



ALTERNATIVE PROVISION

Sickness Absence Policy

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Approved by: [RAISE-AP Educational Directors](#)

Approval Signatures

*RAISE-AP
Directors*

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Aims

Our policy aim to offer, clear support and guidance for everyone who works for [RAISE-AP](#). We will look to support you during periods of ill health and this policy sets out the steps we will take to offer this support and guidance to you. This policy also covers the steps you need to take, such as reporting sickness, when you can self-certify, and when a fit note is needed.

We understand that everyone gets ill at some point and may need some time away from work to recover. We also know that sickness absence has an impact on all the young people in our provision and on other members of our team. In managing sickness absence, we are seeking a balance between doing the right thing for you and doing the right thing for your colleagues and the young people.

From time to time we may need to put other measures in place to improve attendance and our aim in these situations is to be open and honest with you, along with treating you fairly and with dignity.

Reporting Unplanned Absence

If you are unable to come to work for any reason it is important that you let us know. You can do this by contacting your manager or the Head of Provision, before the start of the day where possible. Ideally, we'd like to be informed about an absence by 7.15am to allow for cover arrangement to be put into place.

You should inform your manager or the Head of Provision for the reason of the absence and its likely duration. In the event that your absence continues for a number of days or weeks, you will need to maintain regular contact with [RAISE-AP](#) to keep us informed of the reasons for your ongoing absence and the date when you expect to be able to return to work. You should agree a plan with your manager to keep us up to date with your situation.

If you are too unwell to make contact personally, where possible we ask that you make alternative arrangements e.g., ask a family member to call on your behalf. If you do not arrive for work and we have not had any contact to explain your absence, your manager will attempt to contact you to ensure your wellbeing.

Forms

Up to 7 days – Self-certification form (SC2)

You should complete a self-certification form for absences due to sickness which lasts between four and seven days in a row (including non-working days), in order to claim Statutory Sick Pay (SSP).

The form can be located on the [HMRC website](#) and is designed to be completed electronically and printed. If you require any help to complete the form, please talk to your manager or the Head of Provision.

Once you have completed the self-certification form and you have signed it, you should give it to your manager upon their return to work for further completion at the return-to-work interview. It is important that the completed form indicates actual days of sickness, even if they include days when you would not have normally worked (e.g., weekends).

8 days or more - a *Statement of Fitness for Work* (or 'Fit Note') from your doctor

For absences of more than a week you must obtain a certificate from your doctor, known as a 'Fit Note', stating that you are not fit for work and giving the reason. We will take a copy for our records, but you should keep the original. Your doctor may give you a Fit Note which does not cover the first seven days of your absence, don't worry you will just need to complete the self-certification form as described above.

If absence continues beyond the expiry of a certificate, a further certificate must be provided.

If your doctor provides a certificate stating that you "may be fit for work" you must inform your manager or the Head of Provision. We will hold a discussion with you about if we can support you returning on amended duties for a short period of time. If we can't support this you will remain on sick leave and [RAISE-AP](#) HR will set a date for review for you and you manager or the Head of Provision.

Your health is very important to us and your GP will set out in their medical opinion the earliest date you should return to work. This will be set out in you Fit Note, to ensure we follow the medical advice you will be unable to return to work prior to your fit note expiring. If you think you are able to return to work earlier, please talk to your GP and get a Fit Note stating that you "may be fit for work", as above.

Absence Recording

All absence (planned and unplanned) will be recorded on your HR record and the hours not worked will be deducted from the relevant pay period and shown on your payslip.

Any Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) or Company Sick Pay (CSP) due, will be paid and shown on your payslip. If you need any help or support to understand how much will be deducted from your pay, please contact HR.

If you are absent on an agreed overtime shift, no deduction of hours will be made, however the absence will still be recorded on your HR record so that absence trends can be monitored. Where you have claimed both overtime and been absent within the same pay period, both the overtime and absence will be calculated at your basic rate for the number of hours absent. For example, if you are absent for a 14.5-hour shift and submit a claim for 20 hours overtime within the same pay period, the first 14.5 hours of overtime will be paid at your basic rate.

