



# Absence, Sickness and Lateness Policy

***The legal framework and documents referenced in this policy are:***

*The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974*

*Data Protection Act 2018*

*Equality Act 2010*

*GDPR 2018*

## Introduction

This policy sets out our procedures for reporting sickness, absence and lateness and its management in order that it be fair and consistent.

We wish to ensure that the reasons for sickness absence and lateness are understood in each case and investigated where necessary. In addition, where needed and reasonably practicable, measures will be taken to assist those who have been absent by reason of sickness to return to work.

Sickness absence can vary from short intermittent periods of ill-health to a continuous period of long-term absence and have a number of different causes (for example, injuries, recurring conditions, or a serious illness requiring lengthy treatment).

We may vary the procedures set out in this policy, including any time limits, as appropriate in any case.

## Disabilities

We are aware that sickness absence may result from a disability. At each stage of the absence monitoring procedure, particular consideration will be given to whether there are reasonable adjustments that could be made to the requirements of a job or other aspects of working arrangements that will provide support at work and/or assist a return to work.



If you consider that you are affected by a disability or any medical condition which affects your ability to undertake your work, you should inform your line manager.

## **Sickness absence and late attendance reporting procedure**

If you are unwell or injured and unable to come to work or anticipate a late arrival, you should adhere to the following procedure:

1. Call the Headteacher on her mobile phone as early as possible and no later than 7:30am or an hour prior to your start of work whichever is the earlier of the two times, on each morning of work. If you are unable to call, please request a family member or friend to call for you. Do not, text messages, emails and whatsapp messages do not serve as sufficient notice. If the headteacher does not answer leave a voicemail on her phone and follow up with a text message and call your line manager or another member of the Senior Management Team.
2. The following details should be provided by you:
  - a) The nature of your illness or lateness.
  - b) The expected length of your absence/lateness from work.
  - c) Contact details.
  - d) Any outstanding or urgent work that requires attention.
3. Line Managers should ensure that:
  - a) Any sickness absence that is notified to them is recorded and reported to the Headteacher/ HR Department ([hr@alamiyahschool.org](mailto:hr@alamiyahschool.org)) by 7:45am so cover can be arranged.
  - b) Arrangements are made, where necessary, to cover work and to inform colleagues and clients (while maintaining confidentiality).



4. You should expect to be contacted during your absence by your line manager and/or Headteacher who will want to enquire about your health and be advised, if possible as to your expected return date
5. For each day of sickness absence employees are expected to repeat steps 1 - 4 of this reporting procedure, unless a return to work date has already been provided.
6. On your return to work you must fill in the '**Sickness Self Certification**' form which is found in the office. This form must be filled in for each absence and must be completed on the day of return. Please leave this in the Senior Administrator's Pigeon Hole.

### **Vomiting and Diarrhoea**

Employees who have diarrhoea or have been vomiting should not return to work until 48 hours after the last incident of vomiting or the last loose bowel movement. If you report into School confirming an episode of diarrhoea or vomiting you would not need to report in each day during the 48 hours. Once the 48 hour timeframe has elapsed you would be expected to return to school or report further sickness absence via the reporting procedure above.

If you experience further episodes of vomiting and diarrhoea during that 48 hours, then you would need to report this to the school at the earliest opportunity.

### **Evidence of incapacity**

For sickness absence of between four and seven calendar days you must complete a **sickness self-certification form** which is available from your line manager.

For absence of more than a week you must obtain a certificate from your doctor (a "Statement of Fitness for Work") stating that you are not fit for work and the reason(s) why. This should be forwarded to the headteacher/line manager as soon as possible. The Headteacher/Line Manager will pass on this information to the Senior Administrator for pay purposes. If your absence continues, further medical certificates must be provided to cover the whole period of absence.



If your doctor provides a certificate stating that you "may be fit for work" you should inform your line manager immediately. We will discuss with you any additional measures that may be needed to facilitate your return to work, taking account of your doctor's advice. This may take place at a return to work interview. If appropriate measures cannot be taken, you will remain on sick leave and we will set a date to review the situation.

Where we are concerned about the reason for absence, or the level of frequent short-term absence, we may require a medical certificate for each absence regardless of duration. In such circumstances, we will cover any costs incurred in obtaining such medical certificates, for absences of a week or less, on production of a doctor's invoice.

### **Falling Sick During the Working Day**

The absence for an employee, who reports sick during the working day, is recorded as follows:

- Leave within 1 hour of start time - Half day sickness absence
- Leave after 1 hour of start time - One day sickness absence before end of working day

### **Unauthorised absence**

Cases of unauthorised absence will be dealt with under our Staff Disciplinary Procedure.

