



**Ivington C of E
Primary and
Pre-school**

*Reaching together with the Fruit of the
Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)*

Managing Attendance and Absence Policy

Approval of the Governing Body

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for:

Managing attendance and absence Policy

at

Ivington CE (VA) Primary and Pre-school

It was revised during the:

Spring Term 2023

It has been agreed and is supported by the teaching staff and the governing body.

We aim to review this policy during the:

Spring Term 2026

Or sooner if necessary



Linking with our Vision – Reaching together with Love, Joy and Peace (Galatians 5:22-23)

To provide a caring, Christian ethos for the school, which inspires and excites a shared enthusiasm for life and learning.

At Ivington CE Primary and Pre-school, through our strong Christian ethos and focus on nine important Christian values, we are committed to providing a deeply nourishing, spiritual, ambitious, and broad curriculum.

Our motto, 'Reaching together' underpins our belief in equality of opportunity for all, where we actively endeavour to promote understanding and appreciation of our diverse society and give each child a special place in the world where they feel valued, essential to our community and equipped with the necessary skills to make a positive contribution.

We perceive our role to be opening a 'Window on the World', through which our pupils are actively encouraged to develop respect for the beliefs and cultures which enrich their everyday lives and encourage others to do likewise.

We strive to eliminate inequality through our deep Christian ethos of respect and understanding of all groups in society, which ensures that everyone at Ivington will be treated fairly despite his or her creed, colour, disability, or gender.

More details are available in our Inclusion, Racial Equality and Equal Opportunities policies.

The health, safety, and welfare of all the people who work or learn at our school are therefore of fundamental importance. We aim to provide a safe, secure, and pleasant working environment for everyone. The governing body, along with the LA, takes responsibility for protecting the health, safety and welfare of all children and members of staff.

1. Overview

This guidance provides information about how to apply the Managing Attendance and Absence Policy HR006 (SCH).

Employees should be supported to improve their attendance and well-being. Whilst a level of sickness absence is inevitable, the lost productivity, additional pressure on colleagues and financial costs to the School is considerable and as such the Headteacher or nominated representative should be supported to enable them to appropriately manage absence levels that are a cause for concern.

An employee hitting a trigger does not automatically mean that the employee should receive a formal warning and each case should be considered on its own merits. This document provides further guidance for Headteachers and nominated representatives on when discretion could be given.

2. Absence Review Points

So that a consistent approach can be adopted, the Managing Attendance and Absence Policy identifies key absence review points to support Headteachers and their nominated representatives in identifying when an employee's absence has reached a level for concern. This is namely:

- Employees who have had four or more periods of sickness absence in the preceding 6 months.
- Employees who have had five or more periods of sickness absence in the preceding twelve months (including single days and half or part days).
- Employees who have had a total of ten or more days of sickness absence in the preceding twelve months over 2 or more occasions (or two working weeks for part-time employees; including single days and half or part days).
- Employees who have a pattern of sickness absence that may give rise to a cause for concern. An example might be an employee who is absent only on a Monday or Friday
- Where employees have continued to hit any of the absence review points outlined above, for a period of 18 months or more, the Headteacher or nominated representative may decide to move straight to Stage 2.

Where an employee has a live warning for absence on file:

- During the 12 month monitoring period the employee has a further period of sickness absence and they continue to hit the Absence Review Points (Error! Reference source not found.) OR has a further two or more periods of sickness absence

All sickness absence should be recorded and considered against the absence review points, including those which are certified by a medical professional with a "fit-note". The reason for the absence should be identified and recorded after every absence, including part days in the return to work meeting.

3. Pregnancy Related Absence

All sickness absence related to a pregnancy should be discounted when reviewing absence against the 'absence review points'.

For employees going through IVF treatment, they are protected by pregnancy rights from the date of embryo transfer. There is then a two-week wait until a pregnancy test can be carried out. If the transfer has been successful, the pregnancy protection continues.

4. Disability Related Absence

The Equality Act 2010 states that it is against the law to treat any person unfairly or less favourably as a consequence of a disability. As such, where an employee has a disability, the Headteacher or nominated representative **must make a reasonable adjustment** to the 'absence review points' for that individual.

For example, an employee who is diagnosed with ME/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, a disability under the Equality Act (2010), is likely to have an increased level of absenteeism. It is not 'reasonable' to discount all disability related absence from the absence review points, but they should be adjusted to accommodate an increased level of sickness absence. In this case it **may** be appropriate to increase the absence review points to:

- six or more periods of sickness absence in the preceding 6 months (including single days and half or part days).
- eight or more periods of sickness absence in the preceding twelve months (including single days and half or part days).
- 15 or more days of sickness absence in the preceding twelve months (or three working weeks for part-time employees (including single days and half or part days)).