Planned time off for medical reasons such as operations will be deducted as above.

Payments – SSP

You may be entitled to Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) if you meet the relevant statutory requirements, which are set by the UK government. Qualifying days for SSP are as set out in your contract of employment and are your normal working days.

The rate of SSP is also set by the government in April each year. Under the [current arrangements](#) SSP is not 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.

Payments - CSP

Statutory Sick as explained above is set by the UK government and for many companies this is the only way they pay sick pay. We recognise that being off work due to ill health can have a financial impact, which is why [RAISE-AP](#) have a discretionary scheme called Company Sick Pay (CSP) which we are rightly proud of to support our staff.

This does not form any part of your contract; its payment is discretionary, and the scheme may be amended or removed at any point.

If you are absent from work through sickness or injury, [RAISE-AP](#) may pay Company sick pay for the absence, inclusive of any SSP that may be due for the same period, on the following basis set out below.

Length of Service	Sick Pay Entitlement	Eligible Period
During probation	<i>Statutory Sick Pay</i> only	Paid from the 4 th day of absence
Up to 1 year's continuous service	Maximum of 1x weeks full pay	Paid from the 1 st day of absence
Between 1- and 2-years continuous service	Maximum of 1x weeks full pay	Paid from the 1 st day of absence
Between 2- and 3-years continuous service	Maximum of 2x weeks full pay	Paid from the 1 st day of absence
Between 3- and 4-years continuous service	Maximum of 3x weeks full pay	Paid from the 1 st day of absence
Between 4- and 5-years continuous service	Maximum of 4x weeks full pay	Paid from the 1 st day of absence
5+ years of continuous service	Maximum of 5x week's full pay + an additional maximum of 5x weeks half pay	Paid from the 1 st day of absence

Payment of company sick pay may not be made for sickness or injury if:

- The employee fails to comply with absence notification and certification requirements as outlined in this policy.
- The employee makes or produces any misleading or untrue statement or document concerning their fitness to work.
- The employee's incapacity has been caused by participation in dangerous sports or activities outside of work.
- There is evidence of negligence by the employee.
- The employee's actions may be delaying the process of recovery.
- The employee is unreasonably failing to co-operate with an adjustment to facilitate a return within a reasonable timeframe or comply with requests to attend medical assessments or supply medical information.

The above list is not exhaustive.

If, during working hours, you are required to leave due to ill health or sickness, RAISE-AP is not obliged to pay for the remainder of your working time when you are not working. RAISE-AP may amend or withdraw the Company Sick Pay Scheme at any time.

Accidents / Injuries at Work

RAISE-AP will look into every accident or injury which happens at work and may consider an extension to the normal sick pay entitlements. When this happens, it is done for your wellbeing, it does not imply that RAISE-AP accepts any liability or responsibility for the accident or injury.

Where you are absent as the result of an unavoidable injury at work, we may pay your full wage for an agreed period. This will not normally exceed 26 weeks. Prior to any decision to depart from the provisions of the normal sick pay entitlements, the following process will apply:

- Accident/Injury must be recorded on the online system within a reasonable timeframe.
- The absence is reported and identified as an accident/injury at work.
- HR will send the relevant manager an accident/injury form for completion, detailing a description of the accident/injury, whether correct procedure/training was followed and any concerns.
- The Educational Directors will review all work-related accidents/injuries, including any relevant evidence where applicable. This is to ensure an objective, and consistent approach is adopted with any decision making. Potential outcomes of this meeting:
 - Full pay may be agreed for up to 26 weeks (inclusive of any SSP/CSP due). Where full pay is agreed, you will be notified of the decision in writing. This will be reviewed at a milestone date i.e. monthly basis, duration of fit note, or where there is new information or a specific request to do so.
 - Further investigation may be required by HR, H&S and/or our insurers.
 - The case may need to be considered further by the Directors.

