

Applecroft School



Staff Health and Attendance Policy

Person Responsible:	Headteacher
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Staff Health & Attendance Policy

1) Introduction:

School Vision:

'To be a positive and inspiring community that nurtures each individual and empowers leaders for life'.

School Mission Statement:

'Nurturing Potential, Inspiring Minds, Changing Lives'.

School Values:

- Ambition and Leadership
- Kindness and Supportiveness
- Respect and Honesty
- Determination and Resilience.

This policy complies with the STPCD, the Burgundy Book (teaching staff) and the Green Book (support staff), as well as our funding agreement and articles of association.

The school recognises that its employee's contribution to the functionality of the school is crucial to its continuing success. It is therefore committed to preserving the health, welfare and safety of all its employees and as such seeks to provide a safe and healthy working environment. It is inevitable that from time-to-time employees may be unable to attend work due to sickness or injury. In such instances, the school is committed to dealing with absence due to genuine sickness in an empathetic, objective, sensitive, and consistent way across the school and to assist employees return to work as quickly as possible. It is also the school's aim to minimise the incidence of sickness and to give appropriate guidance and support to achieve this.

However, high levels of sickness absence and/or repeated absence can cause significant disruption to the business of the school and can place an undue burden on other teams' members and therefore this needs to be managed closely.

The school is aware that sickness absence may result from a disability. At each stage of the procedure, including meetings/hearings particular consideration will be given as to whether there are reasonable adjustments that could be made to the procedure or role requirements.

This policy sets out the school's approach in relation to sickness absence management, including its procedure for notification and certification and its position on payment during sickness absence.

The procedure applies to all employees of the school. This procedure does not form part of any employee's contract of employment, and it may be amended at any time.

2) Aims:

This policy aims to:

- Set out our school's approach to staff sickness, including the procedures for reporting sickness and how we manage sickness absence fairly
- Support all parties in managing staff sickness and absence effectively and consistently, to ensure a fair and transparent approach across the school that complies with our duties under the Equality Act 2010

- Set out our approach to requests for time off outside of annual leave or leave covered by other policies
- Help create and maintain a happy and healthy working culture in which staff are encouraged to look after their physical and mental wellbeing.

This policy has been developed with the NAHT union.

This policy does not form part of any contract of employment or other contract to provide services and we may amend it at any time in consultation with the NAHT.

3) Legislation & Guidance:

This policy meets the requirements of:

- [Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- [Employment Rights Act 1996](#)
- [Employment: Statutory Code of Practice](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Induction for Early Career Teachers \(England\)](#)
- [The Statutory Sick Pay \(General\) Regulations 1982](#)

It also reflects best-practice guidance set out in:

- [The Advice, Conciliation and Arbitration Service \(ACAS\)'s guidance on holiday, sickness and leave](#)
- The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) [incident reporting in schools](#)

Our staff have a contract that specifically incorporates conditions from:

- [School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document \(STPCD\)](#)
- [Conditions of Service for School Teachers in England and Wales](#) (the Burgundy Book)
- [The National Agreement on Pay and Conditions for Support Staff](#) (the Green Book).

4) Scope:

4.1 Eligibility

This policy applies to all staff who are employed directly by school.

Self-employed workers, volunteers and agency workers are not covered by this policy.

4.2 Exceptions

This policy does not apply to staff who are:

- Taking maternity, paternity, shared parental and/or adoption leave or
- Taking leave for dependents

For these, please see our 'Family & Parental Leave Policy'.

5) Data Protection:

All discussions and sensitive medical and personal information about staff members' sickness and other absence will be treated confidentially by all parties concerned. This data will be collected, used and stored in line with the Data Protection Act 2018. Please refer to our [privacy notice for staff](#) members for more detail on how data will be processed.

6) Roles and Responsibilities:

6.1 Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for making sure that:

- This sickness and absence policy is applied consistently across our school and that it is in line with equality legislation
- All staff are aware of this policy and their responsibilities
- Monitoring staff absence and following the procedures on managing staff absence if 'trigger points' are surpassed (see sections 17 and 18 for more)
- Considering all valid requests for time off equally, fairly, and according to the needs of the school and pupils.

6.2 Finance & Business Manager

The Finance & Business Manager is responsible for:

- Liaising with payroll promptly if a staff member's pay needs to be adjusted as a result of their absence.

6.3 Line Managers

Line managers have day-to-day responsibility for this policy. If staff have questions about this policy, they should refer to their line manager in the first instance.

Line managers are responsible for:

- Supporting staff and managing ill-health matters confidentially and sensitively, and in line with the Data Protection Act 2018
- Promoting positive working arrangements, including monitoring workload and maintaining effective communication with staff
- Monitoring staff absence and following the procedures on managing staff absence if 'trigger points' are surpassed (see sections 17 and 18 for more)
- Giving due regard to equality legislation and taking any disability requirements into consideration.

6.4 Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees will hold the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy. The Board of Trustees has delegated the approval of this policy to the Policy Review Committee.

6.5 All Staff

Staff are expected to:

- Follow the procedures set out in this policy
- Adhere to the stated timescales when responding to or appealing the school's requests or decisions.

