Staff Absence Monitoring Policy

Responsibility for Review: School and College Trust Leader: People
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Staff absence monitoring policy: document provenance

Approver	School and college trust leaders
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Policy authors	Head of HR Centre of Excellence
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Summary of changes in this review	• 6.5 - For sickness immediately before a closure period added that a medical certificate is only required for an absence of more than 7 days where the employee makes contact to confirm that they are fit for work within 7 days. • 8.1 - Included further detail around the access to Medical reports act 1988. • 10.5 - Added that outcome letters for stage meetings should be provided within 5 working days • 12.0 - Addition of a more detailed process around managing long-term absence from the previous version • 13.0 - Addition of infectious diseases section • 14.0 - Addition of medical suspension section
Related policies and documents	• Staff leave policy • Green book • Burgundy book • School teacher terms and conditions document • Trust standard terms

Unless there are legislative or regulatory changes in the interim, the policy will be reviewed as per the review cycle. Should no substantive change be required at this point, the policy will move to the next review cycle.

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1. Policy statement

1.1. We recognise that sickness absence varies greatly in cause and duration and, as part of our duty to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of all our staff, it is essential that the reasons for absence are understood in each case and investigated where necessary. It is an essential part of our role as a responsible employer to, where needed and reasonably practicable, take measures to assist those who have been absent in returning to their role successfully.

1.2. This policy is not part of any employee's contract of employment and, following consultation with recognised trade unions, may be amended at any time. We may also, where appropriate and reasonable, in individual cases vary the procedures set out in this policy, including any time limits.

2. Scope and Purpose

2.1. This policy covers workers in our trust at all levels and grades, regardless of status, and sets out our procedures for reporting sickness absence and the management of absence in a fair and consistent way.

2.2. This policy is intended to ensure staff understand the expectations of our trust in terms of attendance at work and affirms our duty to support the health and wellbeing of anyone who works in our trust. In applying this policy, we aim to ensure that employees receive relevant and appropriate support when needed and, in turn, that attendance is managed appropriately and consistently.

3. Definitions

3.1. **Short-term sickness** – any absence that, in a continuous period, lasts up to, and including, 20 working days (pro-rated for part-time).

3.2. **Long-term sickness** – any absence that, in a continuous period, exceeds 20 working days. (pro-rated for part-time).

3.3. **Disability** – any physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term negative effect on your ability to undertake normal daily activities.

4. Disability

4.1. We are aware that sickness absence may result from a disability, even where this is not immediately apparent. At each stage of our absence procedure, managers should give consideration to any underlying health conditions and the impact that they may be having on attendance / performance at work; line managers should make any reasonable adjustments necessary to ensure that individuals are supported in returning to / attending work and appropriate adjustments to the operation of this policy.

4.2. If an employee considers that they are affected by a disability, or long-term health condition, which affects their ability to undertake their role they should speak with their line manager or a member of our trust HR centre of excellence.

5. Sickness absence reporting procedure

Becoming unwell or being injured whilst at work

5.1. If an employee is taken ill or injured at work they should report this to an appropriate leader as soon as they can. They will then make arrangements for first aid / medical treatment or for ensuring the individual is accompanied home if necessary.

5.2. If the employee is normally based at that academy the academy administration manager will ensure that the absence is logged in our people database (currently iTrent), any appropriate accident reporting is undertaken, the principal is informed and arrangements for cover are made.

5.3. For employees who are not normally based at an academy their line manager is responsible for the relevant actions in paragraph 5.2 above.

Becoming unwell or unfit from work whilst at home

5.4. If an employee cannot attend work because they are ill or injured, they should telephone the nominated person within the academy (their line manager for members of staff not normally based within an academy) as early as possible, and no later than 7:30am. It is not acceptable to use text messages, emails or messages on Microsoft Teams as a way of notifying sickness absence unless it is impossible to call personally. The following details should be provided:

- The nature of the illness or injury.
- Expected duration of the absence, and anticipated return date.
- Contact details.
- Any outstanding or urgent work that requires attention, including information in relation to student work that needs covering

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5.5. The manager receiving the notification should ensure that:

- Any necessary actions to ensure the health and wellbeing of the individual during their leave are taken.
- The absence is recorded and reported to the relevant person overseeing absence management, usually the academy administration manager, the persons line manager and / or principal.
- Arrangements are made, where necessary, to cover work and to inform colleagues who need to know.