Where an absence is reported prior to payroll cut-off, but a decision has not yet been reached regarding pay (i.e. because a panel has not yet reviewed the information and/or further information is required), the absence will be paid in-line with ordinary SSP/CSP entitlements.

RAISE-AP may decide to not support payment above company sick pay or to withdraw payment at any time, where this has been previously agreed, due to the reasons set out in this policy.

Return to Work

After any period of absence, we would like to welcome you back and reconnect with you. Your manager or the Head of Provision will arrange a return to work meeting. We do this to so we can check that you're feeling ok and that you are fit to return to work. It also give us the chance to explore what caused your absence and to find out if there is any help or support, we can offer. We may also explore some other areas, such as:

- Are there any temporary changes we need to make to further aid your recovery
- Help you to make sure that you have submitted the right forms and talk about any impact on your pay and when this may show
- We will bring you up to speed on anything that may have happened during your absence
- If we are concerned about your overall attendance, we will talk to you about our concerns and discuss how we can help improve your attendance at work

Occupational Health

There are times when we may need some medical advice to help us better understand your medical condition. This means we may ask for your consent to obtain a medical report from your GP and/or to a medical assessment by an Occupational Health (OH) professional or other specialist nominated by us (at our expense). We will always obtain your written consent prior to doing so.

We do this because Occupational Health referral give us access to professional advice on health issues at work and provide health assessments. We use these to:

- Advise on fitness for work with a view to supporting staff to continue at work
- Advise on reasonable adjustments
- Facilitate rehabilitation for staff returning to work following a period of ill health
- Advise on capability issues.

We will seek your consent first 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.

If you are asked to attend an appointment with an OH physician, you will receive a copy of the medical report. We will arrange a follow up meeting to discuss the report and try and agree a way forward.

We understand that you may not want to provide your consent; this does mean that we may have to consider any health and/or attendance concerns without the benefit of expert advice. This would make it more difficult to support you and would not be in your best interest. It also means the any decisions would be made based on the limited information available to us.

If you do not attend an arranged OH appointment, without prior notification within 24 hours of the appointment time, we will be charged for the full cost of the appointment.

We reserve the right to deduct the amount charged from your next available pay, unless the reason for non-attendance is deemed reasonable.

Persistent Absence

For the purposes of this policy, short term sickness absence is defined as lasting up to 4 weeks. Recurring short-term absence is a number of episodes of absence from work, each lasting less than 4 weeks.

The following paragraphs set out our procedure for dealing with frequent short-term absence which has given us cause for concern. The purpose of the procedure is to investigate and discuss the reasons for your absence, whether it is likely to continue or recur and whether there are any measures that could improve your health and/or attendance.

We may decide that medical evidence, or further medical evidence, is required before deciding on a course of action.

You may be required to attend an initial absence review meeting with your line manager if you have:

- 3 periods of absence within a 6-month period
- A pattern of absence that is of concern e.g. Mondays/Fridays or absence following bank holidays

The initial review meeting is an informal meeting to help us better understand the reasons behind your absence. We will cover things like

- Identify any contributing issues and understand how these may be resolved
- Establish whether there is an underlying medical condition or disability (this may involve seeking further medical advice from OH or your own GP)
- Consider what other support may be needed to help improve your health and/or attendance e.g., changes to working patterns, counselling or additional management support

- Encourage improved attendance at work through agreed targets within a certain timescale.

We will always notify you in writing of the time, date and place of any meeting and why it is being held. If you cannot attend at the time specified you should let us know as soon as possible and we will try, within reason, to agree an alternative time.

If you have a disability, we will consider whether reasonable adjustments may need to be made to the absence procedure, or to your role or working arrangements.

If your attendance has not improved within the agreed timescale, or there has been no sustained improvement, we will hold a further review meeting.

During the meeting we will seek to establish why there has been no improvement, and whether the situation is likely to change. We may set a further date for review to continue to monitor your attendance, however if it is considered unlikely that your attendance will improve within a short time, we may decide to treat the matter as an issue of capability or conduct and progress to a formal meeting.

