

Sickness Absence Policy (Teachers)

Summary:

The School aims for a high level of attendance in order to deliver services efficiently and effectively.

- You are responsible for your own attendance at work.
- Your manager is responsible for managing absence fairly and in a consistent manner.

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Who does this policy apply to?	It applies to employees employed on teacher's terms and conditions of employment.
What should I do if I am sick and cannot come into work?	<p>You must inform your manager by 9.30am, before your normal start time or in line with the school's cover arrangements.</p> <p>If you are sick for more than three consecutive days you must ring and up-date your manager on the fourth day.</p> <p>You will need to complete a self certification for any absence up to seven calendar days.</p> <p>If you are sick for eight calendar days or more, you must supply a doctor's fit note and ring and speak to your manager on the eighth day.</p> <p>You should then continue to update your manager before the expiry of every fit note and maintain continuous fit note cover.</p> <p>If you fail to follow the reporting procedure your manager may suspend your sickness pay.</p>
Do I need a doctor's	You should complete a self certification for the first seven days

fit note?

and if you are still sick you must obtain a doctor's fit note from day eight onwards, continuously until you are fit to return to work.

What do I do if my fit note says I may be fit for work?

If your doctor believes you may be fit for work, they will provide guidance on the fit note. You should send your fit note to your manager as normal and ring them to discuss the details. Your manager will discuss with you whether or not the advice on the doctor's fit note can be accommodated, bearing in mind the needs of the school/service. If for any reason it is not possible to accommodate your return to work at this stage, you will remain off sick.

If your manager is able to accommodate the guidance you must return to work. Should you refuse, your manager will need to consider taking action under the [Conduct Policy](#).

Will I be paid when I am off sick?

Yes, provided you follow the requirements of the policy you will receive pay in line with the conditions of service for teachers. If you fail to follow the requirements, your manager may suspend your sickness pay.

The amount of sickness pay depends on your length of service as follows:

- First year of service full pay for 25 working days and after completing four month's service half pay for 50 working days.
- Second year of service full pay for 50 working days and then half pay for 50 working days.
- Third year full pay for 75 working days and half pay for 75 working days.
- Fourth and subsequent year of service full pay for 100 working days and half pay for 100 working days.

For the purpose of the sick pay scheme, "service" includes all aggregated teaching service with one or more local education authorities.

Sick pay includes, where appropriate, statutory sick pay and will not exceed normal pay.

What is the sick leave year?

1st April to 31st March. Where you are sick on 31st March in any year, no new entitlement will begin to accrue until you return to duty.

What happens if my absence is due to an injury sustained at work?

In the case of absence due to accident, injury or assault confirmed by an approved medical practitioner to have arisen out of and in the course of the your employment you will receive full sick pay for a period of six months, subject to producing self certificates and/or doctors' fit notes (as required) from the day of the accident, injury or assault up to the date of recovery. After the initial six months you will be

Will my manager refer me to Occupational Health (OH)?	<p>entitled to normal sick leave and pay as above. The Burgundy Book provides further detail on this.</p> <p>Your manager may refer you to OH if they feel their input would be helpful, particularly if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• You have had a total of eight days absence or more (whether on one occasion or accumulated over several occasions) during the last 12 months.• Your absence is related to mental illness or musculoskeletal issues.• They become aware that you have a medical condition that is likely to result in long term absence.• Your absence continues after a period of four weeks.
What happens if my manager asks me to attend OH?	<p>The school may ask for your consent for OH to contact your doctor for access to information based on your medical records. The details provided by your doctor are entirely confidential to OH and will not be shared with anyone else.</p> <p>The purpose for requesting this information is simply to allow OH to have a full picture of your medical situation. This helps to ensure that any advice subsequently provided by OH to your manager regarding the effect of your health on your employment is based on the full facts of the situation, rather than what otherwise might be an incomplete picture. However, you do have a legal right to refuse consent for OH to contact your doctor or, if you do provide consent, to see and comment on the report before your doctor sends it to OH.</p> <p>Your manager will use the advice and guidance from OH as a basis to talk to you about managing your health and/or return to work and to help make informed decisions about the potential effect of your health on your employment. OH and your manager will only be able to make decisions about your employment based on the information they have.</p> <p>An employee who unreasonably fails to co-operate with their employer in the appropriate management of their sickness absence may have their contractual sickness pay suspended.</p>
What happens if the medical advisers recommend a phased return to work	<p>Where a short (normally no longer than two to four weeks) period of rehabilitation is recommended by OH or your own doctor, the school will in discussion and agreement with you, implement it (wholly or in part) if possible, giving due consideration to the needs of the school/service. It may be unsafe if you are partially fit to attempt to return to normal duties but for rehabilitation you can attend work, with appropriate support, during your sickness absence. In these circumstances you normally continue to submit fit notes and will receive normal entitlement to sick pay.</p>

Your manager may use their discretion to agree an appropriate arrangement for a phased return depending on the situation and with reference to the guidance, available to managers, linked to the [Attendance Policy](#).