7) Headteacher and the Chair of the Board of Trustees:

In cases where the Headteacher is the absent party, the Chair of the Board of Trustees will carry out the functions normally allocated to the Headteacher in this procedure.

Where Headteachers are absent they will need to notify both the Chair of the Board of Trustees and their deputy or next suitable post holder.

8) Breaches of this policy and procedure:

Breaches of this policy and procedure include a failure to adhere to notification and certification procedures or taking 'sickness absences' when not genuinely ill.

In the case of a breach of this policy and procedure, employees may be subject to disciplinary proceedings and possible withdrawal of sick pay. In cases of frequent or long-term absence, the school will also have regard to its absence management procedure.

9) Notification/certification procedure:

9.1 Absence less than 7 calendar days

We encourage staff to keep an open dialogue with their line manager regarding their health to help us:

- Identify absence problems early on
- Support staff wherever possible, including with rehabilitation and return to work.

If a staff member is taken ill or injured while at work, they should report or be taken to their line manager to be given permission to leave work, if appropriate. Line managers should decide arrangements for anyone who is unwell to be accompanied home or to receive medical treatment where necessary.

If a staff member is unable to attend work because of illness or injury, they should:

- Contact the Deputy Head teacher (if a member of teaching staff), the Assistant Headteacher (if they are a LSA) or the Finance & Business manager (for admin & site staff) **by no later than 7am** (for staff starting by 8:30am) **or at least 3 hours before** the start of their working day if they start after this time. If they are not able to get hold of their line manager, they should:
 - Contact the senior administrator or other member of office staff; and
 - Send an email to their line manager, letting them know about their illness or injury and confirming how they can contact the staff member.
- Explain the nature of their illness or injury and provide an estimate of when they are able to return to work
- Agree with their line manager how and when to keep in touch (see more in section 9.3 below) and confirm contact details
- Advise on any urgent or outstanding work-related matters that need attention.

If the staff member is too unwell or otherwise unable to contact the school, they should:

- Arrange for another family member to make contact on their behalf.

If the Headteacher is unable to attend work because of illness or injury, they should:

- Contact the Deputy Headteacher to make them aware
- For absences longer than 7 calendar days they should also contact the Chair of Trustees.

For absences of more than 7 calendar days, staff members must obtain a "statement of fitness for work" stating that they are not fit for work and the reason(s) why. This should be forwarded to their line manager as soon as possible. If absence continues, the staff member must obtain further medical certificates to cover the whole period of their absence.

Employees (or their next of kin if they are not sufficiently well to do so) should maintain contact with their line manager, during any period of self-certification, such that their Headteacher has a reasonable knowledge of the employee's progress at all times, and of when he/she can realistically expect the employee to return to work.

If the statement or medical certificate says that the staff member "may be fit for work", the individual should inform their line manager immediately. We will discuss any potential measures needed

to facilitate the staff member's return to work, considering the healthcare professional's advice. If appropriate measures cannot be taken, the staff member will remain on sick leave, and we will agree a date to review the situation.

If the absence is the result of an accident or injury sustained during the course of work duties, this information and the name of the person to whom the incident was reported must be made known. This is to ensure that the school's management has properly recorded the accident and, where necessary, taken remedial action.

9.2 Absence greater than seven calendar days:

For absences of more than seven consecutive calendar days, (including weekends and public holidays), employees must obtain a fit note from their doctor and send it to the school immediately after the first week of absence. If an employee is still not fit to return by the time their fit note expires, the employee must obtain another fit note so that their entire period of absence is covered and send this to the school at the earliest opportunity.

The requirement to provide a fit note to cover absences also applies to school holidays. Where an employee is not fit to work on the last day of term and first day of the next, a fit note should be provided to cover the school holidays or otherwise to show that the employee was fit during that period of time.

9.3 Maintaining contact with line managers during sick leave:

If staff are absent on sick leave, their line manager may contact them from time to time to discuss:

- Their wellbeing and expected length of continued absence from work
- Any of their work that requires attention.

The purpose of such contact is to reassure the staff member, and line managers will keep it to a reasonable minimum.

If staff have concerns while absent on sick leave, whether about the reason for their absence or their ability to return to work, they should feel free to contact their line manager at any time.

9.4 Provision of fit notes for periods of absence less than eight calendar days:

The school reserves the right to require employees to obtain a fit note from their GP for absences of any duration. Examples of when this may be done include where there are concerns about frequent absence, or where employees have been off work due to sickness at any time during the week immediately before or immediately after they have taken some holiday (in this case, a fit note will be required for the whole period of absence). In such circumstances, the school will cover the costs incurred in obtaining such a fit note for absences of a week or less on production of a doctor's invoice.

9.5 Fit notes which recommend adjustments:

The school will give reasonable consideration to all adjustments recommended by GPs where it is stated that the employee is fit if certain adjustments can be made. However, where the school feels unable to comply with the adjustments, the employee will remain sick in accordance with the note.

9.6 Sickness incapacity whilst on annual leave:

If an employee becomes unfit during annual leave and wishes to treat the incapacity as sick leave and reclaim the annual leave they must comply fully with the usual requirements for notification and provision of medical evidence. Where those requirements are not fulfilled, the absence will be deemed to be unauthorised and will not be paid.

