Unclassified
HRS 75b

Schools' Model Management of Absence Policy Guidance

This Policy has been formally adopted by the Governing Body of

The Primrose Centre.

Signed by the Chair of Governors:

Date ratified by the Governing: November 2026

Date of review: November 2027

Table of Contents

1.0	**Introduction**	**3-4**
	Management of Absence Flowchart	5
2.0	**Exceptions and Exclusions**	**6**
3.0	**General Points**	**7-9**
3.1	An Employee's Right to be Accompanied	7
3.2	Sickness Absence Notification and Staying in touch	7
3.3	Recording and Monitoring Sickness Absence	8
3.4	Informal Welfare Contact	8
3.5	Return to work contact and follow up support/action	9
4.0	**Decision Makers**	**10**
5.0	**Additional Points**	**11-14**
5.1	Referrals to Occupational Health	11
5.2	Phased return to work	11
5.3	Absence due to Work-Related Illness or Injury	12
5.4	Disability Related Absence	12
5.5	Pregnancy Related Absence	12
5.6	Stress Related Absence	12-13
5.7	Medical Redeployment	13
5.8	Ill-Health Retirement	13
5.9	Chronic or Terminal Illness	13
5.10	Medical Suspension	14
5.11	Grievance against the Designated Person	14
6.0	**Sickness Absence Triggers and Policy Stages**	**15-19**
6.1	Informal Welfare Contact	15
6.2	Sickness Absence Triggers	15
6.3	Initial Review of Absence Record	15
6.4	**Formal Stage 1 Meeting**	**15-16**
6.5	**Formal Stage 2 Meeting**	**16-17**
6.6	**Formal Stage 3 (Staffing Committee)**	**17-19**
6.7	**Appeals Committee**	**19**
7.0	**Records**	**20**
8.0	**Confidentiality**	**20**
Appendix 1	**Procedure for Formal Stage 3 (Staffing Committee)**	**21**
Appendix 2	**Procedure for the Appeals Committee (Stage 1 and 2)**	**22**
Appendix 3	**Procedure for the Appeals Committee (Stage 3)**	**23**
Annex 1	**Schedule of Designated Persons (Schools)**	**24**

1. 0 Introduction

1.1 This document sets out a framework for implementing the Schools' Model Management of Absence Policy and must be applied in conjunction with the Policy as it provides information and practical guidance around the Local Authority's approach to handling sickness absence and related matters.

Why have a Management of Absence Policy?

1.2 The primary objective of this Policy is to manage and improve attendance at work through the provision of advice and guidance to:

1.2.1 deal with all sickness absence in a fair and consistent manner, treating employees with tact and sensitivity;

1.2.2 provide clarification for employees of what to do when they are off sick, what the process entails and what support is available;

1.2.3 encourage employees to proactively manage their own health and well-being and fully engage in the processes aimed at assisting them to return to work;

1.2.4 help employees successfully return to and sustain attendance at work;

1.2.5 ensure all sickness absence is correctly and promptly notified and recorded for monitoring and payment purposes.

1.3 The Designated Person is the Head Teacher. However, unless otherwise stated, the Head Teacher may delegate certain responsibilities to the appropriate Line Manager/Senior Manager within the School to deal with sickness issues at Formal Stage 1 and 2.

1.4 **The Designated Person needs to:**

- manage sickness absence in a fair and consistent manner, however, this does not mean that each case of sickness absence should be handled in the same way, as no two cases are rarely the same.
- ensure employees are aware of this policy and guidance and their responsibilities in relation to sickness absence.
- ensure that sickness absence is reported accurately and that sickness data is correct.
- agree regular contact and communication with staff who are absent particularly if this becomes extended in terms of type and frequency of contact and to keep a log of this to ensure that all contact with absent employees is carried out in a supportive manner.
- ensure where an employee has a disability as defined in the Equality Act 2010 that appropriate reasonable adjustments are considered and accommodated.
- carry out return to work meetings with all employees who return following any period of absence on the day of return, or as soon as reasonably practicable.
- establish clear plans of action where it is decided such action is justified.
- to seek advice and make referrals to Occupational Health where appropriate at any stage in the absence or to prevent and/or minimise an absence then to act on it as necessary.