5.6. As part of our commitment to ensuring wellbeing, we will expect employees who are absent to maintain reasonable contact so that we can enquire after their health, ensure we are providing appropriate support and to be updated on the expected date of return.

5.7. If you have any concerns whilst absent on sick leave then you should contact your line manager.

6. Evidence of incapacity

For sickness absence of up to seven calendar days

6.1. In most cases an employee can self-certify absences of up to seven days, this information is captured in our people system during the return-to-work meeting.

6.2. In some cases where:

- we are concerned about the reason for absence
- there have been frequent short-term absences; or
- we feel we need more information to provide appropriate support to the member of staff

We reserve the right to require a medical certificate for each absence, regardless of the duration. In such circumstances, while the employee will be responsible for obtaining the certificate from their doctor, we will cover the costs involved.

For sickness absence in excess of seven calendar days

6.3. An employee must obtain a medical certificate stating that they are not fit for work and the reason why, which must be forwarded to their line manager as soon as possible, and in any event within a calendar week of issue. Should an employee's absence continue beyond the expiry of the original certificate, further certificates to cover the entire absence should be sought and sent to an employee's line manager within a week of issue each time.

6.4. It is the responsibility of the employee to ensure that, where necessary, they have made an appointment with their doctor to have a further certificate issued before the expiry of the current one if this is necessary.

For sickness absence immediately prior to a closure period

6.5. Where an employee is absent as a result of sickness on the day immediately prior to a closure period, the employee will continue to be deemed as absent for the purpose of sickness recording and / or calculating contractual sick pay throughout the closure period, unless they make contact to confirm that they are fit for work, or where the illness lasts for more than 7 days provide a medical certificate indicating they are fit to return to work. It is the responsibility of the employee to obtain any certificate from their doctor, our trust will, however, cover any costs involved in obtaining this certificate.

Undergoing an elective or cosmetic procedure

6.6. Where an employee will be absent from work to undergo an elective or cosmetic procedure or surgery, then any entitlement to occupational sick pay (set out in the employee's contract of employment) will be subject to receipt of satisfactory evidence that the procedure was medically necessary and was being undertaken on medical advice.

6.7. Where the procedure is not medically necessary our trust reserves the right to require an employee to take annual leave from within their entitlement; for teaching or term time only staff this will be unpaid and must be agreed in advance with the relevant principal or school and college trust leader.

Unauthorised absence

6.8. Absence that has not been notified in keeping with the sickness absence reporting procedure will be treated as unauthorised absence.

6.9. Any absence more than seven days that is not covered by a medical certificate, including where an employee has not made arrangements to obtain a further certificate in time following the expiry of the previous certificate, will be treated as unauthorised absence.

6.10. Unauthorised absence will be investigated and, if necessary, dealt with under our trust disciplinary policy.

7. Sick pay

7.1. As we operate a number of sick pay arrangements, based on an individual's role and / or how they joined our trust, an employee should always refer to their contract of employment for details of their entitlement to occupational sick pay.

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7.2. Where absence has not been reported in line with the sickness absence reporting procedure then it will not normally be eligible for the payment of occupational sick pay, unless after investigation it is apparent that the employee was unable to act in line with the reporting procedure.

7.3. Where absence exceeds seven calendar days and a medical certificate has not been provided, or for any days in a continuing absence not covered by a medical certificate, occupational sick pay will be withheld and, in the majority of cases, we will also be unable to pay sick pay at the statutory sick pay rate as a medical certificate is a requirement of this scheme.

