



STAFF ATTENDANCE POLICY

Introduction

The Governing Body is committed to creating a positive and healthy work environment. This policy document has been prepared to give clarity about how any absence from school is managed. It is divided into three distinct sections:

Section 1	Absence due to sickness
Section 2	Discretionary leave
Section 3	Flexible Working Requests
Section 4	Career breaks

Section 1	ABSENCE DUE TO SICKNESS
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The School acknowledges that from time to time employees may become ill and as a consequence be unable to attend work. All employees who are absent from work due to sickness will be treated with consideration and respect and we will make every effort to assist staff in their recovery and return to work. We expect employees to co-operate in ensuring that all sickness absences are managed in line with this policy.

This policy applies to all employees, both permanent and fixed-term. It does not apply to agency workers, consultants, self-employed contractors, volunteers or interns.

This policy is intended to support staff and enable the School to manage any absence in a way that is fair, consistent and complies with employment, health and safety and education legislation. The procedure described herein balances the need to maintain service delivery and the interests of employees by ensuring that employees are fit and healthy for work. This policy is dependent on the openness and mutual trust and respect between employees and their line managers and the willingness of all parties to co-operate.

Equal opportunities, Sickness and Disability

All policies and procedures will be applied fairly and in accordance with employment law and the Bournemouth School Equal Opportunities Policy.

The Equality Act 2010 ¹Equality Act 2010 [online]

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents> defines a person with a disability as a person with a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Sickness absence may be related to a disability under the Equality Act. Where this is a possibility, we may ask the employee to consent to us obtaining a medical report and/or guidance from the employee's doctor and/or occupational health. Particular consideration will be given to whether reasonable adjustments could be made to the individual's working systems or environment that will provide support at work and/or assist a return to work.

Confidentiality

Information about sickness absence will be handled carefully by the School and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 to ensure that sensitive details remain confidential.

Responsibilities

Bournemouth School's Governing Body is responsible for maintaining fair, consistent and objective procedures for matters relating to staff sickness absence.

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the internal organisation, control and management of the policy.

Sickness Absence Reporting Procedures

A member of staff (teacher or support staff) who is sick and likely to be absent should telephone the School on 01202 512609 as early as possible before their normal starting time but at the latest by 7:30am on each day of absence so that arrangements for cover can be made, if required. The employee should leave a message on the reception answer phone. Cleaning staff should contact the school at least 2 hours before normal start time.

The call should be made by the employee personally, or, if this is not practical and in exceptional circumstances, by a partner, friend or relative. Texts or emails are not an acceptable method of notifying a sickness absence.

The employee should state:

- the reason for their absence as in the nature of their illness;
- the estimated period of absence, if known and

any outstanding or urgent work that requires attention and if well enough and able to do so, teachers will need to email in cover work. This should be emailed to the Cover Manager at the following email: cover@bournemouth-school.org

If no reason is given then a member of senior staff may telephone the employee at home.

After leaving a message on the answer phone, you should ring during normal school hours and make arrangements to speak with your line manager. Only in exceptional circumstances should someone else make this call on your behalf.

You should expect to be contacted during your absence by [your line manager **OR** the HR Department] to enquire after your health and be advised, if possible, as to your expected return date. If the absence will be long-term absence, such contact will be agreed between the member of staff and the school.

If an employee feels unwell and wishes to go home during the course of the working day, s/he must seek the permission of a member of the SLT before leaving. That day of absence will be recorded but will only constitute a day's sickness if leaving before 12 noon.

In order to manage sickness absence levels effectively, absences need to be consistently and accurately recorded. A designated person will record the date, duration and reason of each absence. This information will be retained by the School, in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018.

If an employee provides false evidence of incapacity, fails to notify an absence, or a valid reason for absence is not given, the employee may be subject to disciplinary measures subject to the agreed Disciplinary Procedure. In these circumstances, Bournemouth School reserves the right to make such a period of absence unpaid.

Self-certification and certificates from medical professionals

A period of sickness of seven calendar days or more must be certified by a fit note, which will then be checked by the member of SLT before being sent to payroll for processing. The requirement for informing school of sickness and providing Statements of Fitness for Work (or equivalent), where appropriate, applies where the employee is sick during a period of pre-arranged annual leave.

