

# *Lyminster Primary School*



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## Staff Absence Policy

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Lyminster Primary School Wick Street, Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN17 7JZ

**POLICY**

Approved Date: July 2023

Review Date: July 2024

Reviewed and updated by: SBM

# Absence Policy

## **SICKNESS ABSENCE**

### Reporting Absence

Teaching Assistants must inform the School by telephoning/messaging the Assistant Head by 7:00 a.m. The Premises Manager must inform the school by telephoning/messaging School Business Manager no later than 6:00 a.m. All teaching staff and all other staff must inform the school by telephoning/messaging School Business Manager as soon as possible and no later than 7:00am. In all cases you must ensure you receive a response for the person you contact, to ensure they have received your message.

A brief indication of the nature of their illness and its expected duration should be given, and details of any known commitments or arrangements that need to be covered during absence. It is not acceptable, except in emergencies, for someone to call in on the employee's behalf.

All staff should telephone the school again by 2:30 pm to indicate whether or not they will be in school the following day.

### Self-Certificate

On return to work, the member of staff will complete a Self-Certificate and submit this to their Line Manager.

### Medical Certificate

A doctor's medical certificate will be required on the 8th calendar day of any absence.

### Monitoring of Absence

The SBM or Line Manger will review with the member of staff if:

- a) in any one term, there have been more than three separate absences
- b) the length of an absence is a cause for concern
- c) a pattern of absence has emerged that causes concern

### Sick Pay and Leave Entitlement

Staff are entitled to pay in accordance with the scale set out in their Contract of Employment. For teachers this is dependent upon their length of service. For support staff this is dependent upon their length of service and grade.

The Governing Body has the discretion to extend an employee's entitlement to sick pay in very exceptional circumstances.

## **DISCRETIONARY LEAVE**

### Appointments during Working Time

Normally staff should not make appointments during working time, particularly where this may cause disruption and/or require cover to be arranged. It is recognised that, because of the working hours of others, such appointments are, occasionally, unavoidable. Examples might include: meeting with a

solicitor, a dentist, a bank, a local authority representative, other body or professional person whose availability may be limited. However, it should be borne in mind that many of these services are accessible until early evening and on Saturdays and it should be possible to arrange appointments that do not interrupt the school day. Where an appointment cannot be made other than in working hours, the request to the Line Manager for time off must be made five working days prior to the appointment, except where an emergency arises.

If it is felt appropriate by the Line Manager to grant absence for an appointment during normal working hours, the following will apply:

- In the case of a teacher, there should be no disruption to normal teaching unless satisfactory cover is arranged at no cost to the school;
- Support staff would be expected to make up the time.

#### DEPENDENCY LEAVE

Staff are entitled to take dependency leave to deal with certain unexpected problems or emergencies (no more than five days per 12 months), for example:

Deal with an unexpected emergency lasting a day or less, where they are the primary carer of the dependant. For example:

- if a dependant has been involved in an accident;
- to make longer-term care arrangements for a dependant who is ill or injured;
- to deal with an unexpected disruption or breakdown in care arrangements for a dependant
- to deal with an unforeseen incident involving their child during school hours where the parent's presence is required by the school.

Deal with longer term Dependency Leave issues where the employee is the primary carer of the dependant. For example:

- Serious illness of a dependant which makes it particularly difficult for them to attend work;
- The death of a dependant, for example to make funeral arrangements or to attend a funeral;

Any other serious or complex family or domestic situation where there are compelling compassionate grounds for granting leave.

After the first day, dependency leave is unpaid, although individual cases may be referred to the Governors who may exercise their discretion to authorise paid dependency leave.

#### Parental Leave:

The Parental Leave Scheme gives an entitlement to a maximum of 18 weeks' unpaid leave per child.

Employees are eligible for parental leave if they:

- Have a child under the age of 18, and are taking the leave to be able to care for the child;
- Have one year's continuous service at the time of taking parental leave;
- Are named on the adoption or birth certificate; and/or,
- Have legal parental responsibility for the child

Employees would normally take parental leave:

- In blocks or multiples of one week for a period of between one and four weeks in any one year
- After giving 21 days written notice to the line manager (although in some circumstances it is recognised this may not be possible).

- Immediately after a period of maternity leave, provided that notice requirements and qualifying period are met;
- When a child is placed with an employee for adoption provided that the qualifying period of one year's continuous service is met.