8. Medical examinations

8.1. We may, at any time we think it would be beneficial, ask an employee to consent to an appointment / examination by an occupational health practitioner at our expense subject to the relevant data protection legislation and the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988. They will normally produce a report following any such appointment / examination, which an employee will have a right to review and will be asked to agree to its disclosure to us.

8.2. Where an employee is absent from work and the cause is cited as workplace stress or results from an accident / injury at work then an assessment by our occupational health provider will normally be sought after the first week of absence, in other cases where an employee remains absent after 20 working days it will be our usual practice to request an assessment by our occupational health provider.

8.3. Where there is a difference of opinion between an employee's GP and the occupational health practitioner appointed by our trust regarding an employee's fitness for work, functional capacity, the existence of an underlying medical condition or the reasons for absence we will normally give precedence to our occupational health providers advice. In some cases, we may consult with an independent medical advisor to give an opinion.

8.4. Where an employee unreasonably refuses to consent to an appointment / examination by our occupational health providers this may be dealt with under our trust disciplinary policy.

9. Return to work interviews

9.1. An individual's line manager, or other manager delegated by the principal at our academies, will speak with them on their return to work following any period of sickness absence.

9.2. The purpose of this conversation is to confirm the reasons for absence and to understand what support, if any, they may need now that they have returned to work; it also provides an opportunity for the employee to raise any concerns or questions they may have relating to their absence.

9.3. The individual undertaking the discussion will then complete the form on our people database (currently iTrent) or make a paper record of the meeting which can then be uploaded to the absence record on our people database.

9.4. In cases of long term illness, it is important to speak to individuals in advance of their return to ensure a supportive return and to ensure any reasonable adjustments such as a phased return are put in place where appropriate.

10. Meetings held under the short or long term absence procedure

10.1. We will always try, where practicable, to give five working days' notice of the date, time and location of any meeting held under these procedures and employees should make all reasonable efforts to attend the meeting, a failure to attend without good reason may be considered misconduct and referred to our trust disciplinary policy. The meeting will be conducted by a suitably senior leader from our trust.

10.2. Where a person is unable to attend a meeting under these procedures, and it is felt important that the meeting goes ahead, consideration should be given to:

- Holding the meeting virtually e.g. on Microsoft Teams.
- Holding the meeting at more convenient location or off trust premises.
- The employee making a written statement to be considered as part of the meeting.
- The employee asking a trade union representative or work based colleague to attend on their behalf.
- Holding the meeting outside of normal working hours.
- Any other reasonable adjustment which would make it easier for the employee to attend.

10.3. An employee has the right to be accompanied to any meetings held under this procedure by a trade union representative or work based colleague. They should provide details of any companion to the manager leading the meeting in good time, and we will ensure that any arrangements necessary for their attendance are made. Where a chosen companion cannot attend at the date and time specified, an employee may suggest an alternative date and time within a working week of the original time specified, we will make all reasonable efforts to accommodate these alternative arrangements.

10.4. If during a meeting it becomes apparent that further information, or advice from our occupational health provider, is necessary then the manager will adjourn the meeting to obtain this information. When the information has

been received the manager will reconvene the meeting, providing at least 5 working days' notice where possible, and continue the discussion.

10.5. The outcome of meetings held under this procedure will be confirmed in writing with an aim to provide this within 5 working days, and any warnings issued will remain 'live' for a period of twelve months following issue, during this period any further absence, or collection of absences, which cause concern would be dealt with at the next stage of the procedure and may result in a further sanction or an extension of the current warning. Where further absences occur shortly after the end of the 'live' period of any warning, we reserve the right to deal with the matter at the same stage in our procedure and not return to an earlier stage.

10.6. If at any stage, it becomes apparent that an employee is taking sickness absence when they are not unwell, we will halt proceedings under this process and refer matters to our trust disciplinary process.

11. Short term absence procedure

11.1. We define an absence as 'short term' if it is less than 20 working days in duration (pro-rated for part-time), absences in excess of 20 working days are normally excluded from absence calculations under this procedure, however, where it is felt appropriate and where there are multiple absences then they may be dealt with under this procedure or the long term absence procedure.