Where there is no known medical reason for the unsatisfactory attendance, you may be invited to attend a formal disciplinary hearing under the Disciplinary Policy. Where a known medical issue is identified, or your absence relates to dependency, you may be invited to attend a formal capability hearing under the Capability Policy. Any potential outcomes will be reflected in the relevant policy.

In the event you are invited to attend a formal meeting, you will be written to, inviting you to attend a meeting to consider your attendance and you will be given a copy of your attendance record and other relevant supporting documentation.

Long Term Absence

For the purposes of this policy, long term sickness absence (including recurring long-term sickness absence) is defined as absences from work lasting 4 or more weeks. The following paragraphs set out our procedure for dealing with long-term absence.

The purpose of the procedure is to investigate and discuss the reasons for your absence, whether it is likely to continue or recur, and whether there are any measures that could improve your health and enable you to return to work. We may decide that medical evidence, or further medical evidence, is required before deciding on a course of action.

During long term sickness absence, it is important that you keep in touch with your manager or the Head of Provision at agreed regular intervals and let them know of any changes in your health or expected date of return.

Monthly review meetings will normally be held with you and may be arranged at work, at your home or another agreed location. In some cases, where there is a known medical reason for your absence and there is a known date of return to work, meetings may be held at longer intervals by agreement, with contact mainly by telephone. These meetings will normally be arranged by your line manager or the Head of Provision.

These meetings are an opportunity to discuss the reasons for your absence, how long it is likely to continue, whether to obtain a medical report (if not already), and whether there are any measures that could improve your health and/or facilitate a return to work. They can also be a good opportunity to keep you up to date with any goings-on in the provision, if you wish to be informed.

During the meeting(s) we will consider any medical advice obtained and seek to establish whether the situation is likely to change and consider any adjustments and/or redeployment opportunities that may facilitate a return to work and allow you to do your job more easily, for example the implementation of flexible working arrangements.

It is in your best interest to attend any arranged meetings so that we can fully understand the extent of your illness and offer appropriate support. Only if a medical expert (GP and/or OH professional) confirms that any such communication would have a negative impact on your health, would we deem it reasonable for you not to communicate or meet.

In cases of long-term absence, we may seek to agree a return-to-work programme, possibly on a phased basis or amended duties for a period of time. This will usually be agreed in consultation with medical advice and where appropriate following a health risk assessment.

If you are recovering from illness and it is considered that a phased return to work would be beneficial, this will be discussed with you. A phased return allows you to return to work starting on reduced hours for a short period of time, building up hours gradually to your normal contractual hours. A phased return will normally last around 4 weeks.

Any shortfall in hours will be unpaid. If you feel you are not able to return to your contractual hours at the end of this phased return period, flexible working arrangements may be considered upon request.

If, after a reasonable time, you have not been able to return to work and are unlikely to return to work within a further reasonable timeframe, or it is evident that you will be unable to fulfil your role effectively for health reasons, we may inform you that you are at risk of dismissal.

We may set a further date for review or invite you to attend a formal capability hearing under the Capability Policy, at which we will consider your future employment with the provision.

Other Absence

For absence other than sickness, you must obtain prior agreement from your line manager, as relevant.

If you are uncertain about any other types of absence, ask for advice from your manager or HR. Other types of absence may be covered by other provision policies and procedures and/or by statutory rights.

If you do not follow the arrangements set out in this policy such as failing to report absence or falsely claiming sick pay, we may treat the matter as misconduct under our Disciplinary Policy.

This policy should offer, clear support and guidance. If you have any questions regarding the policy or you just need some additional help or support, please contact HR.

Raise Values

Our [RAISE-AP values](#) (Resolve, Attitude, Invest, Social Skills and Education) are key in everything we do, specifically with attitudes (modelling and expectations), invest (tailoring setup for our young people) social skills (becoming part of a community) which are linked to our Sickness Absence policy.