Where the school is being asked to consider longer periods of rehabilitation, the school may agree with you a temporary adjustment to your contract of employment.

The purpose of a phased return is:

- To allow you an opportunity to return to work in a structured way when you have recovered. This helps you to build up your stamina and confidence for a full return to work after a long period of absence.
- To allow you to experience a gradual return to work to enable you to test your own ability to do the job in relation to your medical condition.
- To allow your head teacher (or Chair of Governors - in the case of a head teacher) managers and OH provider to assess your actual level of fitness reached and the advisability and timescale for a return to normal duty.
- To allow the school to meet its obligations under the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Can my manager contact me when I am off sick?

Yes. You and your manager should keep in regular contact during any period of sickness absence, this could reasonably include meeting with you.

What if I am sick during a school closure period?

Sickness during a school closure will not affect a teacher's entitlements to sick leave. You should continue to submit fit notes if sick during closure periods.

The rate of pay applicable during the closure is the rate applicable on the last day before the closure.

What if I feel I am fit to return to work before the end of my doctor's fit note?

Where a doctor's fit note says you are not fit but during the period of the fit note you feel you have recovered sufficiently and want to return to work, you should contact your manager to discuss. In considering your return to work you and your manager will undertake a risk assessment. Any early return to work should be confirmed in writing.

Will my manager ask me to attend a return to work meeting?

Your manager will discuss your sickness absence on your return to work and may ask you to attend a return to work meeting after any period of sickness absence but particularly when you have had:

What is the purpose of a return to work meeting?

- short term absence totaling eight days accumulated over the last 12 months, or
- a single period of absence of more than 14 consecutive calendar days

The purpose of the meeting is to:

- welcome you back to work
- ensure you are fit to return, particularly if you have been absent for a prolonged period of time
- identify the cause of the absence
- together you will address any problem that may be causing or contributing to the absence
- agree priorities for the post-absence period
- agree any initial support that may be needed when you return

What will happen if I do not follow the reporting procedure?

Your absence will be unauthorised and dealt with as a disciplinary matter. Your sickness pay will be suspended.

What about Ill Health Retirement?

The [Teachers Pension scheme](#) provides further advice on this.

Can I be dismissed from my job for being sick?

Sickness absence is managed through our [Attendance Policy](#) and the aim is always to secure sustained improvement in attendance at work. However, poor attendance or an inability to carry out the role for which you are employed can result in dismissal.

I have a disability. Will this be taken into account when dealing with my sickness absence?

Yes. Your manager will comply with The Equality Act (2010) and seek to make reasonable adjustments to support you to do your job. When appropriate they will take advice from OH and HR.

I have a disability, is there any support available?

Yes. The Access to Work Service offers financial and practical assistance to people with a disability to try and enable them to continue in work. You contact the [Access to Work Service](#) through Jobcentreplus.

More information can be found on this website: <http://disabilityrightsuk.org/access-work>

What happens if my

If you cannot do your current job after reasonable adjustments

disability means I can't do my job?

have been fully explored the school will seek to redeploy you. However if no suitable employment is available you may be dismissed.

If these measures fail then ill health retirement may be appropriate. If you are under normal retirement age you should apply for ill health benefits, completing both the application form and medical evidence form. This should be done with your line manager so that OH can be involved if appropriate and the employer's certificate can be completed.

I am not sick but need time off for an emergency, what should I do?

Speak to your manager to see if you can take leave, under the '[Authorised Special Leave Policy](#)', which covers compassionate leave and family care leave.