11.2. We may apply this procedure whenever we consider it necessary, including when:

- An individual has been absent due to illness for six or more days, or on three or more occasions, in a rolling twelve month period
- Matters which require further investigation have been discussed at a return to work interview
- An individual has an absence record which repeatedly falls just short of the limits set out above
- Have further absences during a period of monitoring, or shortly afterwards, that fail to meet any targets set for attendance
- An individual whose absences exhibit a pattern that causes concern.

11.3. This meeting will be initiated by concerns in line with those stated above. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss:

- The reasons for absence
- Understanding whether there is an underlying cause to the absences which needs further investigation / support
- Considering if further medical advice is required or, if already obtained, discussing that advice
- Considering what measures, if any, may improve the employee's health and / or attendance
- Determining a way forward, any actions that need to be taken, a target for the employee's improved attendance and the timescale for review.

11.4. Once the meeting has been concluded the manager may, having considered all of the information available to them issue a formal warning to the individual that their level of absence has reached a concerning level and that further absence may lead to a final warning and in turn impact their continued employment with our trust.

Stage two

11.5. Where a formal warning has been issued under stage one of this procedure and is still 'live', and where either the attendance targets set during the monitoring period or significant further absence is of a concern to our trust, then a further meeting will be arranged at stage two of our persistent short term absence process.

11.6. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss:

- The reasons for absence
- Understanding whether there is an underlying cause to the absences which needs further investigation / support
- Considering if further medical advice is required or, if already obtained, discussing that advice
- Considering what measures, if any, may improve the employee's health and / or attendance
- The impact of an individual's continued absence on the academy, our students and their colleagues
- Considering whether an employee remains fit to return to / remain in their current role in view of their capability and the needs of our trust.
- Considering any reasonable adjustments that may be required.

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- Determining a way forward, any actions that need to be taken, a target for the employee's improved attendance within a reasonable timescale for review.

11.7. Once the meeting has been concluded the manager may, having considered all of the information available to them issue a final warning to the individual that their level of absence has reached an unsustainable level, and that further absence may impact their continued employment with our trust.

Stage three

11.8. Where a final warning has been issued under stage two of this procedure and is still 'live', and where either the attendance targets set during the monitoring period or significant further absence is of a concern to our trust, then a further meeting will be arranged at stage three of our persistent short term absence process. At this stage, in addition to setting out details of the relevant absences in the invitation to the meeting, we will produce a fuller 'statement of case' which will summarise fully the meetings and actions that have taken place over the full course of the sickness absence process to support an employee to improve their attendance at work.

11.9. The meeting will be chaired by a principal, functional lead or school and college trust leader; the purpose of the meeting is to discuss:

- The reasons for absence
- Understanding whether there is an underlying cause to the absences which needs further investigation / support
- Considering if further medical advice is required or, if already obtained, discussing that advice
- Reviewing the previous meetings that have taken place, the matters discussed and the warnings issued
- The impact of an individuals continued absence on the academy, our students and their colleagues
- Considering whether an employee remains fit to return to / remain in their current role in view of their capability and the needs of our trust.
- Considering any reasonable adjustments that may be required.
- Determining a way forward, any actions that need to be taken, and whether the termination of the individual's employment or any suitable alternative to dismissal is now reasonable.

11.10. Once the meeting has been included the manager may, having considered all the information available to them extend the period of any final warning or determine that there is unlikely to be a sustained improvement in attendance and terminate the individual's employment. Where employment is terminated under this procedure, the termination will be with full notice or, in the sole discretion of our trust, a payment in lieu of notice.

Appeals

11.11. An employee has the right to appeal the outcome of any meeting held under this procedure. An appeal should be based on a disagreement with the level of any sanction imposed, a belief that the procedure was not followed correctly or that there was some level of unfairness or discrimination in the process.

