

Staff Sickness and Absence Policy

Aims

At School's Out Henleaze we encourage all our employees to maximise their attendance at work while recognising that employees will, from time to time, be unable to come to work due to sickness. This policy sets out our arrangements for sick pay and for reporting and managing sickness absence.

Principles

We aim to provide a healthy working environment and demonstrate a commitment to the health, safety and the welfare of staff in order to promote their wellbeing and maximise attendance. The Management is responsible for regularly monitoring and taking appropriate action in connection with sickness and other unplanned absence.

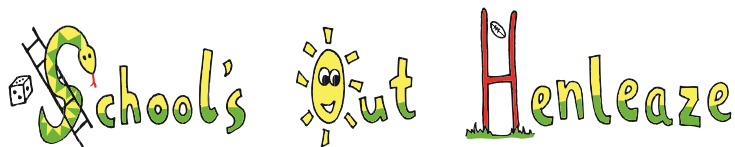
It is recognised that all cases of sickness must be dealt with on an individual basis because of differing circumstances. This procedure gives an outline of the principles to be observed.

- School's Out Henleaze recognises that everybody is sick or subject to emergencies from time to time. However, regular attendance at work is a requirement.
- This procedure will be invoked where the management has cause for concern regarding an employee's short-term persistent or long-term absence*.
- This procedure applies to ALL staff including those in their probationary period.
- This procedure will not discriminate, either directly or indirectly, on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage / civil partnership, pregnancy / maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation or any other personal characteristics.
- The abuse of sick leave and pay may be classified as misconduct and will be dealt with through the disciplinary procedure.

Advice will be taken from ACAS at all formal stages of this procedure to ensure the correct application of it within our organisation

Exclusion Periods for Contagious Illnesses

Working with children means that you are in contact with illnesses which can be highly contagious. We take the health of children and staff very seriously; therefore, if you have any contagious illness you must adhere to the same exclusion periods as children. This will ensure that you are able to recover appropriately and that this illness is not passed on to other staff, children or parents. For information on exclusion times, please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities>



Sickness Absence Reporting Procedure

On your first day of absence, you must:

- Text Jenny (**No earlier than 9:00am term time or 7:30am on a Holiday Club Day**), or email manager@schoolsouthenleaze.co.uk as soon as is reasonable.
- Give brief details of your illness and your expected length of absence.
- If you have been unable to determine how long the absence will last, and it exceeds the third day, you must contact your manager again on the fourth day.

Self-Certificate/Fit Note

Any sickness absence of less than seven days (short term sickness/absence) requires an employee to 'self-certificate', that is confirm that they have been off sick. This will be done via filling out a form/sending an email.

Sickness absence which exceeds seven days (long term sickness/absence) requires an employee to obtain a 'Fit Note' from their GP or hospital doctor. This includes non-working days and bank holidays.

Return to Work

After returning to work from any sickness absence leave, a 'Return to Work' interview may be carried out by the Manager. This will not happen in all situations but will normally be held in the following circumstances:

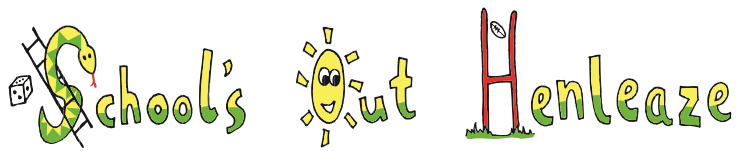
- Where the absence has exceeded 7 days.
- Where the nature of the illness means that duties on return to work may need to be altered and clarification and/or consultation is required.
- Where a member of staff has had two or more absences in 12 weeks.

During the return to work interview the following will be discussed:

- The reason for absence.
- Whether adjustments to the role (on a temporary or more permanent basis) are required and what they are. These might include adjusted work patterns, start and finish times and changes of duties.
- Future requirements and expectations, e.g., improved attendance.

The return-to-work interview should be recorded and signed by both the Manager and employee and a copy attached to the employee's file

Where an employee's attendance record gives cause for concern because of the duration or frequency of absence, this should be brought to the attention of the employee through a discussion with the manager.



If an employee is deemed unfit for work, then the cycle of absence, fit note and return to work meeting will be repeated until the employee is able to return to work or a more formal process triggered.

Covid-19

If an employee is absent from work due to the effects of Covid-19 (isolation or illness) please refer to the latest guidelines regarding absence management and sick pay.