For full details please see the Parental Leave Policy.

#### COMPASSIONATE LEAVE

A bereaved parent of a child under the age of 18 or of a child stillborn after 24 weeks of pregnancy is entitled to a **statutory minimum** of two weeks compassionate leave, within 56 weeks of the child's death. This leave can be taken in one block or two blocks of one week. Where an employee meets the qualifying period\* they **are also** entitled to statutory parental bereavement pay.

\* Have at least 26 weeks' continuous service and weekly average earnings over the lower earnings limit.

In order to claim this, the employee would need to complete the '**Application for Statutory Parental Bereavement Leave – Full Pay**' as soon as practicably possible. This form will enable statutory pay to be offset, where eligible.

Other Leave on compassionate grounds is entirely at the discretion of the Headteacher, but will generally be granted in the following circumstances within one academic year.

· Death of a partner/member of immediate family	up to 5 Paid days
· Death of other near relative	up to 3 Paid days
· Death of close friend	up to 1 Paid day
· Child's unexpected, serious illness	up to 5 paid days**
· Serious illness of partner/near relative	up to 3 Paid days**

\*\* This is intended to provide first day cover until the employee can make alternative arrangements; absence for the duration of the illness should be in very exceptional circumstances only.

Any period of compassionate leave in excess of two weeks will normally be considered without pay rather than with pay taking into account the circumstances and needs of the school.

#### INTERVIEWS

Paid leave of absence to attend interviews for appointments in teaching/local government will be granted up to a maximum of five interviews in any one school year.

Unpaid leave for any other category of job interview may be granted at the Head Teacher's discretion and in any event not more than three such absences in any one school year will be granted.

## ADVERSE WEATHER

Paid time off work because of adverse weather is at the discretion of the Headteacher. It should be borne in mind that every employee has a contractual duty to report for work and is expected to make every effort to attend, even if arrival is delayed. This applies equally to public transport strikes and other emergencies as well as adverse weather.

If it is necessary to close a school, employees are still expected to report for work – unless they are instructed or advised not to (in which case they must be paid as normal).

If an employee does not attend for work on the grounds of adverse weather conditions, they must submit full details to the Headteacher. If the Headteacher is satisfied that all reasonable efforts were made to get to work, the employee should be paid as normal for the first day; it is expected that alternative arrangements would normally be made to attend subsequently. If the Headteacher is not satisfied with the reasons for non-attendance, the absence may be without pay.

As an alternative to paid or unpaid leave of absence, the Headteacher may exercise one of the following options, according to the circumstances:

- agree that the employee can work at home (where this is realistic/feasible);
- arrange for the employee to make up all or some of the absence by working additional hours as agreed;
- authorise annual leave;
- agree that the employee may report to work elsewhere.

Employees who are genuinely late for work and/or sent home early because of adverse weather should be paid as normal – although the Headteacher may require the time to be made up.

If an employee asks to leave early, a deduction should normally be made from pay, unless the request is reasonable having regard to the conditions. Otherwise, it may be appropriate for the time to be made up.

When there are adverse weather conditions, staff should be advised to listen to local radio broadcasts, particularly for information about possible closure of the school, and should, if necessary, try to contact the Headteacher for advice. When the school remains open for pupils there needs to be staff available to teach and supervise; they must, therefore, make every reasonable effort to attend.

## SPECIAL LEAVE

Paid leave may be granted at the Headteacher's discretion in the following special circumstances:

Moving house (1 day)

Other personal reasons (To be considered on an individual basis)

## UNPAID LEAVE

The Headteacher may grant unpaid leave up to a maximum of ten working days, for urgent personal considerations. Requests for longer periods must also be referred to Governors for due consideration.

Each case will be considered on its merits and classed as “leave of absence” rather than “extended leave” for the purpose of the supply regulations.

Staff should note that such leave affects pension benefits as it does not count as reckonable service.

#### UNPAID HOLIDAY LEAVE

Leave of absence will not be granted to any member of staff requesting holiday during term-time except in very special circumstances.

#### **OTHER ABSENCE**

Please see other policies for any of the following:

Sickness Absence Policy

Maternity/Paternity Leave

Parental Leave

Adoption Leave

Flexible Working

Study Leave

Trade Union Activities

Jury Service

Religious Festivals