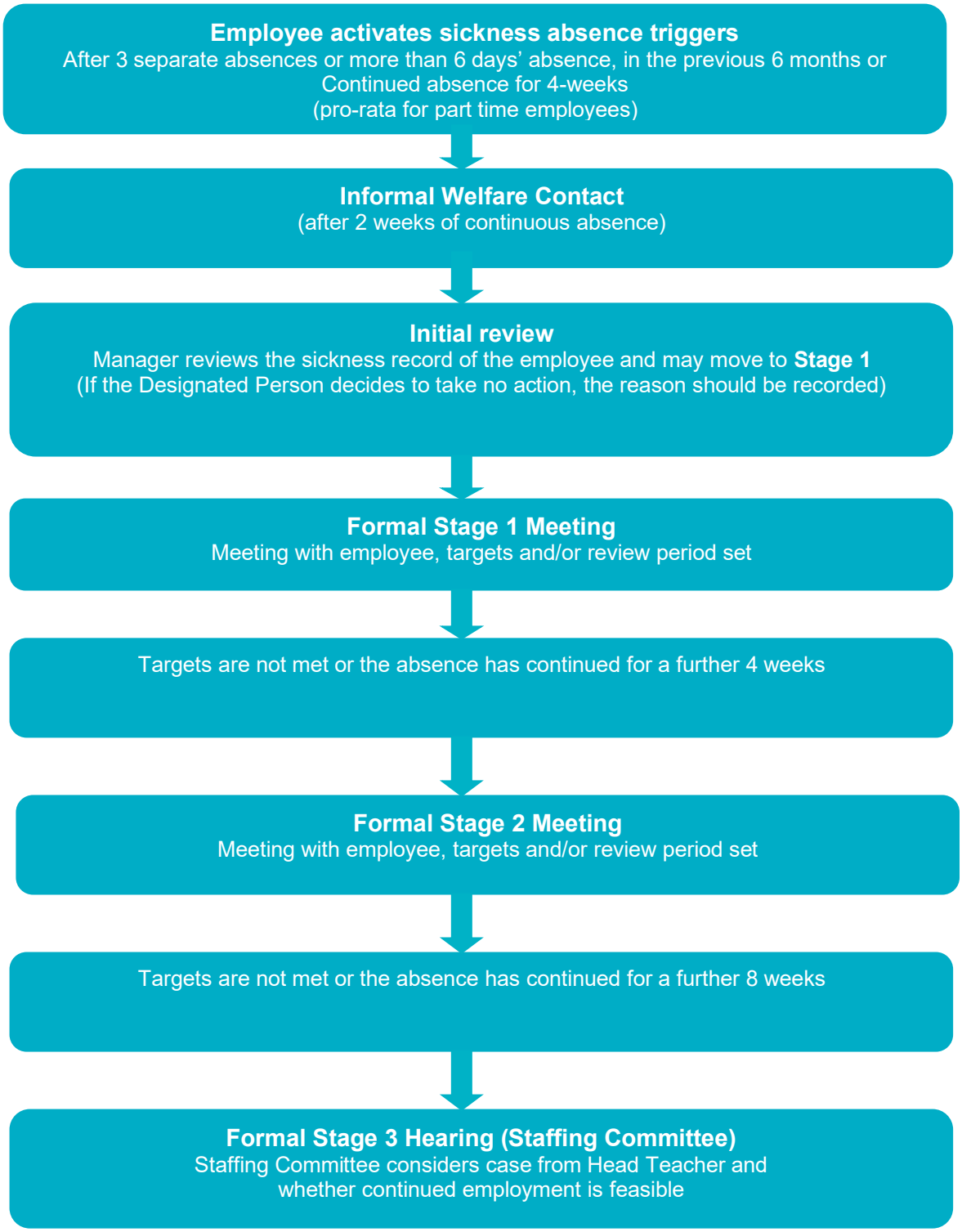
- ensure notes of meetings at all stages, formal records and copies of correspondence are retained on the employee's personal file for future reference and that confidentiality is maintained in relation to information about sickness absence. Formal letters to be issued to employees.

1.5 **Employees need to:**

- act responsibly with regard to any type of sickness absence and to adhere to the requirements set out in the policy and supporting guidance.
- follow all School notification and certification requirements clearly communicating the reason/s for their absence.
- participate in return to work meetings and attend appointments with Occupational Health as required. If an employee is unable to attend an appointment with Occupational Health with good reason, they must telephone immediately to rearrange.
- inform the Designated Person if they have a disability including the nature of the disability, if it will impact on their work and any requirements or reasonable adjustments that may be needed for them to fulfil their role.
- to respond to communications from the Designated Person whilst off sick and to make every effort to attend meetings to discuss their absence.

Management of Absence Flowchart

(NB: an employee must be informed of their right to appeal against any action taken at any Formal Stage)



2.0 Exceptions and Exclusions

2.1 The Schools' Model Management of Absence Policy applies to all School based employees (Non-Teaching and Teaching staff including Head Teachers) as well as all employees of Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) but should **not** normally be used where:

2.1.1 there is evidence of a repeated failure to comply with the requirement to follow the School's normal sickness absence notification process and/or a failure to provide the timely submission of medical certificates or occasions(s) of unauthorised absence or potential concerns relating to the abuse of the Sick Pay Scheme, then such breaches should be managed in accordance with the School's Model Disciplinary Policy following guidance from the School's HR provider.