[Statutory Sick Pay \(SSP\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/statutory-sick-pay)

[Statutory Sick Pay \(SSP\): employer guide - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/statutory-sick-pay-employer-guide)

(NB: the Government payment of SSP due to Covid-19 related absence ceased September 2021)

***Long-term Sickness Absence**

For the purposes of the policy, long-term sickness absence is defined by the setting as absences lasting over one month.

Where absences have lasted over 10 working days or more, the Manager should contact the member of staff concerned to obtain an initial assessment of the problem and to offer any further help or assistance. At this point, and where felt appropriate after further assessment of the problem, the Manager will arrange a face-to-face meeting or telephone conference between themselves and the member of staff. The meeting should:

- Seek to confirm the reasons and nature of the absence and its likely duration.
- Ensure that the member of staff is aware of the setting's concern regarding their health and necessary absence from work.
- Consider offering alternative duties or a shorter working week if this would enable a quicker return to work subject to medical advice.
- Give consideration to any personal problems being encountered and discuss possible ways of helping the individual resolve these.
- Advise the member of staff that in their best interests they may be asked to see a registered medical practitioner or occupational health provider appointed by the setting to enable a medical report to be prepared.

If all other avenues have been investigated, the absence continues or, following return to work, the attendance record does not improve, a subsequent meeting should be arranged. At this point, unless there are reasonable grounds to believe there will be an improvement in the foreseeable future, the manager should inform the member of staff that long-term sickness absence due to ill health may put their employment at risk and the possibility of termination by reason of capability or suitability to work with children might have to be considered, taking into account any medical information available.



The position will be reviewed periodically and ultimately it may become necessary from a business perspective to consider termination of employment. In these circumstances, the setting will:

- Review the employee's absence record to assess whether or not it is sufficient to justify dismissal.
- Consult the employee.
- Obtain up-to-date medical advice through occupational health.
- Advise the employee in writing as soon as it is established that termination of employment has become a possibility.
- Meet with the employee to discuss the options and consider the employee's views on continuing employment.
- Review if there are any other jobs that the employee could do prior to taking any decision on whether or not to dismiss.
- Allow a right of appeal against any decision to dismiss the employee on grounds of long-term ill health.
- Arrange a further meeting with the employee to determine any appeal.
- Following this meeting, inform the employee of the final decision.
- Act reasonably towards the employee at all times.

Any decision to terminate employment will be made in consideration with School's Out Henleaze Management Committee/Registered Person.

Appeals

You may appeal against the outcome of any stage of this procedure. If you wish to appeal you should set out your appeal in writing to the Management Committee/Registered Person, stating your grounds of appeal, within one week of the date on which the decision was sent or given to you.

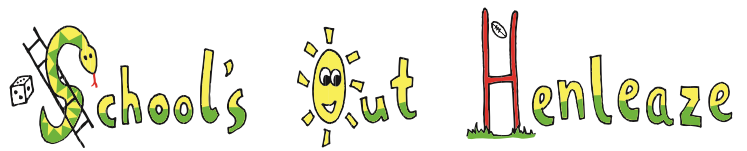
If you are appealing against a decision to dismiss you, we will hold an appeal meeting, normally within two weeks of receiving the appeal. This will be dealt with impartially and, where possible, by a member of the Management/Registered Person who has not previously been involved in the case.

We will confirm our final decision in writing, usually within one week of the appeal hearing. There is no further right of appeal.

The date that any dismissal takes effect will not be delayed pending the outcome of an appeal. However, if the appeal is successful, the decision to dismiss will be revoked with no loss of continuity or pay.

Medical Examinations

We may ask you to consent to a medical examination by a doctor or occupational health professional or other specialist nominated by us (at our expense).



You will be asked to agree that any medical report produced may be disclosed to us and that we may discuss the contents of the report with the specialist and with our advisers. All medical reports will be kept confidential and held in accordance with our Data Protection Policy.

Sick Pay

You may be entitled to Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) if you satisfy the relevant statutory requirements. Qualifying days for SSP are Monday to Friday, or as set out in your employment contract. The rate of SSP is set by the government in April each year. No SSP is payable for the first three consecutive days of absence. It starts on the fourth day of absence and may be payable for up to 28 weeks.

Annual Leave

Statutory annual leave can be booked off by arrangement with the manager. This will be on a pro rata basis, depending on how much of the year you work.

Review

This policy and procedure will be reviewed periodically giving due consideration to any legislative changes.