Absence that has not been notified according to the sickness absence reporting procedure will be treated as unauthorised absence.

If you do not report for work and have not telephoned the headteacher or your line manager to explain the reason for your absence, the headteacher or your line manager (or another member of the management team) will try to contact you, by telephone and in writing if necessary. This should not be treated as a substitute for reporting sickness absence.



## **Sick pay**

If you are absent from work you are entitled to:

Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) provided the relevant requirements are satisfied. Qualifying days for SSP purposes are Monday to Friday. Please refer to your contract of employment for any contractual entitlement, which may be varied from time to time.

## **Keeping in contact during sickness absence**

If you are absent on sick leave you should expect to be contacted from time to time by your line manager in order to discuss your wellbeing, expected length of continued absence from work and any of your work that requires attention. Such contact is intended to provide reassurance and will be kept to a reasonable minimum.

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

## **Medical examinations**

We may, at any time in operating this policy, ask you to consent to a medical examination by 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.

## **Return-to-work interviews**

If you have been absent on sick leave for more than 2 days we will arrange for you to have a return-to-work interview with your line manager.



A return-to-work interview enables us to confirm the details of your absence. It also gives you the opportunity to raise any concerns or questions you may have, and to bring any relevant matters to our attention.

Where your doctor has provided a certificate stating that you "may be fit for work" we will usually hold a return-to-work interview to discuss any additional measures that may be needed to facilitate your return to work, taking account of your doctor's advice.

We are committed to helping members of staff return to work from long-term sickness absence. We will, where appropriate and possible, support returns to work by:

- (a) Obtaining medical advice;
- (b) Making reasonable adjustments to the workplace, working practices and working hours;
- (c) Considering redeployment; and/or
- (d) Agreeing a return to work programme with everyone affected.

### **Absence Monitoring Procedure**

Data on attendance and punctuality is collected and monitored. It will assist managers with staff who may have ill-health and poor attendance issues by giving support, advice, training and ensuring that any action taken is within regulations set down in employment law.

This procedure involves the application of absence "trigger points". It also involves the allocation of responsibility to individual Managers to interview any employee whose level of absence has reached a defined trigger point and, depending on the circumstances, issue a warning for unsatisfactory attendance.

The School will use trigger points as a means to:

- Alert employees that their level of sickness absence/punctuality is causing concern
- Establish appropriate support systems



- Ensure prompt action is taken to deal with sickness absence or punctuality
- Identify potential problems and to deal with them effectively before they escalate

It is not always necessary for a trigger point to be reached before action is taken. The Manager may take action at any time if they have concerns about the underlying cause of sickness/punctuality and/or there is a significant impact on the service.

Absence management procedures will be considered whenever an employee meets any of the conditions set out in the section below, but we may vary the procedures as appropriate in any case.

### **Absence management procedure**

We may apply this procedure whenever we consider it necessary, including, for example, if you:

- (a) Have been absent due to illness on a number of occasions;
- (b) Have discussed matters at a return to work interview that require investigation; and/
- (c) Have been late on a number of occasions;
- (d) Have been absent for more than 5 days.

Unless it is impractical to do so, we will give you 7 days written notice of the date, time and place of an absence meeting. We will put any concerns about your absence and the basis for those concerns in writing or otherwise advise why the meeting is being called. A reasonable opportunity for you to consider this information before a meeting will be provided.

The meeting will be conducted by your line manager and/or another member of the management team. You may bring a companion with you to the meeting.

You must take all reasonable steps to attend a meeting. Failure to do so without good reason may be treated as misconduct. If you or your companion are unable to attend at the time specified you should immediately inform the headteacher or your line manager who will seek to agree an alternative time.



Confirmation of any decision made at a meeting, the reasons for it, and of the right of appeal will be given to you in writing within 14-21 days of an absence meeting (unless this time scale is not practicable, in which case it will be provided as soon as is practicable).

If, at any time, your line manager considers that you have taken or are taking absence when you are not unwell, they may refer matters to be dealt with under our Staff Disciplinary Procedure.

### **Right to be accompanied at meetings**

You may bring a companion to any meeting or appeal meeting under this procedure.

Your companion may be either a trade union representative or a fellow employee. Their identity must be confirmed to the manager conducting the meeting, in good time before it takes place.