11.12. The employee should write to the point of appeal identified in the outcome letter setting out their grounds of appeal in writing, within the period stated in the outcome letter. A manager will be appointed to hear the appeal who is at least as senior as the individual who chaired the original meeting, usually the appeal manager will be more senior to the original decision maker.

11.13. The individual will be invited to a meeting within ten working days of receipt of their appeal and will be entitled to be accompanied to the meeting by a work based colleague or trade union representative.

11.14. Following the appeal meeting, and considering everything presented and discussed at that meeting, the appeal manager will decide on behalf of our trust which may remove the sanction issued, reduce the sanction issued or uphold the original decision. In all cases the decision of the appeal manager will be final on behalf of our trust.

11.15. Where an individual is appealing against a decision to dismiss them under this procedure, the date of any appeal meeting will not delay the date the dismissal takes effect, where an appeal is successful, however, the decision to dismiss will be revoked and there will be no loss of continuity of service or entitlement to pay for the period.

12. Long term absence procedure

12.1. We define an absence as 'long term' where it extends beyond 20 working days. When managing long term absence our focus is on ensuring we support the member of staff with improving their health to return to work where possible.

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12.2. Employees experiencing long-term absences will be treated with sensitivity, whilst appropriately balancing the needs of the organisation, taking into account the specific circumstances of each case.

12.3. The purpose of absence review meetings is to provide a clear process and mechanisms for effective communication and support to enable an individual to return to work in line with our commitment to treating all staff with dignity and respect, whilst also dealing sensitively with cases where absence levels are not manageable in line with the needs of the organisation.

12.4. An employee with a terminal illness or life-threatening degenerative illness where the employee's medical condition is known and will not improve will not be asked to attend absence review meetings. The academy will provide support and encouragement to individuals in these circumstances, and this could well mean that other meetings, are held at reasonable intervals. Employees with a life-threatening condition should be treated sympathetically although it is inevitable at some point that the needs of our trust will need to effectively override this. The wishes of employees in these cases to keep their circumstances confidential must be respected**.**

Stage One

12.5. Where an individual has had an absence of 20 days or more:

12.6. Then a meeting will be arranged to discuss:

- The reasons for absence
- Any long term health conditions contributing to the absence
- What additional support can be provided while the individual is absent from work, and what support will be needed to support a return to work – including any reasonable adjustments or phased return
- Considering what measures, if any, may improve the individual's health / attendance
- Reviewing the report from our occupational health provider, and considering its recommendations
- Where identified in the occupational health report, whether ill-health retirement is appropriate
- Determining a way forward, any actions that need to be taken and the timescale for review;
- The primary consideration should be supporting the individual while they are off, or, if they have returned, on supporting their health and wellbeing as well as their continued attendance.

12.7. Having considered everything at this meeting the manager chairing the meeting may take one of the following actions:

- Issue no formal warning under this procedure but put in place any reasonable support / adjustments identified as necessary to support the individual while they remain off, or in returning to work and in remaining at work. In this case the manager will indicate whether a future meeting will be held under stage one or two of the procedure.
- Issue a formal warning under this process, setting a target for continued attendance and put in place any reasonable support / adjustments identified as necessary to support the individual while they remain off, or in returning to work and in remaining at work.
- Pause action under this process to refer the individual back to our occupational health provider for a formal assessment of their suitability for ill-health retirement. If the assessment indicates this is necessary then a further meeting under stage three of this process should be arranged.

Stage two

12.8. Where:

- A warning has been issued under stage one of this procedure and, while the warning remains 'live', there is a further absence, or
- An individual remains off on sickness absence after a continuous period of 20 working days following a meeting under stage one of this procedure.