If the absence continues, each medical certificate should be submitted by the employee to the Member of SLT at each interval covering their periods of sickness absence consecutively. Any unexplained or uncertified gaps may result in pay being withheld.

Where a medical certificate provides advice in relation to the employee's return to work, the advice on the medical certificate will be taken into consideration and any specific instructions followed if possible and appropriate. These may include a phased return to work, altered hours, amended duties and/or workplace adaptation. If appropriate, and in all cases where agreement cannot be reached with the employee, the School will seek advice from the occupational health provider.

If the School cannot make the requested changes or adaptation, then the employee will be deemed sick until either s/he is fully fit for work or until the recommended changes and adaptation are made, whichever happens first. A review date will usually be set in such circumstances. The employee may bring trade union representation at any meetings to discuss changes to be implemented and/or the advice on the medical certificate. The School has a duty to ensure that a sick employee is not allowed to return to work even where a health care professional has recommended that the employee might be fit for work under certain circumstances. (Please refer to The Education (Health Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2003/3139/regulation/2/made>)

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

Return to work interviews

If an employee has been absent on sick leave the School may arrange for the employee to have a return-to-work interview with a senior member of staff.

A return-to-work interview enables the School to confirm the details of the employee's absence. It also gives the employee the opportunity to raise any concerns or questions s/he may have, and to bring any relevant matters to the School's attention.

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

The School is committed to helping employees return to work from long-term sickness absence. As part of the sickness absence meetings procedure (see below), the School will, where appropriate and possible, support returns to work by obtaining medical advice; making reasonable adjustments to the workplace, working practices and working hours; considering redeployment; and/or agreeing a return to work programme with everyone affected.

Unauthorised absence

Cases of unauthorised absence will be dealt with under our 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 your line manager **OR** the HR Department to explain the reason for your absence, your line manager **OR** the HR Department will try to contact you, by telephone and in writing if necessary. This should not be treated as a substitute for reporting sickness absence.

Statutory Sick pay

You may be entitled to Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) if you satisfy the relevant statutory requirements. Qualifying days for SSP are Monday to Friday, or as set out in your employment contract. The rate of SSP is set by the government in April each year. No SSP is 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. If you are not eligible for SSP or if your SSP entitlement is coming to an end we will give you a form SSP1 telling you the reasons.

Occupational Sick Pay

1.1 Support staff (in accordance with the Green Book)

1.2 You are entitled to receive sick pay for the following periods:

During the 1 st year of service	1 month's full pay and (after completing 4 months' service) 2 month's half pay
During the 2 nd year of service	2 months full pay and 2 months half pay
During the 3 rd year of service	4 months full pay and 4 months half pay
During the 4 th and 5 th 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

The period during which sick pay shall be paid and the rate of pay, in respect of absence shall be calculated by deducting from your entitlement on the first day the aggregate of periods of paid absence during the twelve months immediately preceding the first day of absence.

Teaching staff (in accordance with the Burgundy Book)

You are entitled to receive sick pay for the following periods:

During the 1 st year of service	Full pay for 25 days and (after completing 4 months' service) half pay for 50 days
During the 2 nd year of service	Full pay for 50 days and half pay for 50 days
During the 3 rd year of service	Full pay for 75 days and half pay for 75 days
During the 4 th year of service	Full pay for 100 days and half pay for 100 days

A year is deemed to begin on 1 April and end on 31 March the following year. Where a teacher starts service after 1 April the full entitlement for that year will be applicable. Where a teacher is on sick leave on 31 March in any year no new entitlements shall begin until the teacher has resumed duty and the period from 1 April until the return to duty is regarded a part of the preceding years' entitlement. Service means aggregated teaching service with one or more LA schools or academies and a break in service does not affect entitlement.