3.0 General Points

3.1 An Employee's Right to be Accompanied

3.1.1 At all Formal Stages the employee must be informed of their right to be accompanied by a work colleague or a trade union representative.

3.1.2 Representatives do have the right to put forward representations on behalf of the employee and/or sum up the case, should the employee wish them to do so. However, the representative cannot answer questions put to the employee. The employee must answer any questions that are directed at them.

3.1.3 Representatives can bring additional and/or mitigating circumstances to the attention of the Designated Person or in encouraging and the supporting the employee to do this.

3.2 Sickness Absence Notification

3.2.1 When absent please **call or message Maddie (Acting Headteacher – 07538202026) before 7.45am stating the reason for the absence, how long you expect the absence to last and possible return to work date. You should report every day of the absence unless there is a doctor's note in place.** In Maddie's absence please call or message Zoe (Assistant Headteacher) on 07933194772 before 7.45am. Failure to comply with this will result in loss of pay unless there are acceptable mitigating circumstances.

Staying in touch

3.2.2 At this stage, the Designated Person and employee should agree the frequency of contact depending on the nature and circumstances of the absence. This could include more frequent contact should the expected duration of the absence be unknown or an alternative frequency may be agreed where the expected date of return is clearer.

3.2.3 Unless otherwise stated in local arrangements, employees will also need to contact the Designated Person on Day 4 of their absence.

3.2.4 The Designated Person should agree with the employee what information will be shared with colleagues based on any sensitivity surrounding the absence. In exceptional circumstances (serious illness, hospital admission etc) a partner, relative or close friend may contact the Designated Person on an employee's behalf.

3.2.5 The employee is expected to keep the School informed of any changes to their health and/or circumstances including any prolonged absence so that cover can be arranged in a timely manner.

3.2.6 The Designated Person should also keep employees informed of the relevant stages in the process and general developments at work.

3.3 Recording and Monitoring Sickness Absence

3.3.1 On receipt of sickness notification, the Designated Person will record all absences in accordance with local arrangements.

3.3.2 Employees will be required to complete relevant forms for all occasions of absence (HR70). After 7 days consecutive sickness absence i.e. on Day 8, employees will be required obtain a doctor's medical certificate (fit note) and forward it to their normal contact point. Notwithstanding the requirement to keep the School informed of their continued absence, further medical certificates will need to be submitted by the employee to cover the full period of absence.

3.3.3 Where there is cause for concern the Designated Person may request that medical certificates are provided in respect of all future absences of less than 7 days. This request must be confirmed in writing to the employee and the employee informed that the School will reimburse the cost of any medical certificates provided on this basis. Where a cost is incurred by the employee then on production of the certified receipt they must be reimbursed without unnecessary delay.

First day of sickness	HR70 must be submitted by
Monday	Thursday
Tuesday	Friday
Wednesday	Monday
Thursday	Monday
Friday	Tuesday
Saturday / Sunday	Wednesday

3.4 Informal Welfare Contact

3.4.1 Informal welfare contact either by telephone or in person should be made within a period of 2 calendar weeks continued absence.

3.4.2 Should it be decided that a meeting is necessary, then in discussion with the employee, it will be mutually agreed whether this takes place as a home visit, or at the School or a neutral venue. The employee must be informed in these circumstances that although this is an informal meeting, they may be accompanied. The Designated Person should not conduct such meetings alone.

3.4.3 A welfare visit/contact provides an opportunity for the manager and employee to discuss:

- the nature of the illness/condition
- the potential return to work date
- an Occupational Health referral, if appropriate and to offer any assistance or support
- the impact of any continued absence i.e. inform the employee that the process is informal but that formal stages will commence when the employee has been absent for a continued period of 4 calendar weeks

3.5 Return to work contact and follow up support/action

3.5.1 The return to work contact is an essential and compulsory element in the management of sickness absence and will be carried out on each occasion of absence. Contact should take place on the day of return, or as soon as reasonably practicable and will be recorded by the Designated Person on the final HR70 completed by the employee.

3.5.2 The nature of the return to work contact will vary in accordance with the reasons for the absence and any previous absences but the basic purpose is to recognise the employee has been absent and to offer support and encouragement on their return to work.

3.5.3 When carrying out return to work contact the Designated Person will discuss with the employee:

- settling back into work
- a work update
- the reason for the employee's absence (Is it related to a previous absence? Is there a likelihood of it happening again? Is it connected to a disability? Is further medical treatment required? Does it impact on the risk assessment for a new or expectant mother?)
- the impact of the absence on School service delivery
- the implications of any future absence

3.5.4 Depending on the circumstances of the absence the support available from the School can include:

- occupational health advice
- counselling services
- training
- advice/support from the HR provider, the School or trade union depending on the issues raised
- Consider work stress risk assessment

3.5.5 Depending on the circumstances of the absence the support available from the School can include:

- occupational health referral
- an investigation into the circumstances if the reason for the absence was work related
- a review of any risk assessments
- a phased return to work and/or any adjustment to duties supported by Occupational Health (balancing the needs of the employee/School service)

4.0 Decision Makers

4.1 For all intents and purposes the key decision maker will be the Head Teacher. However, certain responsibilities will be delegated to the appropriate Line Manager within the School who is familiar with the process to deal with sickness absence issues under informal Welfare Contact Stage and Formal Stage 1 and 2. This is explicit within the Schools' Model Management of Absence Policy as the Line Manager is usually in the best position to deal with the matter without delay.