10) Absence Management Procedure:

The informal review process is triggered if, during any rolling 6-month period, a staff member has had:

- three separate occasions of sickness absence; and/or
- a continuous sickness absence of 10 working days' or more; and/or

- an absence which appears to have a recurring recognisable pattern, for example frequent absenteeism around a weekend

Before triggering the process, the line manager should be satisfied that they have explored any reasonable adjustments to help the staff member improve attendance.

10.1 Informal Review

We will aim to give the staff member at least 5 days' written notice of the date, time and place of an informal review meeting.

At the meeting, the line manager and staff member will discuss:

- The staff member's pattern of absence to understand the reasons for it
- Any medical treatment, and whether medical advice is needed from the occupational health service
- Whether the illness is work-related and if any temporary changes to the staff member's work could help them improve attendance
- Whether the staff member has any underlying health problems (including a disability), how this will likely affect their attendance in the future, and whether any reasonable adjustments can be made
- How the staff member's absence is affecting pupils, colleagues and the school
- Any other ways the school can support the staff member
- Remind the staff member of their access to the school's Wellbeing package.

After the meeting, the line manager will summarise the main points in writing, which will be shared with the staff member.

If a staff member's absence levels continue to be of concern after the informal review meeting, their line manager will invite them to the first formal review meeting (see section 10.2). This will usually take place 8 working weeks after the informal review meeting, depending on circumstances.

10.2 Formal Review:

There are 3 formal review meetings: the first formal review meeting, the second formal review meeting, and the final attendance review meeting. If the staff member's absence levels do not improve to an acceptable level after the final attendance review meeting, the Headteacher (or another senior staff member) will convene an ill-health capability hearing, with a panel, to fully review the case (see section 25).

Each formal review meeting will usually take place 8 working weeks after the previous one, depending on circumstances. The line manager will inform the staff member of each meeting, in writing, 5 working days in advance. The staff member has a right to be accompanied to any formal meeting under this procedure by a trade union representative or colleague (see more in section 20).

Where the staff member's attendance improves to an acceptable level during the formal reviews process, the line manager or Headteacher will hold a review meeting to confirm this. They will also agree on any further monitoring meetings, which the line manager or Headteacher will confirm to the staff member in writing.

Where the staff member's attendance improves to an acceptable level and for a sustained period of time i.e. 6 months, formal monitoring will cease. However, if the staff member's absence levels increase again within a year, the formal review procedure will be triggered again from the point at which it was ceased.

10.2.1 During Formal Review Meeting(s):

At the meeting, the staff member and line manager (or the Headteacher or other senior staff, if this is a final attendance review meeting) will discuss:

- The staff member's absence levels, the reasons for it, and whether further absences are likely going forward
- Any medical advice received
- Any work-related issues that may be affecting the staff member's attendance and whether any temporary changes to the job could help improve their attendance
- If the staff member has underlying health problems, any reasonable adjustments that could be made
- How the staff member's absence is affecting pupils, colleagues and the school
- Any other ways our school can support the staff member. This may involve an action plan that includes obtaining further medical advice or outlining what adjustments or adaptations will be made for the staff member.

10.2.2 Possible Outcomes:

At the end of each formal review meeting, the line manager (or Headteacher or another senior member of staff if this is a final attendance review meeting) may decide to:

- Agree the issue has been resolved and take no further action
- Continue to monitor and review the staff member's attendance
- **For the first formal review meeting only:** issue a formal attendance notification, which will normally remain on record for 6 to 12 months depending on the circumstances (such as the nature and prognosis of the illness and impact of the treatment). The notification will:
 - Explain the school's expectations on attendance going forward and what the review period for this will be
 - Warn the staff member of the potential consequences of not meeting the required standards, including another formal attendance notification and the risk of dismissal
- **For the second formal review meeting only:** issue a final attendance notification, which will reiterate the school's expectations on attendance going forward, the review period for this, and warn the staff member of the potential consequences of not meeting the required standards, including the risk of dismissal
- **For the third, final attendance review meeting only:** recommend dismissal and arrange a formal hearing for a panel to examine the case (see section 25 below).

After each review meeting, the line manager will summarise the outcome in writing, including the staff member's right to appeal within 10 working days if the line manager has issued a formal attendance notification or final attendance notification.

11) Failure to inform the school of an absence and/or failure to provide a fit note:

A failure to attend work without providing any reason, or any reasonable reason will be deemed an unauthorised absence from work which may result in an employee being in breach of contract and therefore subject to disciplinary process and/or withdrawal of pay.

Should an employee fail to provide a fit note either from the outset of an absence or fail to maintain certification throughout the entire period of their absence, they will be treated as having an unauthorised absence from the work and may be deemed to be in breach of contract with the consequences outlined above.

It is reasonable in such circumstances for the school to make reasonable efforts to contact an employee to establish their whereabouts to ensure their wellbeing and log their attempts to do so.

The management of such unauthorised absences is not covered by this policy. Cases of unauthorised absence will be dealt with under the Staff Disciplinary Policy.

12) Sick Leave and Pay:

For pay entitlements during phased return to work, see section 13 below.

12.1 Statutory sick pay and occupational sick pay

Staff are entitled to statutory sick pay (SSP) and occupational sick pay, where eligible.

