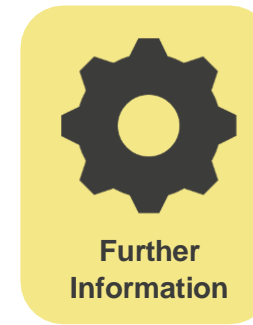
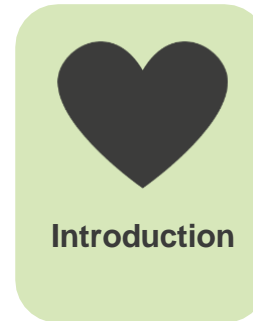




Supporting Attendance



Introduction

Creating a happy, healthy and productive workforce is a key priority for all of us. We have a commitment to care for our health and wellbeing. This policy focuses on a holistic approach to sickness absence. We recognise that individuals need the right support at the right time to stay happy and healthy in work. We also recognise that individuals may in some cases need time off work, for example to recover from illness or for a different reason which is having a significant impact on their health and wellbeing. We aim to achieve a better balance for our Staff and the Trust through:

- . Asset based conversations to support and explore alternatives;
- . A range of health and wellbeing initiatives;
- . Early intervention and prevention;
- . Effective management;
- . Accountability.

Where absence levels become a concern, for example they are having detrimental impact on others; teams, staff and a formal plan has not been achieved, a return to work or improvement, we will explore the most appropriate resolution which, in some cases, may result in termination of employment.

Who does this policy apply to?

This policy applies to all Trust employees, whether permanent or temporary. The policy does not apply to agency workers. As part of our pledge to support the Trade Union Congress' (TUC) Dying to Work Charter, we have developed separate guidance to support employees who have been diagnosed with a terminal illness.

What are the benefits of this policy?

- . Improved support for employees
- . Increased engagement levels
- . Cost reductions
- . Improved service delivery
- . Improved outcomes for people

Key Principles

How will we do it?

We recognise that each case will be different, so we have designed a range of tools to support managers and staff through the process. Whilst the action taken will depend on the circumstances we will ensure that we follow three key principles in all cases, whilst also considering the impact on employees, colleagues and our organisation.

Care	Consult	Consider
Take an asset based approach.	The individual	Absence reason and history
Treat people as individuals.	GP/Specialists (if needed)	Medical advice
Listen, explore options and alternatives.	Occupational Health (if needed)	The prognosis and individual's wishes
Help and support.	HR & OD	Reasonable adjustments/realistic alternatives
	Trade Unions	

The Equality Act

We have a responsibility as an employer not to discriminate against employees who have a disability. The above principles underpin our legal duty to consider and make adjustments which are 'reasonable' in the individual circumstances of an employee with a disability. 'Reasonable' will take into account factors such as cost, practicability and resources available to employers.

As an inclusive employer, we recognise our staff as individuals and embrace our commitment to equality and diversity. We will go beyond the legal requirement and explore adjustments and alternatives for all employees who need help and support based on their individual circumstances

Responsibilities

Employees

- Recognise the importance of regular attendance and be open, honest and accountable.
- Care for your health and well-being and ask for help and support when needed.
- On their first day of absence, an employee must report their absence in accordance with the Trust's Absence Reporting and Certification Procedure
- Inform your Headteacher/Line Manager as soon as possible if you are unable to fulfil your duties.
- Be open to suggestions; alternative arrangements or other options.
- Be aware of and access health and wellbeing initiatives.
- Provide appropriate medical evidence as required; a FIT Note is required for absence of more than 7 days in a row.
- Certify any sickness absence with an end date on your return to work.

Line Manager / Trust HR Officer

- Create a working environment that maximises attendance and engagement.
- Take an asset based approach to sickness absence, discuss realistic alternatives and support plans for employees.
- Promote regular supportive meetings with employees.
- Be aware of and promote health and wellbeing initiatives.
- Manage issues and take appropriate action, including formal action where necessary.
- Trust HR Officer / Admin Officers to maintain accurate records for all employees for all occasions of absence.

HR

- Provide advice and guidance to Headteacher/Line Manager and employees on the application of policy, including support options and appropriate action.
- Provide tools and training for Headteacher/Line Manager.
- Monitor the effectiveness of this policy and seek regular feedback from all employees.
- Consult with trade union colleagues on the policy and take a partnership approach to supporting attendance.

Trade Unions

- Provide advice, information, guidance and support to members.
- Provide feedback on the effectiveness of the policy.
- Work in partnership to explore options, support and solutions for members.

Procedure

Wellbeing Check In

A focused conversation on early intervention and prevention to support to employee's wellbeing and attendance. A wellbeing check in can be held before, during or after a period of sickness. This should be at a private space either at School or the Trust Head Office or in some cases virtually. Wellbeing check in's will help to inform decisions on when to manage absence formally.

Supporting Attendance Plan

A plan to agree the employee's return to work or improvement in attendance. The plan should be reviewed at agreed intervals to determine any necessary changes, extensions, improvements, closure or where it is not being achieved. A plan can be arranged when a return to work or improvement has not been achieved despite support offered/provided as part of the wellbeing check ins. This should be at a private space in School or the Trust Head Office. Trust HR Officer will be present at plan meetings and employees can be accompanied by a work colleague or a recognised Trade Union representative if they wish.

Plan Review Meetings

Managers/Trust HR Officer and employees should review the plan at agreed times and consider if there is a change in circumstances to ensure support is in place and accessed within the agreed timescales. Trust HR Officer will be present at plan review meetings and employees can be accompanied by a work colleague or a recognised Trade Union representative if they wish

Plan Outcomes

Plan achieved—The plan will be closed and the employees attendance monitored for twelve months.

Plan not achieved—Options may include, if not already explored, ill health retirement, medical redeployment or other mutually agreed exit options. Where these are not available or appropriate, an attendance hearing may be arranged.

Employee concerns

If an employee is unhappy with how a Support Attendance Plan is handled or any decisions made, they should raise their concerns with their Senior Leader/Head Teacher / Trust HR. The Senior Leader/Headteacher/ Trust HR will review decisions and action taken.

Appeals

An employee has the right to appeal if they are dismissed. Appeals should be made within ten working days of receiving the letter confirming the outcome of the attendance hearing. Appeals will be handled in line with the Trust Appeals Procedures.