If a period of sickness absence is or appears to be occasioned by actionable negligence, nuisance or breach of any statutory duty on the part of a third party, in respect of which damages are or may be recoverable, you must immediately notify [your line manager **OR** the HR Department] of that fact and of any claim, compromise, settlement or judgment made or awarded in connection with it and all relevant particulars that we may reasonably require. If we require you to do so, you must co-operate in any related legal proceedings and refund to us that part of any damages or compensation you recover that relates to lost earnings for the period of sickness absence as we may reasonably determine, less any costs you incurred in connection with the recovery of such damages or compensation, provided that the amount to be refunded to us shall not exceed the total amount we paid to you in respect of the period of sickness absence.

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

Attendance at Work Procedure (see Appendix 1)

The School may apply the following procedure, for example, if the employee:

- has been absent due to illness on a number of occasions;
- has discussed matters at a return to work interview that require investigation; and/or
- has had high levels of sickness absence.

In some cases, it may be appropriate to miss a stage in the sickness absence procedure.

Unless it is impractical to do so, the School will give the employee 3 school days written notice of the date, time and place of a sickness absence meeting. The School will put any concerns about

the employee's sickness absence and the basis for those concerns in writing or otherwise advise why the meeting is being called. A reasonable opportunity for the employee to consider this information before a meeting will be provided. The employee is entitled to be accompanied by a companion.

The employee's companion may be either a trade union representative or a fellow employee. Their identity must be confirmed to the in good time before the meeting takes place. Employees are allowed reasonable time off from duties without loss of pay to act as a companion. However, they are not obliged to act as a companion and may decline a request if they so wish.

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 the employee works.

The School may at its discretion, permit a companion who is not an employee or union representative (for example, 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 employee's position, but will not be allowed to answer questions on their behalf. The employee may confer privately with their companion at any time during a meeting. The employee must take all reasonable steps to attend the meeting. Failure to do so without good reason may be treated as misconduct. If the employee or their companion are unable to attend at the time specified the employee should immediately inform the member of SLT 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 the employee in writing, usually within 7 school days of a sickness 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, the School considers that the employee has taken or are taking sickness absence when the employee is not unwell, the matter may be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure.

The meeting will usually be conducted by the member of SLT with responsibility for staffing. The member of SLT may be accompanied by the School's HR representative and / or a relevant senior member of staff.

If you have difficulty at any stage of the procedure because of a disability, you should discuss the situation with your line manager as soon as possible.

Sickness absence meetings

Stage 1: first sickness absence meeting

This will follow the procedure set out above in relation to arrangements for, and right to be accompanied, at sickness absence meetings.

The purposes of a first sickness absence meeting may include:

- Discussing the reasons for absence;
- Where the employee is on long-term sickness absence, determining how long the absence is likely to last;
- Where the employee has been absent on a number of occasions, determining the likelihood of further absences;

- Considering whether medical advice is required;
- Considering what, if any, measures might improve the employee's health and/or attendance;
- 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 sickness absence meeting(s)

Depending on the matters discussed at the first stage of the sickness absence procedure, a further meeting or meetings may be necessary. Arrangements for meetings under the second stage of the sickness absence procedure will follow the procedure set out above.

The purposes of further meeting(s) may include:

- Discussing the reasons for and impact of the employee's ongoing absence(s);
- Where the employee is on long-term sickness absence, discussing how long the absence is likely to last;
- Where the employee has been absent on a number of occasions, discussing the likelihood of further absences;
- 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;
- Considering the employee's ability to return to/remain in their job in view both of their capabilities and the School's needs and any adjustments that can reasonably be made to the employee's job to enable them to do so;
- Considering possible redeployment opportunities and whether any adjustments can reasonably be made to assist in redeploying the employee;
- Where the employee is able to return from long-term sick leave, whether to their job or a redeployed job, agreeing a return to work programme;
- If it is considered that the employee is unlikely to be able to return to work from long-term absence, whether there are any benefits for which the employee should be considered;
- 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 already taken, include warning the employee that s/he is at risk of dismissal;

Stage 3: final sickness absence meeting

Where the employee has been warned that s/he is at risk of dismissal or dismissal is a possibility, the School may invite the employee to a meeting under the third stage of the sickness absence procedure. Arrangements for this meeting will follow the procedure set out above.