Staff should refer to the following:

- For teaching staff please refer to the Burgundy Book (which outlines conditions of service for teachers)
- For support staff please refer to the Green Book (which outlines conditions of service for support staff).

Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)

As well as this policy, staff should also refer to their terms and conditions of employment document.

12.2 Pension contributions during sickness absence

Any employer and employee pension contributions, will continue subject to the relevant scheme rules, during any period of occupational or SSP.

12.3 Sickness absence caused by a third party

If a staff member's absence is, or may be, caused by another party who is, or may be, legally liable to pay damages (for example, if the staff member is injured in an accident caused by another person or company), the staff member must immediately give their line manager details of this and of any legal claim they are pursuing.

If the school asks them to, the staff member must take part in any legal proceedings to recover damages. They must also, if asked, give the school part of any damages or compensation payment that relates to lost earnings. The amount will be all of the following:

- Reasonably determined by the school
- Minus any costs the staff member has incurred to get the damages or compensation payment
- Capped at the amount the school paid the staff member over the period of absence.

13) Returning to Work:

We will hold return to work meetings in any six-month period of sickness for any of the above triggers. Where possible, the return-to-work meeting will be carried out on the first day back to work by the Headteacher, line manager, or other nominated person, or shortly afterwards where this is not possible.

The meeting will be to welcome the employee back to work and seek to clarify that the employee is fit to carry out the duties of their post. The meeting will also establish the reasons for the absence and highlight any additional support required for them including services that can be accessed through the school's wellbeing package (SAS). Any concerns regarding absence may be raised and measures identified to support the employee to improve attendance where necessary and help to prevent its reoccurrence.

In a return-to-work meeting, employees should be made aware when they are near to reaching the trigger points and that reaching these could result in a formal ill health capability meeting being convened (see section 25 below). If an employee has reached the trigger points when a return-to-work meeting is held, the employee should be made aware that an ill health capability meeting may be scheduled and a first written warning could be given at this meeting. Alternatively consideration should be given to setting an attendance improvement plan (AIP) (see section 13.1 below).

A record of the meeting must be made using the self-certification sickness absence and return to work meeting form (appendix 3). A copy of this form should be given to the employee and the original placed on the employee's personal record file.

13.1 Attendance improvement plan (AIP):

An AIP is a record of what an employee will need to achieve in terms of attendance over the coming weeks or months. The AIP should provide enough time to demonstrate attendance has improved with details of assistance that the employee will be offered, wherever possible, to help them achieve improved attendance.

AIPs may be put in place either where there are management concerns about attendance or as part of a formal process.

13.2 Persistent short-term absence:

If an employee's sickness absence is close to reaching or indeed has reached a "trigger point", the relevant line manager and/or Headteacher should discuss this with the employee and start to monitor their sickness absence more carefully through an AIP and pursuant to the school's absence management procedure.

13.3 Long-term sickness absence:

Long-term sickness absence occurs when an employee is absent from work for a continuous period of **at least 28 calendar days**. Where it is clear at the outset or becomes clear after a time that the absence will be long term, a referral can be made to Occupational Health (usually after four to six weeks' of continuous absence, sooner if there are concerns of a mental health nature for example, stress, anxiety or depression). The Headteacher/Finance & Business manager or nominated person will inform the member of staff that Occupational Health will be asked to give an opinion in relation to the employee's current fitness for work and recommendations for support that may be of benefit, where it can be facilitated. The Headteacher/Finance & Business manager or nominated person should then contact the Schools' HR advisory service team about making a referral to Occupational Health.

13.4 Referral to the Occupational Health Unit:

During any period of absence or on return to work, the school may require an employee to engage with an Occupational Health physician/adviser so that they can prepare a medical report. If the school has made a referral, employees are expected to co-operate fully with the Occupational Health physician/adviser. This may include attending an appointment with the Occupational Health physician/adviser and providing consent for the release of medical information.

- in this section, the duties of a Headteacher may be delegated to another appropriate member of staff

- the Headteacher/Finance & Business manager should talk to the employee and explain that he/she will be referring him/her to the Occupational Health Unit. In some circumstances, it may be necessary to inform the employee in writing

13.4.1 When to make a referral:

A referral should be made if any of the following occur:

- where it is anticipated or known that the absence is going to last four weeks or more. The absence need not have exceeded four weeks at the time of making the referral
- where there is a concern over persistent short-term absence prior to or during an attendance improvement plan
- where a trigger point is met, unless a referral has already been undertaken recently
- where there is a concern of any nature where there appears to be an underlying medical condition
- when an employee has been absent with, or appears to be suffering from, mental health issues (for example stress, anxiety, depression)
- where there are concerns about an employee's health and/or safety in the workplace and medical advice is required.

Referrals may not be necessary for routine procedures, which require a fixed period of convalescence, unless complications arise.

13.4.2 Occupational Health Recommendations:

It should be noted that the outcomes of an Occupational Health referral in the form of the report(s) provided are advisory in nature. It will ultimately be a judgement for the school, having sought HR advice, as to whether any given recommendation can be reasonably implemented. Occupational Health may recommend reasonable adjustments, which could include a phased return to work, temporary or permanent adjustments to an employee's role. In the event that the employee is unable to fulfil the role, retirement on ill health grounds may be considered or dismissal with notice in line with the school's absence management procedure outlined below.