4.2 If the employee has been absent for a period of 4 calendar weeks or if they have activated the absence management triggers i.e. following 3 or more separate absences in the previous 6 months or more than 6 days absence in the previous 6 months then the Designated Person may convene a meeting at Formal Stage 1.

4.3 Following the meeting at Formal Stage 1 should the employee's absence have continued for a further period of 4 calendar weeks or targets have not been achieved, then the Designated Person will convene a meeting at Formal Stage 2.

4.4 If following the meeting at Formal Stage 2 should the employee's absence have continued for a further period of 8 calendar weeks or targets have not been achieved, then the Head Teacher having carefully reviewed the case, will proceed to a formal hearing at Stage 3 of the Policy and this will be heard by the Staffing Committee.

4.5 An appeal against any decision or action at Formal Stage 1 or 2 or against dismissal (Formal Stage 3) made by the Staffing Committee will be considered by the Appeals Committee of the Governing Body. The decision of the Appeals Committee is final, and the internal process is exhausted, following the appeal outcome at Formal Stage 3.

5.0 Additional Points

5.1 Referrals to Occupational Health

5.1.1 A referral to Occupational Health can be made where appropriate at any period in the absence or to prevent and/or minimise an absence. An employee must be notified that a referral is to be made.

5.1.2 The usefulness of the report provided by Occupational Health will depend greatly on the factual information provided by the School and the specific questions they seek advice on. A report will usually provide advice on what the underlying health issues are, if and when the employee is likely to return to the workplace and any limits on the employee being able to perform their job. The employee will have the opportunity to see and comment on the report before it is released to the Designated Person, nd should further information be required from the employee's General Practitioner/Consultant, then the employee will be notified of their rights under both the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988 and the Access to Health Records Act 1990.

5.1.3 It is important for employees to attend arranged appointments with Occupational Health. If an employee is unable to attend an appointment with good reason, they must telephone immediately to rearrange. If an employee refuses without good cause to consent to medical reports being obtained and/or to attend medical appointments, the Designated Person/Staffing Committee/Appeals Committee will make decisions based on the information available to them at that time.

5.2 Phased return to work

5.2.1 In some cases specific advice or recommendations may be received from the Occupational Health Physician or other medical practitioner that following an employee's long-term ill health, a phased return to work and/or restricted duties is/are appropriate.

5.2.2 The actual return to work arrangements should be discussed and agreed with the employee prior to any return to work. During a phased return, the hours and/or duties should be increased gradually so that by the end of the period, the employee has returned to their full substantive hours/duties. In some cases there may be a need to adopt a more flexible approach in the first period of the phased return. For example, a too rapid increase in hours can sometimes compromise a successful phasing in process, whereas a slower start can often be offset by a quicker increase towards the end. The phased return to work will not normally exceed a period of 6 weeks. In many cases a full return to work will be achieved in less time.

5.2.3 This facility is to encourage a prompt and sustainable return to work. The period of the phased return will be on normal pay and will not be treated as sickness absence. The provisions of this entitlement also apply to part time employees on a pro rata basis.

5.2.4 Unless there are exceptional circumstances an employee will only be able to

use this facility once in any 12 month period.

5.3 Absence due to Work-Related Illness or Injury

5.3.1 If an employee has an accident at work which is followed by an absence then doctor's medical certificates will be required from the first day of absence. The School will reimburse the costs incurred. Where a cost is incurred by the employee then on production of the certified receipt they must be reimbursed without unnecessary delay.

5.3.2 An Incident Report Form must be completed, preferably by the employee involved, if this is not possible then by the Designated Person. If applicable, the Designated Person must telephone and inform the Local Authority Health and Safety Officer of the incident/absence to enable the Health and Safety Executive to be notified as appropriate.

5.3.3 Where an employee is absent as a result of a work-related illness or injury and this absence activates a trigger, the Designated Person should assess the work-related illness or injury on a case by case basis and where this can be justified, may apply discretion to not proceed to a Formal Stage meeting.

5.4 Disability Related Absence

5.4.1 The Equality Act 2010 is a statutory framework which provides legal protection from discrimination on the grounds of disability and places a duty on employers to consider and accommodate reasonable adjustments.