The purposes of the meeting will be:

- To review any meetings that have taken place and matters discussed;

- Where the employee remains 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 a possible return to work or opportunities for return or redeployment;
- To consider any further matters that the employee may wish to raise;
- To consider whether there is a reasonable likelihood of the employee returning to work or achieving the desired level of attendance in a reasonable time;
- To consider the possible termination of employment.

If the outcome is to terminate employment, then a recommendation will be made to the Governing Body that the teacher should be dismissed. The Staff Dismissal Committee will meet as soon as practicable to confirm this decision. Thereafter, the employee will be informed as soon as possible of the reasons for the dismissal, the date on which the employment contract will end, the appropriate period of notice and their right of appeal.

Appeal

If an employee feels that any action taken against them is wrong or unjust, they may appeal in writing against the decision within five school days of being formally advised of the decision, setting out at the same time the grounds for appeal. Appeals will be heard without unreasonable delay and, where possible, at an agreed time and place. The same arrangements for notification and right to be accompanied by a companion will apply as with formal capability and review meetings and, as with other formal meetings, notes will be taken and a copy sent to the teacher.

The appeal will be dealt with impartially and, wherever possible, by Governors who have not previously been involved in the case.

The employee will be informed in writing of the results of the appeal hearing with 5 school days of the appeal meeting. There will be no further right of appeal.

Occupational Health and Medical Examinations

The use of doctors and occupational health service professionals is an effective tool in both preventing sickness absence through advising on appropriate wellbeing strategies and in managing a return to work after sickness absence, especially in cases of a long-term sickness absence. The School may refer an employee to a doctor and/or an occupational health adviser for an occupational health consultation.

The employee will be asked to agree that any report produced in connection with any such examination may be disclosed to the School and that the School may discuss the contents of the report with advisers and the relevant doctor.

The School will meet all costs associated with any medical examination undertaken and/or the release of the employee's medical report should the employee agree to such a request. Any such report submitted to occupational health in respect of the employee will be made available to the employee on request.

The key objective of occupational health is to protect and promote employees' health and wellbeing, taking into account the working environment and all its challenges. Occupational health specialists have the dual role of supporting the School by assessing the effect of employees' health and fitness on their ability to perform their job and supporting employees by examining the effect of their work and the working environment on their health and well-being, assessing the recovery and likelihood of return to work of employees who are off sick and through the provision of support services.

Phased return to work

In many cases of sickness absence, a phased or gradual return to normal hours and responsibilities within a fixed timescale (which will normally be no more than four weeks) will be

considered where appropriate having regard to medical advice. This may be in conjunction with appropriate supportive measures to facilitate a sustained return to work.

An employee returning to work will receive their substantive pay for the time s/he attends work. The employee will remain on sick pay (either full or half, dependent upon the length of absence) for the time s/he is not attending school.

An 'Action Plan' may be agreed between the School, the employee, their trade union or other such representative, that will determine the specific terms of the phased or gradual return to normal hours and responsibilities. This may include any or all of the following:

- timescale and review points;
- training and support to be provided to the employee;
- details of adjustments to the workplace;
- details of the employee's duties;
- details of the employee's duties to be allocated to another person;
- details of information to be shared with other staff and pupils concerning the employee's return to work;
- details of any alterations to working hours;
- confirmation that the employee will be allowed to be absent during working hours for rehabilitation, assessment or treatment;
- details of equipment to be acquired or modified and relevant modifying instructions or reference manuals;
- details of any modified procedures for testing or assessment; and any other relevant information.

Contacting employees who are at home on sick leave

Employees who have followed the reporting procedure for short-term sickness absence will not normally be contacted at home.

During any absence it is important that the employee and appropriate manager maintain regular contact so that the manager is kept fully informed of the employee's state of health and likely return to work date. This does not mean that staff should feel under pressure to return to work before they are ready.

Unless a Statement of Fitness to Work has been provided by a qualified medical practitioner, staff are required to phone school each day. In any event, staff are expected to remain contactable during their absence, and a Statement of Fitness to Work must be provided to cover the full period of absence after the first 7 days.

Where an employee is absent due to long term sickness, he/she is required to update the school on his/her progress by telephone or letter at least once a fortnight, or at a minimum, alongside the Statement of Fitness to Work certificates provided.