13.5 Phased Return to Work

Medical professionals or the occupational health service may recommend that a staff member returning to work from sickness absence should:

- Work reduced hours
- Have lighter duties or different duties.

This will be followed by a gradual increase of working hours and/or duties over a period of 4 weeks, depending on individual circumstances, and may be additionally extended by 2 weeks.

We may, at any time in operating this policy, require staff to attend a medical examination by either, or both, an Occupational Health Provider or a doctor nominated by us (at our expense). You will be asked to agree that any report produced in connection with any such examination may be disclosed to us and that we may discuss the contents of the report with our advisers and the relevant doctor.

We will consider recommendations by a medical practitioner on:

- Further extending the phased return to work.

Staff should refer to their terms and conditions document regarding salary paid during the period of return to work.

This arrangement will be reviewed after a period of 4 weeks after which the school, may pay the staff member for the actual hours worked, in addition to their entitlement to statutory sick pay.

In addition to the above, we will follow the guidance stipulated on the return-to-work form issued by the general practitioner and/or report issued by occupational health.

13.6 Occupational Health

You will be asked to agree that any report produced in connection with any such examination may be disclosed to us and that we may discuss the contents of the report with our advisers and the relevant doctor.

14) Procedure for Reporting Sickness Absence:

14.1 Unauthorised Absence

If a staff member does not report for work and we receive no contact from them or someone on their behalf, their line manager will contact them as soon as possible to:

- Make sure they are safe
- Give them an opportunity to explain their absence.

Staff should not treat this as a substitute for reporting sickness absence.

Where staff remain absent without leave and/or there are grounds to believe that they are acting dishonestly or failing to follow the procedures above, we may treat this as an unauthorised absence without pay.

We may deal with cases of unauthorised absence under our disciplinary procedures - see our [staff disciplinary policy & procedures](#) for more detail.

15) Disability-Related Absence:

We have an obligation under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments for staff with a protected characteristic (such as disability, pregnancy and gender reassignment) where the reasonable adjustment would remove or reduce a disadvantage the member of staff faces. In discussion with the staff member, our school will consider all reasonable adjustments and provide these where possible.

Staff who believe they have a disability or medical condition that affects their ability to do their work should inform their line manager, so that the school is able to consider appropriate reasonable adjustments and support.

Any information provided will be handled in a confidential manner and in accordance with Data Protection regulations.

Where staff need time off work to attend medical appointments related to their disability or medical condition that affects their work e.g., treatment, rehabilitation and/or check-ups, the school will normally allow paid time off for 10 appointments a year (pro rata for part-time staff) as a reasonable adjustment. This is not guaranteed and, as such, staff should speak to their line manager about their needs and any time off will be managed on a case-by-case basis.

16) Pregnancy-Related Absence:

Pregnant staff members may need to take time off to attend medical appointments and/or due to pregnancy-related illness, and our school will support this. We will not count pregnancy-related sickness absence when reviewing staff's attendance record.

However, if the school has concerns about the reasons or lengths of absence, it reserves the right to formally investigate the nature and cause of the absence.

For information on parental leave entitlements, please see our 'Family & Parental Leave policy'.

17) Absence Related to Gender Reassignment:

Staff members who are due to undergo, or are in the process of undergoing, gender reassignment should discuss with their line manager their needs for time off. Our school may accommodate those needs as far as these are reasonably possible.

18) Medical and Dental Appointments:

Where possible, staff should book routine medical and dental appointments outside of working hours. If this is not possible e.g., for hospital or specialist appointments staff should:

- Where possible, book appointments for early in the morning, lunch time or end of the day so it causes minimal disruption to the working day
- Speak to their line manager, who may agree to time off. Staff will need to provide proof of the appointment.

Staff will be granted paid time off for cancer screening.

19) Elective Surgery:

If a staff member is undergoing elective surgery, they should discuss their need for time off and recovery with the Headteacher who may:

- Authorise it as sickness absence if the surgery is medically necessary. The staff member is expected to provide evidence to support this. In this case, the staff member may be entitled to occupational sick pay and/or SSP
- Grant or refuse the absence as special leave. If the absence is granted, it is normally unpaid unless:
 - Staff arrange the surgery and recovery time to occur outside term time
 - It is possible for staff to use annual leave for the period of absence.
- View the time off as sickness absence where not doing so may be in breach of the Equality Act 2010, such as gender reassignment (see section 17 above). The Headteacher may seek further HR advice on how to proceed.

20) Fertility Treatment and IVF:

Staff are encouraged to reach out to their line manager to enable our school to support the staff member where possible. These conversations will be strictly confidential.

Appointments for fertility treatment and IVF will be treated as any other medical appointment (see section 18). However, where possible, our school will endeavour to make reasonable time-off arrangements.

If a staff member becomes unfit for work because of fertility treatment, they should follow the normal procedures for reporting sickness in section 9.

21) Stress-Related Absence:

The school will support and discuss options with any staff who need time off because they are experiencing significant stress at work or in their personal lives.