5.4.2 When notified that an employee is disabled, a risk assessment must be completed and recorded by the Designated Person when investigating reasonable adjustments for the disabled employee. Where an employee has informed the Designated Person, a record will be kept of any absence which they state is connected to their disability.

5.4.3 The Designated Person with the employee will update the Disability Passport Form where required.

5.4.4 The Sickness Absence Management Stages will still apply and the Absence Management Triggers will remain the same where absence is related to a disability. However, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 the School must consider and accommodate reasonable adjustments.

5.5 Pregnancy Related Absence

5.5.1 Pregnancy related absence would not normally be considered under this Policy. When notified that an employee is pregnant, the relevant manager should consider the workplace risks by completing a risk assessment form for a new or expectant mother, and in discussion with the employee, agree any reasonable adjustments to address and/or respond to any concerns raised.

5.6 Stress Related Absence

5.6.1 The Designated Person depending on the circumstances may need to seek

advice from Occupational Health when they become aware that an employee's absence is as a result of stress, regardless of whether this is related to work or personal factors. An informal welfare meeting should be arranged with the employee because identifying the cause early may help resolve the absence before it becomes protracted. A Stress Risk Assessment is undertaken.

5.6.2 If a School is aware or is made aware that an employee who is suffering from work-related stress perceives the Designated Person to be the cause of that stress, then it is advisable that an alternative suitable manager is allocated to maintain contact during the period of sickness absence.

5.7 Medical Redeployment

5.7.1 A Head Teacher is obliged to consider the medical redeployment of an employee if he/she is deemed no longer able to carry out the substantive duties of their post. In the first instance, medical advice will have been sought by the Designated Person from Occupational Health and based on this specific recommendation, medical redeployment should be explored within the School in the first instance then within the Local Authority.

5.7.2 The employee will be informed that their continued employment is "at risk" and that the redeployment period is time bound and failure to find alternative employment may lead to the termination of their employment with notice.

5.7.3 If a period of redeployment or other action fails, or if an employee returns to work under any Formal Stage and then goes off sick again within a 26-week period, the Designated Person may reactivate the process at the Formal Stage previously reached.

5.8 Ill Health Retirement

5.8.1 In some circumstances where employees are having difficulty in sustaining attendance at work, seeking a medical opinion on ill health retirement may be appropriate. No decision to pursue this option will be taken without reviewing the medical evidence available at that time and consulting personally with the employee. Such a request can be initiated by the Designated Person (i.e. Head Teacher) in discussion with the employee or by the employee in discussion with the Designated Person (i.e. Head Teacher).

5.8.2 Ill health retirement is not automatic and to qualify, a pension scheme member must satisfy the necessary medical criteria as defined by the regulations governing the Teacher's Pension Scheme or Local Government Pension Scheme as appropriate. It is recognised that the employee's trade union representative may also be able to assist the process on behalf of their member and with the employee's consent this should be permitted.

5.9 Chronic or Terminal Illness

5.9.1 If an employee has a chronic or terminal illness appropriate support will be provided. It is primarily the Head Teacher's responsibility to maintain contact as this is part of the School's duty of care. However, the individual's wishes

will be of paramount importance and such cases will be dealt with sensitively and confidentially.

5.10 Medical Suspension

5.10.1 The School reserves the right to send an employee home if they do not believe the employee is well enough to perform their duties and their continued presence is placing at risk the health, education and welfare of pupils.

5.10.2 The employee must be informed in these circumstances that although this will be an informal meeting, they may be accompanied so long as this does not unreasonably delay the convening of the meeting. The Designated Person should discuss with the employee the reasons why they are being sent home. The employee should be informed that suspension from work is on health grounds, is not conduct related and during this period they will receive normal pay.

5.10.3 If an employee requests to return to work, they may be asked to produce a medical certificate (fit note) confirming that they are well enough to work and/or to attend an appointment with Occupational Health before they return to work.

5.11 Grievance against the Designated Person

5.11.1 If an employee lodges a grievance against the Designated Person at any Stage of the Policy, then this will be dealt with through the appeals process within the Schools' Model Management of Absence Policy. However, without the implication of any guilt, the School may wish to consider whether in these circumstances an alternative suitable manager is allocated to maintain contact during the period of sickness absence.

5.11.2 If an employee has a grievance about an unrelated matter, this may be progressed concurrently.

6.0 Sickness Absence Triggers and Policy Stages

6.1 Informal Welfare Contact

6.1.2 Informal welfare contact either by telephone or in person should be made within a period of 2 calendar weeks continued absence. The purpose of the welfare contact is to:

- ascertain the employee's health position and offer any assistance or support
- inform the employee that the process is informal but that formal stages will commence when the employee has been absent for a continued period of 4 calendar weeks

6.2 Sickness Absence Triggers

6.2.1 This procedure will be triggered:

- following 3 separate or more absences in the previous 6 months or
- more than 6 days absence in the previous 6 months

These triggers apply to part time employees on a pro-rata basis.