12.9. Then a meeting will be arranged under stage 2 of the long term absence procedure, to discuss:

- The continued reasons for absence
- Any long term health conditions contributing to the absence
- What additional support can be provided while the individual is absent from work, and what support will be needed to support a return to work – including any reasonable adjustments or phased return
- Considering what measures, if any, may improve the individual's health / attendance
- Reviewing the report from our occupational health provider, and considering its recommendations

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- Whether measures put in place as a result of the stage one meeting have improved the likelihood of an improvement in attendance
- Where identified in the occupational health report, whether ill-health retirement is appropriate
- Determining a way forward, any actions that need to be taken and the timescale for review;

12.10. Having considered everything at this meeting the manager chairing the meeting may take one of the following actions:

- Issue no formal warning under this procedure but put in place any reasonable support / adjustments identified as necessary to support the individual while they remain off, or in returning to work and in remaining at work. In this case the manager will indicate whether a future meeting will be held under stage two or three of the procedure.
- Extend any warning issued under stage one of this procedure but put in place any reasonable support / adjustments identified as necessary to support the individual while they remain off, or in returning to work and in remaining at work. Indicating that any further meeting will be held under stage two of the procedure.
- Issue a formal warning under this process, setting a target for continued attendance and put in place any reasonable support / adjustments identified as necessary to support the individual while they remain off, or in returning to work and in remaining at work.
- Pause action under this process to refer the individual back to our occupational health provider for a formal assessment of their suitability for ill-health retirement. If the assessment indicates this is necessary, then a further meeting under stage three of this process should be arranged.

Stage three

12.11. Where:

- A final warning has been issued under stage two of this procedure and, while the warning remains 'live', there is a further absence, or
- An individual remains off on sickness absence after a continuous period of 20 working days following a meeting under stage two of this procedure, or
- Ill-health retirement has been established as appropriate following a meeting under stage one or two of this procedure.

12.12. Then a meeting will be arranged under stage three of the long-term absence procedure. At this stage, in addition to setting out details of the relevant absences in the invitation to the meeting, we will produce a fuller 'statement of case' which will summarise the meetings and actions that have taken place over the full course of the sickness absence process to support an employee to improve their attendance at work.

- The points for discussion at the meeting will be:
- The continued reasons for absence
- Any long-term health conditions contributing to the absence
- What additional support can be provided while the individual is absent from work, and what support will be needed to support a return to work – including any reasonable adjustments or phased return
- Considering what measures, if any, may improve the individual's health / attendance
- Reviewing the report from our occupational health provider, and considering its recommendations
- Whether measures put in place as a result of the stage one and two meetings have improved the likelihood of an improvement in attendance
- Where identified in the occupational health report, whether ill-health retirement is appropriate
- The impact of an individuals continued absence on the academy, our students and their colleagues
- Considering whether an employee remains fit to return to / remain in their current role in view of their capability and the needs of our trust.
- Considering any reasonable adjustments that may be required.
- Determining a way forward, any actions that need to be taken and the timescale for review; this should include whether there is a reasonable prospect in the medium to long term of the individual returning to work or whether ill health retirement is appropriate

12.13. Having considered everything at this meeting the manager chairing the meeting may take one of the following actions:

- Issue no formal warning under this procedure but put in place any reasonable support / adjustments identified as necessary to support the individual while they remain off, or in returning to work and in remaining at work. In this case further meetings will be held under stage three of this procedure until the individual has returned to work.

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- Extend any warning issued under stage two of this procedure and put in place any reasonable support / adjustments identified as necessary to support the individual while they remain off, or in returning to work and in remaining at work.
- Conclude that ill-health retirement is the most appropriate option and terminate the employee's employment on this basis, making a payment in lieu of notice and ensuring our trust HR team take the actions necessary to ensure this decision is communicated to the relevant pension scheme.
- Where ill-health retirement is not a possibility, but where the manager feels all other options have been exhausted (e.g. reasonable adjustments, potential for improvement with reasonable further absence, changes to the individuals role or redeployment), then the manager may move to terminate the individual's employment on the grounds that their continued ill health has meant they are no longer capable of undertaking their role with our trust.

Appeals

12.14. An employee has the right to appeal the outcome of any meeting held under this procedure. An appeal should be based on a disagreement with the level of any sanction imposed, a belief that the procedure was not followed correctly or that there was some level of unfairness or discrimination in the process.