Staff should speak to the Headteacher who may:

- Authorise the staff member time off
- Arrange external support, such as counselling or occupational health services
- Suggest completing a risk assessment and following through with any actions identified
- Reassess the staff member's workload and decide what tasks to prioritise.

At all times, the confidentiality and dignity of staff will be maintained.

Please see our 'Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy - Staff' on policy page of the school website.

22) Work-Related Injuries or Illness:

Staff should report work-related injuries or illnesses to the Deputy Headteacher as soon as possible. The Deputy Head will report all relevant injuries and illnesses (as defined in the RIDDOR 2013 legislation) to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

23) Trigger Points:

In any rolling, six-month period, the trigger points are:

- three separate occasions of sickness absence; and/or
- a continuous sickness absence of 10 working days' or more; and/or
- an absence which appears to have a recurring recognisable pattern, for example frequent absenteeism around a weekend.

However, these trigger points are for guidance only and the school reserves the right to raise any concerns with an employee at an earlier stage where there are reasonable grounds for concern, or at a later stage where appropriate, and to institute an attendance improvement plan at any time (see section 10.1 below).

It is hoped that closer monitoring and discussions with an employee concerning absence and attendance will result in an improved attendance record.

Employees should be aware that a poor attendance record may result in formal action being taken, which may, in some circumstances, include and/or lead to the termination of their employment.

The application of the trigger is a stage in the process where reasonable adjustments will be considered for employees who meet the threshold of disability within the Equality Act.

24) Procedure for Managing Long-Term Sickness Absence:

Our school is committed to dealing fairly and sympathetically with staff members who are absent from work for long periods because of ill health.

We define long-term sickness absence as absence lasting for 4 or more weeks. At this point, we will refer the staff member to the occupational health service so that we can obtain medical advice.

Before triggering the process, the Headteacher should be satisfied that they have explored any reasonable adjustments to help the staff member improve attendance.

24.1 Informal Review

We will aim to give the staff members a minimum of 5 days' written notice of the date, time and place of an informal review meeting.

At the meeting, the line manager and staff member will discuss:

- The medical opinion, prognosis and expected timescale for the staff member to return to work
- What support the staff member needs to enable them to successfully return to work

- Whether the staff member has a disability under the Equality Act 2010 and whether any reasonable adjustments can be made
- What impact the staff member's absence has on the school's operations.

24.1.1 Possible Outcomes of Informal Review

The line manager will summarise the main points of the meeting in writing, including agreed actions (if any) such as:

- A return-to-work plan
- Whether to seek further medical advice.

Where the staff member recovers and returns to work, the line manager or Headteacher will decide, in consultation with the staff member, whether to hold further review meetings.

If a staff member's absence continues, the line manager will invite the staff member to the first formal review meeting within 3 months after the informal review meeting. See section 24.2.

24.2 Formal Review

There are 3 formal review meetings: the first formal review meeting, the second formal review meeting, and the final formal review meeting. If the staff member's absence levels do not improve to an acceptable level after the final formal review meeting, the Headteacher (or another senior staff member) will convene an ill-health capability hearing, with a panel, to fully review the case (see section 25).

Each formal review meeting will usually take place 8 to 12 working weeks after the previous one, depending on circumstances. The line manager will inform the staff member of each meeting, in writing, at least 5 working days in advance. The staff member has a right to be accompanied to any formal meeting under this procedure by a trade union representative or colleague (see more in section 20).

Where the staff member recovers and returns to work during the formal reviews process, the line manager or Headteacher will decide, in consultation with the staff member, whether to hold further review meetings.

24.2.1 During Formal Review Meeting(s)

We will follow the same process for formal review meetings as for the informal review meeting in section 24.1.

24.2.2 Possible Outcomes of Formal Review

At the end of each formal review meeting, the line manager, in consultation with the occupational health service (if relevant) may decide to:

- Agree the issue has been resolved and take no further action
- Agree a return-to-work plan with the staff member
- Extend the period of monitoring and review
- Begin a phased return to work, and/or consider/implement reasonable adjustments to the workplace
- Seek further medical advice
- **For the first and/or second formal review meetings only:** issue a formal attendance notification. This will warn the staff member that they may be dismissed on the grounds of ill health if it's unlikely they can return to work over a reasonable timescale e.g. within 6 months of the previous informal or formal review meeting.
- **For the final formal review meeting only:**
 - Explore if the staff member is eligible for ill-health retirement

- Consider whether the staff member can do other suitable work in school
- Issue a final attendance notification on the grounds of ill health if the staff member cannot return to work at this point or within a reasonable timescale
- If medical professionals advise that the staff member is unlikely to return to work in a reasonable timeframe, usually 3 months, the line manager or Headteacher will convene a formal review hearing, where the facts of the case will be examined (see section 20).

After each formal review meeting, the line manager will summarise the outcome in writing, including the staff member's right to appeal, within 10 working days if the line manager has issued a formal attendance notification or final attendance notification.

25) Ill-Health Capability Review Hearing (for short and long-term absences):

The Headteacher (or another senior member of staff) will convene a panel to fully review the case if all other options have been explored and:

- A staff member's short-term absences have not improved sufficiently
- The long-term absence of a staff member continues due to the nature of the illness

The Headteacher will inform the staff member of the meeting, in writing, at least 5 working days in advance, including that:

- The staff member has the right to be accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative
- If the staff member is not well enough to attend, they can send a representative instead and/or submit a written statement
- The Headteacher or line manager will present a recommendation to the panel
- A possible outcome of the meeting could be dismissal.