6.3 Initial Review of Absence Record

6.3.1 When an employee has activated a trigger, an assessment should be made to decide whether to proceed to Formal Stage 1.

6.3.2 Where the Designated Person has decided not to proceed to Formal Stage 1, they will record the reason/s for their decision as part of the return to work contact on the HR70.

6.3.3 However, proceeding to Formal Stage 1 may allow the Designated Person to support the employee with their medical condition and/or to set acceptable attendance targets. Factors to consider include:

- previous attendance record
- absence patterns
- employee's own health management
- pregnancy/disability related absence
- other causes for concern

6.4 Formal Stage 1 Meeting

6.4.1 The Designated Person should consider whether the employee proceeds to Stage 1:

- following 3 or more separate absences in the previous 6 months or
- more than 6 days absence in the previous 6 months or
- if they have been absent for a continued period of 4 weeks

6.4.2 The employee shall receive written notice of not less than 5 working days' notice before the date of the meeting and must be informed of his/her right to be represented by an accredited trade union representative or fellow work colleague. The meeting must take place in private and be free from interruption. A neutral venue will be considered if this is raised in advance by the employee and/or their nominated representative.

6.4.3 At the Stage 1 meeting the Designated Person should:

- provide the employee with support and listen to what they have to say
- discuss with the employee their medical condition / or any underlying medical condition and the likelihood of it recurring
- the pattern, length of the various absences and the dates in between them
- the need for the work to be done by the employee and the impact of the absences on colleagues who work with the employee
- the impact on the functioning of the School
- consider a referral to Occupational Health if they are concerned about the nature of the employee's absence
- discuss any recommendations from any previous referral to Occupational Health
- review the employee's level of absence and establish regular monitoring
- set targets and review periods, if appropriate (not exceeding 12 months)
- assess the overall situation and whether the absence/s impact on other policies
- inform the employee in writing of the outcome and any recommendations made within 5 working days. The letter should also inform the employee of their right to appeal the decision in writing within 10 working days of the decision, and that they should provide full reasons for their grounds of appeal. The appeal will be heard by the Appeals Committee.

6.5 Formal Stage 2 Meeting

6.5.1 Stage 2 maybe activated:

- if the absence continues for a further 4 weeks
- if the employee has failed to reach the attendance targets set at the Stage 1 meeting (the Designated Person does not need to wait until the end of the review period)

6.5.2 The employee shall receive written notice of not less than 5 working days' notice before the date of the meeting and must be informed of his/her right to be represented by an accredited trade union representative or fellow work colleague. The meeting must take place in private and be free from interruption. A neutral venue will be considered if this is raised in advance by the employee and/or their nominated representative.

6.5.3 At the Stage 2 meeting the Designated Person should:

- provide further support to the employee and listen to what they have to say
- review the situation and respond to any developments that may have occurred
- review current medical opinion
- confirm that all available options as appropriate to the case have been pursued (such as counselling, rehabilitation, risk assessments, reasonable adjustments, ill-health retirement etc)
- restate regular monitoring of the employee's attendance
- review the employee's level of absence and establish regular monitoring
- set targets and review periods, if appropriate (not exceeding 12 months) in consultation with the School's HR provider
- make a recommendation regarding the continued employment of the employee
- inform the employee in writing of the outcome and any recommendations made within 5 working days. The letter should also inform the employee of their right to appeal the decision in writing within 10 working days of the decision, and that they should provide full reasons for their grounds of appeal. The appeal will be heard by the Appeals Committee.

6.6 Formal Stage 3 (Staffing Committee)

6.6.1 Stage 3 will be activated:

- if the absence continues for a further 8 weeks or
- if the employee has failed to reach the attendance targets set at the Stage 2 meeting (the Designated Person does not need to wait until the end of the review period)
- and continued employment is no longer considered feasible

6.6.2 The employee shall receive written notice of not less than 5 working days' notice before the date of the hearing and must be informed of his/her right to be represented by an accredited trade union representative or fellow work colleague. The notification will set out the concerns in relation to the employee's attendance at work and where appropriate that the hearing could result in dismissal. The Head Teacher is required to produce a 'sickness absence management report' copies of which and any evidence to be presented at the hearing must be supplied with the notification. The hearing must take place in private and be free from interruption. A neutral venue will be considered if this is raised in advance by the employee and/or their nominated representative.

6.6.3 The Head Teacher will present the management case at the Stage 3 hearing based on the sickness absence management report outlining the facts of the case along with detailed considerations for continued employment with due consideration to the checklist set out in paragraph 6.6.9 below.

6.6.4 This hearing will take place before the Staffing Committee of the Governing Body and the process to be followed is as set out in **Appendix 1**.