12.15. The employee should write to the point of appeal identified in the outcome letter setting out their grounds of appeal in writing, within the period stated in the outcome letter. A manager will be appointed to hear the appeal who is at least as senior as the individual who chaired the original meeting, usually the appeal manager will be more senior to the original decision maker.

12.16. The individual will be invited to a meeting within ten working days of receipt of their appeal and will be entitled to be accompanied to the meeting by a trade union representative or a work based colleague.

12.17. Following the appeal meeting, and considering everything presented and discussed at that meeting, the appeal manager will decide on behalf of our trust which may remove the sanction issued, reduce the sanction issued or uphold the original decision. In all cases the decision of the appeal manager will be final on behalf of our trust.

12.18. Where an individual is appealing against a decision to dismiss them under this procedure, the date of any appeal meeting will not delay the date the dismissal takes effect, where an appeal is successful, however, the decision to dismiss will be revoked and there will be no loss of continuity of service or entitlement to pay for the period.

13. Ill Health retirement

13.1. Where ill health retirement is an appropriate option for members of staff, either following diagnosis of a debilitating / life limiting condition or because of prolonged absence from work with no sign of recovery, then this would normally be dealt with on advice from our trust HR team and may involve a different process to that described in our long term absence procedure subject to the relevant medical advice.

13.2. At all times the priority is to support our employees and to work with the requirements of the individual local government pension schemes or the teachers' pension scheme as required.

13.3. Given the unique nature of each case our trust HR Centre of excellence will provide specific advice on the process to be followed.

14. Serious Infectious diseases

14.1. The trust is committed to providing a safe environment for pupils, employees and visitors. Employees who have or suspect they may have an infectious disease must inform their line manager as soon as possible and follow the sickness absence reporting procedures.

14.2. Employees are expected to follow current public health guidance and any specific advice from health care professionals.

14.3. Where appropriate, the school may undertake a risk assessment, seek advice from Occupational Health or relevant public bodies, and implement reasonable control measures to reduce the risk of infection. This may include temporary adjustment to duties, remote working where feasible or a delayed return to the workplace.

14.4. Employees must notify their manager immediately if they are informed that they have been in close contact with a confirmed case of a notifiable infectious disease within the school community where this may present a risk to others.

15. Medical suspension

15.1. In certain circumstances the trust may determine that it is not appropriate for an employee to attend work due to concerns relating to their health, safety, wellbeing or the health, safety and wellbeing of students, colleagues or others. Where this occurs, the trust may place the employee on medical suspension whilst further information is obtained and assessed. Medical suspension is a neutral act and does not imply any wrongdoing, or decision regarding an employee's capability to perform their role.

15.2. A medical suspension may be considered where:

- There are concerns that the employee may be unfit to carry out their duties safely

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- An employee's health condition could pose a significant risk to themselves or others
- A medical assessment, Occupational Health advice or specialist medical opinion is required before a return to work can be considered
- There is a risk of transmission of an infectious disease within the workplace
- Reasonable adjustments or alternative duties need to be considered and addressed

15.3. Where an employee is medically suspended, the trust will:

- Confirm the reasons for the suspension in writing;
- Keep the suspension under regular review;
- Seek appropriate medical or Occupational Health advice where necessary;
- Maintain reasonable contact with the employee throughout the period of suspension; and
- Consider whether any temporary adjustments, alternative duties or redeployment opportunities may be appropriate.

15.4. Medical suspension will normally be on full pay for as long as is necessary to assess the circumstances and determine the most appropriate course of action. Employees are expected to cooperate with any reasonable requests for medical information, attend Occupational Health appointments where required, and keep the trust informed of any relevant changes to their health during the period of suspension.

16. Review

16.1. This policy has at its formation, been subject to consultation with recognised trade unions. Unless there are legislative or regulatory changes in the interim, this policy will be reviewed every three years; this will include consultation on any changes with recognised trade unions. Should no substantive change be required at this point, the policy will move to the next review cycle.

Dixons Academies Trust
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