For providing information and facilitating an effective return to work, the employee will periodically be asked to attend meetings normally on school premises. Meetings may be held off site where circumstances dictate.

If the employee is too unwell or physically unable to attend the school, with the agreement and consent of the employee, the school may visit him/her at home or at another mutually agreeable venue.

If an employee has any concerns while absent on sick leave, whether about the reason for the absence or their ability to return to work, the employee should feel free to contact the member of SLT with responsibility for staffing at any time.

Section 2 DISCRETIONARY LEAVE

All absence from work will be recorded (including annual leave) and any unpaid leave or other absence which might affect pay (e.g. sick leave, jury service) must be notified to the Finance Office.

1. Appointments During Work Time

Absences for appointments during normal working hours not covered in this guidance are entirely at the discretion of the Headteacher.

Normally, staff should not make appointments during work 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, sometimes, unavoidable.

In all cases, permission must be sought to attend an appointment during normal working hours by completing a “green slip” and passing it to the line manager for authorisation and then the Deputy Headteacher.

2. Leave for Medical Reasons

There may be a variety of situations where employees will need time off for medical purposes and the general intention is to accommodate reasonable requests for such time off. All requests must be made to the Headteacher, giving reasonable notice.

Routine Appointments

Where practical, employees should make routine appointments for the doctor/dental/hospital etc., outside of working hours, where this is not practical, reasonable paid time off will be approved.

Fertility Treatment

Employees requesting time off for fertility treatment will in general be supported. The specific needs will need to be understood, and the various provisions for leave set out in this policy will be used to enable this to happen where reasonable. This may mean time off for medical appointments, making full use of compassionate and special leave. The leave agreed may be paid or unpaid depending on the specific circumstances. In any event, the situation will be treated with sensitivity, and with the understanding the process can take some time.

3. Family Leave (including Adoption/Parental and Shared Parental Leave Provisions)

The entitlement for parental leave and adoption leave are governed by a number of statutory requirements and other agreements, with the determination of any pay entitlement fairly complex. Any member of staff requiring advice about maternity or paternity leave and the implications for their salary should speak to the member of the leadership team with responsibility for staffing in the first instance.

Paternity pay

Bournemouth School offers 5 continuous working days of occupational pay for paternity leave.

Other advice may be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/parental-leave>
<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1753>
<https://www.gov.uk/statutory-maternity-pay/eligibility>
<http://www.lge.gov.uk/lge/core/page.do?pagelId=126098>
<https://www.gov.uk/paternityleave/overview>
<https://www.gov.uk/shared-parental-leave-and-pay>
<https://www.gov.uk/adoption-pay-leave>

4. Time Off for Trade Union Activities

Accredited Representatives

Employment legislation provides for local trade union officials/representatives (i.e. recognised by the employer and the union) to have reasonable time off with pay and facilities to enable them to undertake their trade union duties. Time may be taken for both consulting and representing and for any necessary training related to these duties. The extent of the time off and facilities is for governors to determine but it must be 'reasonable' in all the circumstances having regard to the Code of Practice issued by ACAS (Arbitration, Conciliation and Advisory Service).

Union officials will also be allowed reasonable time off without pay to engage in other union/association activities not related directly to local industrial relations (e.g. national conferences).

Union Members Other Than Officials

Trade union members (as distinct from officials/accredited representatives) are entitled to reasonable time off without pay to attend union meetings related to their own employment.

5. Time off for Dependants and Compassionate Leave

Employees have the right to take a reasonable amount of **unpaid** time off work to take necessary action to deal with particular situations affecting their dependants (under the Employment Rights Act). The law allows employees to take time off in five types of situations:

- i. to provide assistance if a dependant falls ill, gives birth, is injured or assaulted
- ii. to make arrangements to provide care for a dependant who is ill or injured
- iii. as a result of the death of a dependent (for example, because funeral arrangements need to be made)
- iv. to deal with the unexpected disruption, termination or breakdown in care of a dependent (for example, if a childminder fails to turn up)
- v. to deal with an unexpected incident which occurs with a member of staff's child during school hours (for example, if member of staff's child is suspended from school)

If an employee's situation does not fall into one of the above categories, then there is no legal right to take time off for dependants.