The revised absence review points should remain under review and other support including adjustments to the role should be considered to support the employee to improve their level of attendance before considering moving to a Formal Stage Hearing. It is also important to consider the impact the absence is having (practically and financially) and whether a formal caution is appropriate. Advice should be sought from HR Services and Occupational Health.

NB: Where an employee has adjusted absence review points due to a disability but has absence that is not related to that disability, the employee should be assessed against the standard absence review points. Care should be taken to ensure that any other absence not directly related to a disability is not "arising as a consequence" of a disability.

5. Menopause Related Absence

Menopause and perimenopause are not specifically protected under the Equality Act. However, if an employee is treated unfairly because of the menopause and perimenopause, this may amount to discrimination because, for example, of their sex and/or a disability, and/or their age. Careful consideration should be given when applying absence review points and advice from HR Services and Occupational Health sought. Please see HR031 Menopause Guidance for further support.

6. Gender Reassignment Related Absence

Gender reassignment is a personal process that is, moving away from one's birth sex to the preferred gender rather than a medical process. It may include undergoing medical gender reassignment treatments,

but it does not require someone to undergo medical treatment in order to be protected. An employee is protected from discrimination from the point they propose to reassign their gender.

Where an individual has been diagnosed as having 'Gender Dysphoria' or 'Gender Identity Disorder' and the condition has a substantial and long-term adverse impact on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities, they may also be protected under the disability discrimination provisions of the Equality Act.

Absence for counselling or medical appointments should be made, where possible, outside of working hours and be treated no less favourably than any other medical appointment. Absence in relation to gender reassignment, including recovery from surgeries should be treated in the same way as disability related absence, and absence review points should be adjusted whilst any treatment is being undertaken.

7. Points of Consideration and Discretion

Each case should be considered on its own merit, however discretion can be applied when considering whether an individual case should be referred to a Formal Stage Hearing.

7.1. Planned Operations

Discretion may be given whether to include absence due to planned operations and recovery that has been recommended by a medical practitioner. These absences are usually known well in advance and alternative arrangements can be made to provide cover while the employee is absent.

Where an employee elects to have surgery that is not urgent, where possible this should be undertaken during school holidays only. Where an employee chooses to undergo cosmetic procedures that are not required for medical reasons (e.g. a breast reduction to ease a back complaint) sick pay would not be payable.

7.2. Serious Medical Emergencies

Discretion may be given where an employee has suffered a serious medical emergency, such as a heart attack or serious road traffic accident resulting in absence while they recover.

7.3. Significant Life Events

Employees may qualify for special paid leave to support them through these times, and further details can be found in the Special Leave Policy. Where an employee is then absent due to sickness following a period of special leave, discretion may be given when considering the application of absence review points.

7.4. Critical Illness

Critical illnesses such as cancer, MS, ME and leukaemia will all be classed as disabilities and therefore very careful consideration should be given when applying absence review points, as described in Section 4 and advice from HR Services and Occupational Health sought.

7.5. COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic, and the lock-down that followed, has had a significant impact on the mental health and wellbeing of many people, and consideration should be given to how the employee can be supported during this difficult time. Discretion may be given to exclude absences related to anxiety manifesting due to COVID-19 when considering the application of absence review points

All absences related directly to illness arising from COVID-19, should not be counted when considering the application of absence review points.

Where a staff member is absent due to the requirement to self-isolate, this will be recorded as special leave (paid), and not be counted as sickness absence. When an employee cannot attend work as a dependent is required to isolate, this will be treated under the normal time off for dependents provision.

7.6. Employees' Duty

As well as considering the circumstances of the absence, due consideration should be given to whether the employee is taken all reasonable steps to improve their health and wellbeing. This could include stopping smoking, seeking counselling, taking exercise or having a healthy and balanced diet.

Please seek further guidance and advice from HR Services.

Version	Status	Date	Description of change	Unions Consulted	Date Agreed
1.0	Final	October 2020	New guidance to partner with the HR006 Managing Attendance & Absence Policy v2.0	Unison ASCL NEU NAUWST Voice GMB NAHT	02.10.2020
2.0	Final	January 2023	Update with revised review points for those on live absence warnings and signposted to new Menopause Guidance HR031.	Unison ASCL NEU NAUWST Community TU GMB NAHT	12.01.2023