6.6.5 The Local Authority, through a representative of the Director of Children's Services, has an entitlement to attend for the purposes of giving advice where dismissal may be a possibility.

6.6.6 The purpose of a Stage 3 meeting is for the Staffing Committee to consider the report received from the Head Teacher outlining the facts of the case including:

- the employee's future employment based on medical evidence
- the impact their level of sickness absence is having on the School
- what alternative courses of action exist
- the terms of the employee's contract of employment and that if a decision is taken to dismiss, then employment may be terminated in line with the employee's Statement of Written Particulars

6.6.7 This report will form the basis of the hearing at which the employee and/or their representative will be present.

6.6.8 At the hearing, the Committee must take into consideration all the information available including the medical opinion, the sickness absence management report prepared by the Head Teacher, and the representations made by the employee and their representative.

6.6.9 When considering the appropriate course of action including potential dismissal under this Policy, the Committee should refer to the checklist below and seek to balance the needs of the employee and the School:

a) has adequate consultation/contact been maintained with the employee throughout the absence?
b) does the School have the most up-to-date medical position/recommendations?
c) does the School know the length/frequency of each period of absence?
d) is it reasonable to wait any longer for further developments (i.e. referral for treatment)?
e) is there a real likelihood of a return to work?
f) is there a safety risk if the employee returns to work?
g) what is the impact of the absence on School service delivery/cost and other employees?
h) what alternative courses of action exist e.g. appropriate reasonable adjustments
i) is medical retirement an option and has this possibility been exhausted? (If the recommendation is that the employee receives ill-health retirement then the case does not need to proceed to Formal Stage 3)
j) has reasonable alternative employment been identified/offered?
k) based on the position occupied, how feasible is to amend duties/shift patterns/working hours to facilitate a return to work?
l) is the absence as a result of a work-related injury or illness,

pregnancy or disability and has this been taken into consideration?

m) can future attendance targets be set?

6.6.10 As a result of the hearing the Committee may determine that the employee should be dismissed with notice in line with their Statement of Written Particulars (or Committee may decide depending on the circumstances that a payment in lieu of notice be paid to the employee) or decide on an alternative course of action. Should dismissal be decided by the Committee then the notice shall be effective from the date upon which the decision is communicated to him/her by the Director of Children's Services.

6.6.11 The Chair of the Committee will inform the employee in writing of the outcome and any recommendations made within 5 working days of the hearing. The letter should also inform the employee of their right to appeal the decision in writing within 10 working days of the decision, and that they should provide full reasons for their grounds of appeal. The appeal will be heard by the Appeals Committee.

6.7 Appeals Committee

6.7.1 Upon written notification that an employee wishes to exercise his/her right to appeal against the decision taken at any Formal Stage, the Appeals Committee shall acknowledge receipt of this notification. The appeal shall be heard as soon as practically possible after the written notification of the appeal.

6.7.2 The employee and his/her representative shall be given not less than five working days' notice of the date, time and place of the hearing of the Appeals Committee. A neutral venue will be considered if this is raised in advance by the employee and/or their nominated representative.

6.7.3 The appeal will be dealt with impartially by Governors who have not previously been involved in the case. The appeal will focus on the grounds of appeal set out in the letter from the employee.

6.7.4 The process for the Appeals Committee to hear the appeal at Formal Stage 1 or 2 is detailed in **Appendix 2.** The process for the Appeals Committee to hear appeals against a dismissal decision made by the Staffing Committee following a Formal Stage 3 Hearing is detailed in **Appendix 3**.

6.7.5 A representative of the Director of Children's Services shall be present at appeals against a dismissal decision.

6.7.6 The results of the appeal should be communicated by the Chair in writing within 5 working days of the hearing and a copy of the letter shall be retained on the employee's personal file. The final appeal hearing exhausts the internal process.

7.0 Records

7.1 In order that comprehensive records are maintained, copies of all minutes and correspondence arising out of the operation of this procedure shall be retained on the employee's personal file.

8.0 Confidentiality

8.1 All meetings and any subsequent appeal hearings will be dealt with in the strictest of confidence. The Designated Person and any other individuals involved in this process (including witnesses) must adhere to this.

8.2 Any documents relating to formal proceedings must be kept secure at all times.

8.3 All matters will remain confidential in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR at any stage except in circumstances where there is a legal obligation to disclose such information.