Above and beyond meeting the requirements of the law, **paid** compassionate leave will be granted by the Headteacher and governors on a case-by-case basis to support colleagues and promote a positive working environment. The following guidelines may be adopted for leave with pay in any leave year:

- death of member of immediate family - up to 5 working days
- death of other near relative - up to 3 working days
- death of a close friend - one working day
- child's illness - up to 3 working days*
- serious illness of a near relative - up to 3 working 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 the time scales above will normally be considered without pay rather than with pay taking into account the circumstances and needs of the School.

6. Interviews

The School allows paid leave of absence to attend interviews for appointments in teaching/local government on the basis of a maximum of five interviews in any year.

Unpaid leave may be granted at the governors' discretion; this may be appropriate for interviews for posts outside teaching/local government.

7. Public Duties

Employees are entitled to 'reasonable' time off but not necessarily with pay for the performance of such duties as:

- a Justice of the Peace
- a member of a
 - Local Authority
 - Statutory Tribunal
 - Health Authority
- a member or governor of a maintained educational establishment

The Headteacher has the discretion to grant up to 18 working days' paid leave of absence per member of staff. Additional time off may be granted by the governors, either unpaid or as a charge to the School's budget.

8. Jury Service

An employee required to undertake jury service is, effectively, entitled to paid leave of absence by virtue of the allowances which may be claimed from the Court, namely:

- travelling expenses, including parking fees
- subsistence allowance
- financial loss allowance

An employee should receive a Certificate of Loss of Earnings with the summons to attend court. This must be sent to the Finance Office for completion and returned to the employee to take to Court. At the end of the Jury Service, the employee needs to obtain a statement of the actual Loss of Earnings Allowance paid, for submission to the Finance Office so that the amount can be deducted from his/her salary and credited to the school's budget.

9. Attendance as Witness in Court/Employment Tribunal

Attendance as a witness may be on the basis of paid or unpaid leave of absence, as explained below.

Paid Leave of Absence

Where a member of staff is required to attend as a witness arising from his/her employment, paid leave is automatic. He/she must:

- ascertain from the Finance Office the daily amount of loss of earnings for the attendance concerned;
- enter a claim for this from the party who called him/her to give evidence;
- Inform the Finance Office when the claim has been paid – so that the amount can be deducted from salary.

Unpaid Leave

If attendance is in the employee's private capacity, he/she is expected to take annual leave. If this is not possible, unpaid leave of absence should be granted, but it should be made clear that the employee should claim loss of earnings and that any shortfall may not, necessarily, be made up.

The procedure in the latter circumstances requires the employee to:

- obtain prior agreement to leave of absence;
- insist on a subpoena or witness summons as a pre-condition of attendance (as the issuing party has to offer to meet the witness's expenses);
- ascertain from Finance Office, the daily loss of earnings (which will include Saturday/Sunday if the absence is for a complete week or includes a weekend);
- enter a claim from the party who called the employee as a witness;
- inform Finance Office of the full period of absence so that the loss of earnings is deducted from salary (even if this exceeds the amount recovered).

10. Service in Non-Regular Forces

It is the School's policy to grant two weeks' paid leave of absence for attendance at summer camp etc., to an employee who is a member of the Non-Regular Forces. An employee who wishes to become a member of the Non-Regular Forces should prior to joining, seek approval from the Headteacher. Such approval will not be withheld unreasonably.

11. Special Leave***Paid***

An employee will be granted paid leave in special circumstances as follows:

- moving house: one working day
- bus or rail strike which prevents travel to work, with no other means being reasonably available: one working day
- other personal considerations (e.g. attendance at a son's/daughter's graduation ceremony): up to three working days
- an employee who is being made redundant should be given reasonable paid time off to look for a new job or to arrange training