Some companions may not be allowed: for example, anyone who may have a conflict of interest, or whose presence may prejudice a meeting. Companions should not normally work at another site, unless no-one reasonably suitable is available at the site at which you work.

A companion may make representations, ask questions, and sum up your position, but will not be allowed to answer questions on your behalf. You may confer privately with your companion at any time during a meeting.

### **Stage 1: first absence meeting**

The purposes of a first absence meeting may include:

- (a) Discussing the reasons for absence.
- (b) Where you are on long-term sickness absence, determining how long the absence is likely to last.
- (c) Where you have been absent on a number of occasions, determining the likelihood of further absences.





- (d) Considering whether medical advice is required.
- (e) Considering what, if any, measures might improve your health and/or attendance.
- (f) Agreeing a way forward, action that will be taken and a time-scale for review and/or a further meeting under the sickness absence procedure.

## **Stage 2: further absence meeting(s)**

Depending on the matters discussed at the first stage of the absence procedure, a further meeting or meetings may be necessary.

The purposes of further meeting(s) may include:

- (a) Discussing the reasons for and impact of your ongoing absence(s).
- (b) Where you are on long-term sickness absence, discussing how long your absence is likely to last.
- (c) Where you have been absent on a number of occasions, discussing the likelihood of further absences.
- (d) If it has not been obtained, considering whether medical advice is required. If it has been obtained, considering the advice that has been given and whether further advice is required.
- (e) Considering your ability to return to/remain in your job in view both of your capabilities and the school's needs and any adjustments that can reasonably be made to your job to enable you to do so.
- (f) Considering possible redeployment opportunities and whether any adjustments can reasonably be made to assist in redeploying you.
- (g) Where you are able to return from long-term sick leave, whether to your job or a redeployed job, agreeing a return to work programme.



(h) If it is considered that you are unlikely to be able to return to work from long-term absence, whether there are any benefits for which you should be considered.

(i) Agreeing a way forward, action that will be taken and a time-scale for review and/or a further meeting(s). This may, depending on steps we have already taken, include warning you that you are at risk of dismissal.

### **Stage 3: final absence meeting**

Where you have been warned that you are at risk of dismissal, we may invite you to a meeting under the third stage of the absence procedure.

The purposes of the meeting will be:

- (a) To review the meetings that have taken place and matters discussed with you.
- (b) Where you remain on long-term sickness absence, to consider whether there have been any changes since the last meeting under stage two of the procedure, either as regards your possible return to work or opportunities for return or redeployment.
- (c) To consider any further matters that you wish to raise.
- (d) To consider whether there is a reasonable likelihood of you returning to work or achieving the desired level of attendance in a reasonable time.
- (e) To consider the possible termination of your employment.

Termination will normally be with full notice or payment in lieu of notice.

### **Appeals**

You may appeal against the outcome of any stage of this procedure and you may bring a companion to an appeal meeting.



An appeal should be made in writing, stating the full grounds of appeal, to Angela Misra, Trustee within 7 days of the date on which the decision was sent to you.

Unless it is not practicable, you will be given written notice of an appeal meeting within one week of the meeting. In cases of dismissal the appeal will be held as soon as possible. Any new matters raised in an appeal may delay an appeal meeting if further investigation is required.

You will be provided with written details of any new information which comes to light before an appeal meeting. You will also be given a reasonable opportunity to consider this information before the meeting.

Where practicable, an appeal meeting will be conducted by a manager senior to the individual who conducted the absence meeting.

Following an appeal, the original decision may be confirmed, revoked or replaced with a different decision. The final decision will be confirmed in writing, if possible within 14-21 days of the appeal meeting. There will be no further right of appeal.

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

## **Long Term Absence**

The words 'long term absence' is generally used to mean absence of more than four weeks.

Alamiyah School will not initially consider terminating the employment of an employee who is absent from work due to genuine sickness or injury. Thereafter, the position will be reviewed periodically and ultimately it may become necessary from a business perspective to consider termination of employment. In these circumstances, the School will:

- Review the employee's absence record to assess whether or not it is sufficient to justify dismissal



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

## **Record-Keeping**

Written records of meetings and discussions relating to absence, sickness and lateness are retained. A copy will be placed on the employee's personnel file in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Copies of meetings will be provided to the employee and are available upon request.

## **Review of Policy**

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or sooner or if there is any change in statutory guidance or legislation. See 'Policy Review Schedule'.

Adopted in a meeting at Alamiyah School on 28/08/2017

Signed: H Musa (Headteacher) and S Motara (Chair of Trustees)