



PARKSIDE HOUSE SCHOOL

Absence Management Policy



REVIEWED

October 2017
June 2018

Introduction:

High levels of absence are a serious problem for small organisations like Parkside House School.

This policy is concerned with the following categories of absence:

- Unauthorised absence (which includes lateness)
- Certified or uncertified sick leave
- Authorised absence (compassionate leave, maternity leave etc.)

The effects of high absence levels are widely varying and affect everyone at Parkside House School as they lead to:

- A lower quality level service for our pupils
- Disruption to the flow of work
- Low morale and general dissatisfaction resulting in low productivity across the school
- Higher stress levels for pupils and staff.

These issues are not regarded purely as a management problem because all employees have an interest in ensuring that a few absent staff do not jeopardise the job satisfaction for all staff. By working together to establish and maintain ways of monitoring and controlling absence we are not only controlling costs and increasing levels of service but also ensuring the fair and consistent treatment of the whole staff team.

Communications

On commencement of employment at Parkside House School, as part of their induction process all employees will be given information on:

- Absence reporting procedures
- Punctuality & attendance standards
- Methods of monitoring and recording
- Sick pay

Recording of Absenteeism – Manager's Role & Responsibilities:

It is the management team's responsibility to ensure;

- All absences are recorded accurately in a timely manner
- Provide employees with details of whom they should contact if they are unable to attend work
- Ensure all employees absent from work report their absence on the first day of absence and every subsequent day unless a doctor's fit note is provided

- Conduct return to work interview
- Monitor and record absences and forward this information to the accountancy department
- Whenever there is an absence, check the individual's absence record and look for any discernible trends or patterns that may be building up e.g. Monday/ Friday absence on a regular basis
- Ensure self – certification is completed or fit note submitted
- To maintain contact in the case of long term absence
- To recognise good attendance
- Be consistent but prepared to respond to individuals circumstances

Employees' Role and Responsibilities:

- Employees unable to attend work must report the absence by 7am
- Must comply with the absence reporting procedures at all times
- Must speak to the Head personally by telephone the morning of absence
- Continue to inform the management team on a daily basis or provide a doctor's fit note verifying reason and duration of absence.
- Bring to the Head's attention (in confidence) any reasons affecting their ability to attend work
- To read and understand Parkside House School Sick Pay Procedures and the implications absence may have on their basic rate of pay
- To complete a self- certification form (up to 7 days) or provide a doctor's certificate

Return to Work Interview

Holding a return to work interview is likely to have a significant impact on attendance. The following areas are to be discussed and it should take place on the day of return.

- Confirm reason for absence
- Be sensitive and courteous
- Check whether medical advice has been sought
- Review attendance record
- Use the meeting to update employee on any items missed
- Review impact of absence – staff team
- Ask whether re- occurrence of the problem is likely
- Together agree on a form of action
- Complete and sign off self - certificate form
- Explain what further action, if any, will be taken

Each case will be considered on their own merits with regard to pattern, causes/reasons for absence and total absence.

Statutory Sick Pay

- All Staff will receive SSP only during first year of service
- At management discretion Company Sick pay can be awarded
- SSP is only payable on the fourth day of absence
- If SSP is continuous it can only be awarded for 28 weeks

Company Sick Pay

- Company Sick Pay is not a contractual benefit and there is no automatic right to it
- If Company Sick Pay is paid, it can also be withdrawn at any point during a period of absence

Absence Management Meetings

At any point during employment at Parkside House School an employee can be called to an Absence Management meeting.

The purpose of the meeting is to formally discuss:

- Level of absence and individuals' absence records
- Cause of absence
- Any long term condition which may fall under the Equality Act 2010
- Operational implications of absence
- Sick pay implications
- Likelihood of any further absences
- Any reasonable adjustments Parkside House School may be able to make in order to allow employment to continue
- Agree ongoing motoring procedures and timelines
- Explain consequences of failure to meet required standards, e.g. termination of contract

The employee has the right to be accompanied by a colleague to the meeting

Using the Absence Management Procedure

If action is required, the following procedure will be followed;

Prior to any action being taken;

- Review the absence pattern
- Keep comprehensive records

Before the Absence Management meeting:

- Give the employee advance notice of the meeting
- Advise them of the reasons for holding the meeting

- Give the employee the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or union official

Absence Management Meeting

- Identify the issues and concerns
- Ask questions to establish reasons
- Explain what is an acceptable level of absence
- Make it clear that absence is unacceptable
- Discuss information contained on fit notes, if available
- Set period of review and date for next meeting
- Outline the consequences of failure to improve

Procedure

1. Absence Management Meeting
2. Absence Management Review Meeting
3. Meeting to discuss proposal to dismiss

Long Term Sick

Parkside House School recognises its duty to keep in touch with all employees, particularly those who are suffering long term sickness. To achieve this, contact will be made through home visits and telephone calls.

If you are absent for more than four weeks you may be asked if a visit can be made to your home. The decision rests with you as to whether you have a home visit or would prefer to attend school for the meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to give any support or information which is available for your welfare and to keep the school up to date with your circumstances. If an employee on long term sick refuses a home visit or to attend a meeting in school on more than one occasion, a decision about termination of contract may be considered on the basis of the information available at the time.

Parkside House School will deal with cases of long term sickness on an individual basis taking into account;

- How much operational damage is being caused by the absence
- Will a return to work be possible/likely
- Will a full recovery be possible/likely
- Could the employee return if some assistance was provided
- Is lighter, less stressful work available
- Are reduced hours of work possible
- How long the employee has been in school
- Have all possibilities and avenues been discussed

If it is felt that these areas have all been exhausted the employee will be informed and a meeting to discuss the proposal to dismiss will be arranged.

In the absence of further information coming to light, it is likely that dismissal would follow such a meeting