Unpaid

The Headteacher may grant unpaid leave in accordance with the schools policy (e.g. up to a maximum of 10 working days) for urgent personal considerations. Requests for longer periods may then be referred to the Chair (or Vice-Chair) of Governors for due consideration. Each case should be considered on its merits and is classed as 'leave of absence' rather than 'extended leave' for the purpose of the supply regulations. It should also be noted that periods of unpaid leave affect pension benefits as it does not count as reckonable service. For Support Staff who are members of the LGPS, there may be implications for their pension contributions whilst taking unpaid leave. Any additional regular contributions or contributions being made for the purchase of additional membership under the LGPS will remain payable throughout unpaid leave. The contributions will be calculated on the rate of pay receivable, as if the individual was not on unpaid leave. The additional benefits therefore continue to accrue in full. The individual needs to make arrangements with the Finance Office for the contributions to be collected, so early contact with that office is advised to ensure continuing cover. N.B If the contributions are not made then the contract to purchase additional benefits would cease and would not recommence on return from unpaid leave.

12. Study Leave***Teachers***

For studies leading to external Higher Education qualifications which contribute to a teacher's professional development, up to 20 working days paid leave be granted over the duration of the course, with not more than 5 working days in any one year, plus the days of the examinations.

Support Staff

The National Conditions of Service state that paid leave of absence should be granted for the purpose of sitting examinations applicable to local government service. Paid leave will be permitted:

- for study revision for the first attempt at an examination on the basis of one working day for each day of examination, with a maximum of 5 working days (extended in exceptional cases only);
- for study by correspondence course, up to two working days leave for each day of examination, with a maximum of 10 working days.

13. 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, he/she 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 will 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, check their emails and monitor the school website, for information about possible closure of the school, and should, if necessary, try to contact the School 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.

14. Leave for Religious Festivals and Cultural Observance

The School has a responsibility to respond reasonably and sensitively to any request from an employee regarding their cultural or religious needs. A member of staff who wishes to observe a religious or cultural tradition should consider whether it is practical to do so by using either leave or flexible arrangements. Requests for leave will be considered carefully by the Headteacher.

Section 3 FLEXIBLE WORKING REQUESTS

This applies to all staff employed by our school, including part-time employees. It does not apply to agency staff and self-employed contractors. Staff members have the right to make a statutory request for a flexible working arrangement if they:

Have not already made 2 requests for flexible working arrangements in the last 12 months

See Appendix 1

Section 4 CAREER BREAKS

Introduction

As part of the school's commitment to the health and well-being of staff, the Headteacher will consider staff requests for a career break/sabbatical away from school. This will help to:

- rejuvenate staff;
- aid the retention of staff;
- contribute to the personal and/or professional development of staff;
- enable staff to experience new challenges;
- enable staff to fulfil personal or domestic commitments;
- enable staff to undertake voluntary or community work.

The Headteacher may grant up to eighteen months' unpaid leave of this type, although it is expected that absences of such length will be exceptional. When considering requests for such leave the Headteacher will have regard to fairness and consistency with all categories of staff within the context of:

- the operational needs of the school;
- the individual needs of the person concerned;
- the length of time requested;
- the timing of the period requested in relation to the school year;
- the amount of notice given;
- the ability of the school to recruit additional staff or reorganise work amongst existing staff.

Key Points

- Sabbaticals are open to all staff at the school
- Staff must have served 5 years continuously at Bournemouth School to be eligible to apply
- No more than 18 months' leave may be taken at any one time
- Application must be made in writing to the Headteacher at least 6 months before the beginning of the proposed leave period
- The period must be taken unpaid
- The request for sabbatical leave of 2 terms or less will not be considered as they are too disruptive to the school
- No more than 1 member of staff may be on sabbatical leave at the same time
- If more than 1 person applies for any given period, the following criteria will be used to select the successful applicant:
 - length of service

- attendance record
- role within the school
- the ease with which additional staff may be recruited or workload distributed
- The member of staff on sabbatical leave must inform the school at least 3 months before the end of the agreed leave period, if he/she does NOT intend to return to post at the end of the period and wishes to resign
- The granting of a sabbatical is wholly at the Headteacher's discretion

Under this scheme it is not possible to take up alternative paid employment during any career break or to undertake activities that are deemed by the Headteacher to be detrimental to the school or its reputation. Exceptions to this rule will be considered on a case by case basis, but may include:

- a career break for educational purposes and work on a casual basis or as part of a placement is required;
- a career break to work for a charitable organisation where a small subsistence wage may be received;
- a career break to fulfil domestic commitments, which prevents the member of staff being able to undertake their duties at Bournemouth School, but do not preclude part-time working.