Appendix 1 - Procedure for Formal Stage 3 (Staffing Committee)

Action	Person
• Introductions and explanation of the process to be followed • That an adjournment may be requested at any time during the hearing	The Chair of Staffing Committee
• Outline of reasons for the meeting/hearing	Head Teacher
Presentation of management case, including the calling of their witness/witnesses	Head Teacher
Questions to Head Teacher (and their witnesses)	Employee or trade union representative/work colleague
Questions to Head Teacher (and their witnesses)	The Chair/Committee and advisor/s (as appropriate)
Presentation of employee's case, including the calling of their witness/witnesses	Employee or trade union representative/work colleague
Questions to the employee (and their witnesses)	Head Teacher
Questions to the employee (and their witnesses)	The Chair/Committee and advisor/s (as appropriate)
Summing up of the management case (no new evidence can be introduced at this stage)	Head Teacher
Summing up of the employee's case (no new evidence can be introduced at this stage)	Employee or trade union representative/work colleague
Withdraw from the meeting/hearing whilst the case is being considered	Head Teacher, employee, trade union representative/work colleague
If the Chair requires further clarification on a point of fact, both parties will be asked to return even if the question is to be put to one side only, so that the other side can hear what is being said	The Chair/Committee
The Chair/Committee makes the decision	The Chair/Committee and advisor/s (as appropriate)
Hearing reconvened all parties return and employee informed of the decision and right of appeal	The Chair/Committee
Formal letter confirming decision and right of appeal issued within 5 working days	The Chair/Committee

Appendix 2 - Procedure for the Appeals Committee (Stage 1 and 2)

Action	Person
• Introductions and explanation of the process to be followed • That an adjournment may be requested at any time during the hearing	The Appeals Chair
Presentation of employee's case, including the calling of their witnesses	Employee or trade union representative/work colleague
Questions to the employee (and their witnesses)	Designated Person*
Questions to the employee (and their witnesses)	The Appeals Chair/Committee and HR Consultant
Presentation of management case, including the calling of their witnesses	Designated Person*
Questions to the Designated Person* (and their witnesses)	Employee or trade union representative/work colleague
Questions to the Designated Person* (and their witnesses)	The Appeals Chair/Committee, and HR Consultant
Summing up of the employee's case (no new evidence can be introduced at this stage)	Employee or trade union representative/work colleague
Summing up of the management case (no new evidence can be introduced at this stage)	Designated Person*
Withdraw from the hearing whilst the case is being considered	Designated Person*, employee, trade union representative/work colleague
If the Appeals Chair/Committee requires further clarification on a point of fact, both parties will be asked to return even if the question is to be put to one side only, so that the other side can hear what is being said	The Appeals Chair/Committee
The Appeals Chair/Committee makes the decision	The Appeals Chair/Committee and HR Consultant
Hearing reconvened all parties return and employee informed of the decision	The Appeals Chair
Formal letter confirming decision issued within 5 working days	The Appeals Chair

NB (*Manager or Head Teacher as applicable)

Appendix 3 - Procedure for the Appeals Committee (Stage 3)

Action	Person
• Introductions and explanation of the process to be followed • That an adjournment may be requested at any time during the hearing	The Appeals Chair
Presentation of employee's case, including the calling of their witnesses	Employee or trade union representative/work colleague
Questions to the employee (and their witnesses)	Chair of Staffing Committee
Questions to the employee (and their witnesses)	The Appeals Chair/Committee, and HR Consultant/ Legal Advisor/ representative of the Director of Children's Service
Presentation of the management case, including the calling of their *witnesses	Chair of Staffing Committee
Questions to the Chair of Staffing Committee (and their *witnesses)	Employee or trade union representative/work colleague
Questions to the Chair of Staffing Committee (and their *witnesses)	The Appeals Chair/Committee, and HR Consultant/ Legal Advisor/ representative of the Director of Children's Service (as appropriate)
Summing up of the employee case (no new evidence can be introduced at this stage)	Employee or trade union representative/work colleague
Summing up of the management case (no new evidence can be introduced at this stage)	Chair of Staffing Committee
Withdraw from the hearing whilst the case is being considered	Chair of Staffing Committee, employee, trade union representative/work colleague
If the Appeals Chair/Committee requires further clarification on a point of fact, both parties will be asked to return even if the question is to be put to one side only, so that the other side can hear what is being said	The Appeals Chair/Committee
The Appeals Chair/Committee makes the decision	The Appeals Chair/Committee, and HR Consultant/ Legal Advisor/ representative of the Director of Children's Service
Hearing reconvened all parties return and employee informed of the decision	The Appeals Chair
Formal letter confirming decision issued within 5 working days	The Appeals Chair

NB (*It is anticipated that the Head Teacher will be called as a witness)

Annex 1 – Schedule of Designated Persons (Schools)

General Principles

- If the employee's attendance has continued or activated the sickness absence triggers / targets then the escalation process is as set out below.

Formal Stage 1	Formal Stage 2	Formal Stage 3
Madeleine Saunders	Madeleine Saunders	The appropriate Committee of the Governing Body usually Staffing Committee considers the case presented by the Head Teacher

NB (*Manager or Head Teacher as applicable)

Reviewed on	Reviewed by	Completed
November 2026	Madeleine Saunders	November 2026