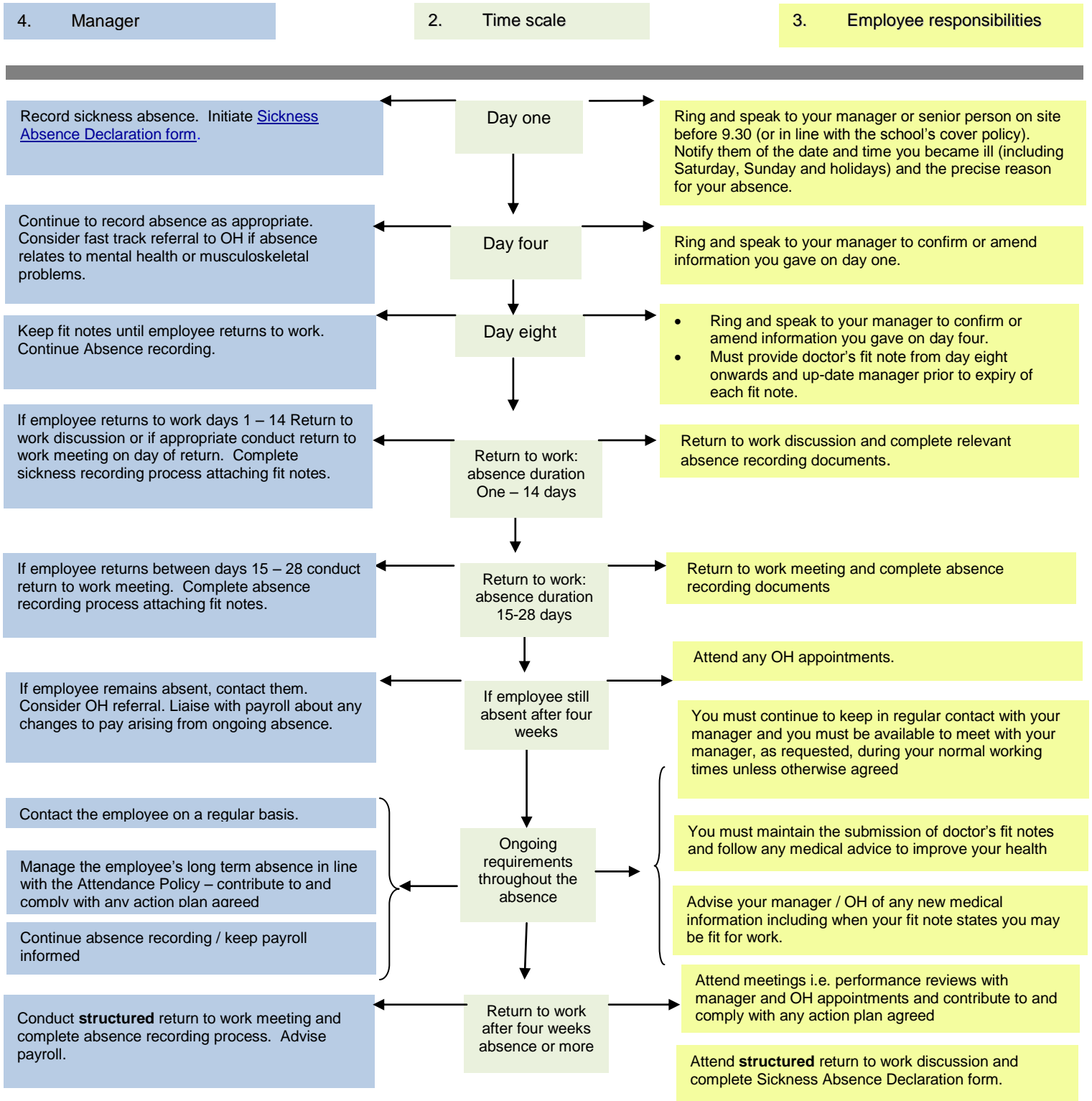
What happens if I am absent as a result of an accident for which a third party is liable?

In this case you should advise the school immediately. The school will expect you to provide details of any settlement of a claim for damages related to the injury/condition which has caused the absence and may require you to pay back part or all of the sick pay paid but this amount will not exceed any damages recovered.

Are there any other circumstances in which sick pay may be withheld?

If, in the opinion of the governing body, the injury/condition has arisen due to your misconduct, if you have failed to comply with the conditions of this scheme or have behaved in a way prejudicial to your recovery, sick pay may be suspended. In this case you will be allowed to meet with the appropriate panel of governors to respond to the concerns.

Flowchart 1. Sickness absence from work Manager and employee responsibilities during sickness absence



Note: Reporting sickness absence

In certain cases it may be necessary to warn an employee that failure to notify sickness absence as outlined above will result in loss of pay and / or exclusion from the relevant sick pay scheme and that formal action may also need to be taken under the Attendance Policy