25.1 Convening the Panel:

The panel will usually consist of:

- The Chair of Trustees and up to 3 members of the Board of Trustees

The Headteacher may also invite the following people to the meeting:

- An HR adviser
- A representative from the Local Authority.

During the meeting, the Headteacher and panel will review:

- The record and pattern of absence, and how likely it is to improve
- What support the staff member has received and whether all appropriate options have been properly explored
- Whether the staff member has an underlying illness, disability, or any other issues raised by the occupational health service
- The impact of the absence on colleagues, pupils and the school
- The staff member's attitude towards recognising and addressing the impact of their absence
- The needs of the school and best interests of the staff member.

The staff member will also have the opportunity to present evidence and explain their level of absence and what actions they are taking to reduce it to an acceptable level.

25.2 Deciding on Appropriate Action:

The meeting will be adjourned, and the panel will reflect on it before coming to a decision.

The panel may decide to:

- Keep the staff member's absence under review for a defined period of time
- Agree a return-to-work plan
- Dismiss the staff member
 - The Board of Trustees will dismiss the staff member with notice
 - Decide whether the employee can retire on the grounds of ill health (where appropriate).

The chair of the panel will communicate the decision to the staff member in writing within 5 working days. The decision will also inform the staff member that they can appeal if they are not satisfied with the outcome and explain how to do this.

26) Right to be Accompanied to Formal Meetings:

The staff member has a right to be accompanied to any formal meeting under this procedure by a trade union representative or colleague. Their details must be provided to the line manager conducting the meeting in good time before any meeting.

We may, at our discretion, permit other companions e.g., a family member, where this will help overcome particular difficulties caused by a disability, or difficulty understanding English.

A companion may make representations, ask questions, and sum up the member of staff's position, but will not be allowed to answer questions on their behalf. The member of staff may confer privately with their companion at any time during a meeting.

27) Appeals:

If the staff member is not satisfied with the outcome of a review, they have the right to appeal the decision of the line manager, Headteacher or panel.

The staff member should set out their grounds of appeal in writing within 5 working days and submit this to the Headteacher.

An appeal is not designed to re-hear the matter but to examine the grounds of appeal. The staff member should therefore be specific about the grounds of the appeal.

However, a full re-hearing may be appropriate in exceptional circumstances.

The Headteacher will appoint an appeal panel consisting of 3 people. This will be a group of people independent from any previous stage of the procedure, and the panel will be chaired by an independent individual.

Appeals will be heard without unreasonable delay and in any event within 15 working days of the date of the appeal notice. The Headteacher will tell the staff member the time and place of the appeal meeting in advance in writing.

Staff have the same statutory right to be accompanied to the appeal meeting by a colleague or trade union representative.

The outcome of the appeal will be confirmed in writing by the chair of the appeal panel to the staff member within 5 working days of the appeal. The decision of the appeal panel is final.

28) Other instances of absence (bereavement and compassionate leave, ECT induction, jury service and trade union duties):

Our school recognises that it is not possible to cover all circumstances where it is reasonable to grant leave. If there is a specific or exceptional situation not covered by this policy, staff should discuss their need for time off with their line manager and/or the Headteacher.

28.1 Bereavement

We encourage staff experiencing bereavement to reach out to their line manager so they can discuss:

- Whether and when the staff member will take compassionate leave. We will be guided by the wishes of the staff member on this
- How the school can support the staff member during this difficult time.

28.1.1 Compassionate Leave

Staff can take up to:

- 2 days of compassionate leave for immediate family (parent, guardian, child, unborn child, sibling, partner), per year plus
- 1 day for attending a funeral.

Depending on circumstances, staff may be able to extend this period of leave or take compassionate leave for situations outside of their immediate family.

Compassionate leave will be paid when concerning immediate family members. Compassionate leave also applies to critical illnesses or injuries.

28.1.2 Statutory Parental Bereavement Leave and Pay

Beyond compassionate leave, staff may be eligible for statutory parental bereavement leave and pay in cases where:

- A child (under the age of 18) dies
- A child is stillborn after 24 weeks of pregnancy
- There's an abortion after 24 weeks of pregnancy

Read the government's [guidance on statutory parental bereavement and pay](#) to find out more.

28.2 Early Career Teachers (ECTs) Serving Induction

Where an ECT has been absent for 30 days or more (or equivalent for part-time ECTs), per year of their induction, their induction period will be extended by the aggregate total number of days absent. If the ECT is unable to serve the extension at Applecroft School they will need to complete 1 or more terms in a new school or institution.

This does not apply to ECTs taking statutory maternity, paternity, shared parental, adoption or parental bereavement leave.

28.3 Jury Service and Magistrate Duty

If a staff member is summoned for jury service, they should speak to their line manager and Headteacher as soon as possible to allow time to arrange cover.

At Applecroft School, we will continue to pay staff whilst on Jury Service (although this is not a requirement).

If a staff member is a magistrate, the school will grant the employee up to 15 days per year which will be unpaid.

