosis or a requirement to self-isolate) SSP is paid for every day the employee is off work. If the illness is not related to coronavirus, SSP is normally paid for any period of sickness absence lasting for more than 3 qualifying days. For SSP purposes, qualifying days are the employee's normal contracted working days. Periods of sickness can be linked for SSP purposes if they occur within an 8 week period. SSP is paid by the Company for up to 28 weeks; thereafter the Company will complete and give the employee a form (SSP1) which they should take to their local Department for Work and Pensions office.

The entitlement to SSP relates to the employee's own sickness. Where an employee is absent for another reason e.g. illness of family member, this should be dealt with under the appropriate part of the policy e.g. Time off for Dependents.

The rules relating to the payment of Statutory Sick pay (SSP) can be complex and the purpose of this policy is to give general guidance. Employees should seek advice from the manager on their own particular eligibility.

The payment of SSP may exceptionally be withheld if the employee fails to comply with the notification procedure, gives false information relating to the absence or where the Company has reasonable grounds to believe that a false declaration of sickness has been made. In these circumstances, the employee may also be subject to disciplinary action.

Medical Examinations

The Company may at any time require the employee to submit to a medical examination, and consent to reports on the absence being supplied to the Company, by its Occupational Health Advisers. Failure to agree to such examinations without good cause will render the employee liable to disciplinary action.

Return to Work

Employees should notify the Manager as soon as they are able to confirm the date that they intend to return to work, specifically if this differs from the date of return previously notified.

On return to work after any period of sickness/injury absence, the employee will be required to attend a return to work interview, a record of which will be kept on their personnel file.

Maternity/Paternity/Parental/Adoption Leave and Pay

Entitlements are in accordance with the statutory provisions. Employees must inform the Manager at an early stage so that entitlements and obligations can be explained. More information can be obtained or by following the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/browse/working/time-off>

Time off for Dependents

Employees have a right to a reasonable amount of unpaid time off work under statutory provisions to deal with incidents involving a dependant. Entitlements are in accordance with the statutory provisions. Should an employee be in a situation where they require a short amount of time off work to provide help to dependants, they must inform the Manager of the reason for the absence and when they are likely to return to work.

Compassionate Leave

In the event of the death or funeral of a relative or close friend, an employee may be granted appropriate time off work and payment at the discretion of the Company after careful and sympathetic consideration has been given to the circumstances surrounding each bereavement.

Appointments

Employees should always try to make appointments such as with doctors or dentists outside of normal working hours but time off may be given in exceptional circumstances. Time off to attend such appointments must be confirmed by the manager. Appointment cards should be shown to the manager upon request.

Other Statutory Leave

There are other circumstances in which an employee may have a statutory right to ask for reasonable time off e.g. fulfilling duties as an employee representative. Employees should consult with their manager to discuss specific situations.

Absence due to travel difficulties

If an employee is unable to attend work due to travel difficulties (for example, a strike relating to public transport, the employee's car will not start; severe traffic disruption) the employee must inform his/her line manager as soon as possible. This should be within one hour of the usual starting time. If possible, employees should carry out work from home. If this is not possible the decision regarding payment for that day will be at the discretion of the management committee

Absence due to other difficulties

If an employee is unable to attend work due to a personal difficulty that is not covered by dependent leave (e.g. illness of a pet, need to stay in for a tradesman) this absence will be taken as unpaid leave.

General

The Company will take a serious view if employees take sickness leave that is not genuine and this may result in disciplinary action being taken.

In deciding whether or not an absence is acceptable or not the Company will take into account the reasons and extent of all the employee's absences, including any absence caused by sickness/injury. The Company cannot operate with an excessive level of absence as all absence, for whatever reason, compromise our ability to deliver our service.

Annual Holidays/Special Request

Individual holiday entitlement will be detailed in the Contract of Employment. The leave year runs from July to August and is a term time contract.

During the first year of employment an employee's holiday entitlement accrues monthly in advance, at the rate of one-twelfth of the annual entitlement each month. Employees will only be able to take days leave equivalent to the number of days accrued and these will normally be taken during school holiday times.

The Company will endeavour to meet special request holidays subject to the overall operating needs of the business.

For details on how to process a special holiday request, please speak to the manager.

Where termination of employment is due to gross misconduct or where the full contractual notice period is not given and worked, unused holiday pay will not be paid, apart from any payment required under the Working Time Regulations 1998.

Public Holidays

Entitlement to public/bank holidays is shown in individual contracts of employment.

Appendix



Self Certification Form

Name :

National Insurance Number :

Date of Birth :

What date did your sickness begin (including non-working days) :

Date fit for work (including non-working days) :

First notification to :

(Give method of notification and name of person notified)

Notification date :

Has your sickness ended " Y/N

Reason for absence :

Did you attend hospital clinic doctor

Did you receive medication from doctor self-prescribed from chemist

Please describe your symptoms :

Was your sickness caused by an accident at work?:

Is there anything else you need to make us aware of in relation to your absence?

Declaration

I confirm that the information I have provided is correct

Signed

Date