28.4 Trade Union Duties

The school recognises the legal requirement for employers to allow reasonable time off work for the school's elected representatives of recognised trade unions to carry out their duties in the school in which they are elected.

Staff who represent a trade union that is recognised by our school are entitled to paid time off to complete training and union duties, such as:

- › Negotiating pay, terms and conditions
- › Helping union members with disciplinary or grievance procedures, including meetings to hear their cases.

For more information please see our 'Staff Leave of Absence Policy'.

29) Monitoring Arrangements:

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher.

At every review, this policy will be approved by the Policy Review Committee.

30) Links to Other Policies:

This policy links to the following policies:

- Capability policy
- Data protection policy
- Family & parental leave policy
- Flexible working policy
- Privacy notice for staff members
- Staff appraisal policy
- Staff code of conduct policy
- Staff disciplinary policy & procedure
- Staff leave of absence policy
- Staff mental health & wellbeing policy.

Sick Pay Entitlement (Teachers)

Teachers	
During the first year of service	Full pay for 25 working days and after completing 4 calendar months' service half pay for 50 working days
During the second year of service	Full pay for 50 working days and half pay for 50 working days
During the third year of service	Full pay for 75 days and half pay for 75 working days
During the fourth year and successive years	Full pay for 100 working days and half pay for 100 working days

Note 1: For teachers, working days are the days defined as "directed time" (currently 195 per school year). Years of service are based on aggregated service.

Sick Pay Entitlement (Support Staff)

Table B	
Support Staff in Voluntary Aided, Foundation or Academy Schools not covered by the HCC Collective Agreement	
During the First year of service	1 Month full pay and, after completing 4 months' service, 2 months half pay
During the second year of service	2 months' full pay and 2 months' half pay
During the third year of service	4 months' full pay and 4 months' half pay
During the fourth & fifth year of service	5 months' full pay and 5 months' half pay
After 5 years' service	6 months' full pay and 6 months' half pay
Note 1: For occupational sick pay entitlement record purposes (and without prejudice to the National Council's arrangements for self-certification days and to any local agreements on "qualifying days" for statutory sick pay purposes) "one month" is deemed to be equivalent to 26 working days, Saturday being reckoned in all cases as a working day.	
Note 2: If an employee has suffered an injury during the course of their work duties, and this has been confirmed in writing by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), then the employee is entitled to receive the first 6 months of their absence as full pay. If they are still absent after the first 6 months, then their normal sick pay entitlement will begin.	
Note 3: Entitlement is based on continuous service.	

Self-Certification Sickness Absence and Return to Work Meeting

User Guidance Notes													
This form should be completed using block capitals and placed on the employee's school file. In addition a copy should be given to the employee.													
Please ensure that you complete all sections of the form. If you require further guidance please contact the Schools' HR Advisory Team.													
Part One-Employee details													
Title	First name						Last name				Initials		
Job Title				Payroll Number									
Part Two - Details of Sickness													
Number of days Absent		Start date of sickness						Last date of sickness					
Working days													
Calendar Days		Please tick this box if the sickness was over 7 calendar days <input type="checkbox"/>											
		Please attach a fit note for absences over 7 calendar days											
Part Three - Return to work meeting													
Line Manager's Name													
Date of meeting													
Location of meeting													
People present at meeting													
Back problems		<input type="checkbox"/>	Muscular Skeletal				<input type="checkbox"/>	Stress/Depression/Anxiety				<input type="checkbox"/>	
Carcinoma		<input type="checkbox"/>	Colds				<input type="checkbox"/>	Flu				<input type="checkbox"/>	
Infections		<input type="checkbox"/>	Headache/ Migraine				<input type="checkbox"/>	Eye Disorder				<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ear, Nose & Throat		<input type="checkbox"/>	Urinary Tract infection				<input type="checkbox"/>	Pregnancy Related				<input type="checkbox"/>	
Stomach Aliments		<input type="checkbox"/>	Heart problems				<input type="checkbox"/>	Respiratory/Chest/Asthma				<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other (please specify):													
Details of items discussed													
Risk Assessment reviewed or conducted <input type="checkbox"/>													
Have any health review prompts been reached?													

Health review prompts

- When there are 3 or more instances of absence in any rolling 6-month period
- When an individual accumulates ten or more calendar days absence within any rolling 6-month period
- When an absence appears to have a recognisable pattern, for example frequent absence around a weekend
- When an employee's sickness absence is for a continuous period of at least 28 calendar days
- When there are a series of absences which impact on service delivery
- Has an Attendance Improvement Plan been set recently (this may be set prior to trigger points being met).

Yes (If yes, consider arranging a Formal ill-health Capability Meeting and inform employee that they may be issued with a warning at the Formal ill-health Capability Meeting)

No

Attendance Improvement Plan set

Details of support offered

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Details of the impact of the absence on the school/employees workload

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Referred to Occupational Health

Part Four - Authorisation

I certify I was absent from work due to sickness as detailed on this form.

Please note: Knowingly making a false statement may result in disciplinary action being taken and sick pay being terminated.

Employee Signature:	Name							
	Date					2	0	

I certify that I have discussed this absence with the employee and that the necessary certifications have been completed.

Managers Signature:	Name							
	Date					2	0	