An employee may carry out work for the School during their career break by agreement with the Headteacher. Work may be undertaken on a temporary basis and would attract payment at the rate appropriate to the tasks undertaken.

The employee must keep in regular contact with the Headteacher to ensure that they are kept up to date with their role and with any developments within the School. Arrangements for this will be agreed in advance.

The employee must inform the Headteacher about any change of address or other contact or personal details during the career break.

Following the career break the employee will normally be entitled to return to the same or similar role within the School where possible. Should there be a reorganisation whilst the employee is on their career break, the Headteacher will contact the employee as soon as possible, to discuss the implications to their role. Should a redundancy situation occur the employee may be required to participate in the consultation process and attend the workplace.

Whilst on a career break the employee remains an employee of the School in line with their contract of employment and they will retain their continuous service, with the exception of length of service requirements for the purposes of increases to annual leave entitlement and sick pay entitlement.

How to apply

The employee should initially discuss their request for a career break with the Headteacher. A formal application for a career break should then be made in writing at least 6 months before the intended start date (there may be some flexibility in exceptional circumstances).

The Headteacher will review the application and aims to make a decision within 28 days of receipt of the request from the employee.

Declined requests

The scheme operates at the discretion of the School and is not a right of the employee. The granting of extended periods of leave depends on the existing and longer term operational requirements and business need. The Headteacher has the right to refuse a career break request.

Circumstances where a career break request may be declined or postponed include:

- where an employee is on an approved training course funded by the School;
- the inability to recruit additional staff or reorganise work amongst existing staff;
- a substantial negative impact on service delivery;
- the activity could affect the School's / academy's reputation.

As there is no guarantee that an application for a career break will be accepted, an employee should not commit themselves to any plans unless the career break has been approved in writing.

Where a request is refused the employee will be informed in writing. The letter will include the reasons for refusal.

There is no right of appeal.

Headteacher responsibilities

- The Headteacher must treat all requests fairly, within timescales, giving clear reasons for approval or non-approval of a career break.
- Prior to the start of the career break how communication will be maintained will be agreed. The Headteacher will ensure that the employee is aware that it is also their responsibility to maintain contact.
- The Headteacher will ensure that the employee is asked to disclose any changes in personal circumstances that could impact on their role, and assess whether a referral to the DBS or Occupational Health should be made.
- If the employee returns to the same role, or to a new role, the Headteacher will make suitable arrangements for the reintroduction into the workplace. Depending on the length of the break, this may include an induction period and assessment of any training and development needs, including ensuring access to IT systems if necessary. Any reasonable adjustments required previously will need to be retained.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Member of SLT

_____ Date: _____
Employee

Conducting an Attendance at Work Procedure Meeting

Preparing for the Meeting

Book a private room

Gather information on previous sickness history

Gather together return to work interview forms and previous trigger forms

Give consideration to reasons for absences, any reoccurring patterns, average length of absences etc.

Give the employee reasonable notice of the meeting

Inform employee that they can have a Trade Union representative or colleague present at the meeting if they wish

Conducting the Meeting

The following structure should be followed:-

1. Reason for Meeting

2. Enquire about health

3. Offer of assistance

4. Any consequences of absence

5. Future action

6. Completion of formalities

1. Reason for Meeting

Explain purpose of the meeting: they have reached sickness absence trigger level, that you want to find ways to reduce absence level.

2. Enquire about Health

Gain information regarding the reasons for the absences, whether the absences are related to an underlying condition which may reoccur.

3. Offer of assistance

Find out if a risk assessment of the workplace is required and if any adjustments are needed. If appropriate, arrange an Occupational Health referral which could provide support for the member of staff and further medical information for yourself. If appropriate, provide details of Health & Wellbeing Team.

4. Any consequences of absence

Where absences are causing concern, complete Section B of the Trigger Form. Notify the employee that they have been reviewed under Stage 1, 2, 3 or 4 of the Attendance at Work Procedure. Explain that any more absences could lead to further action under the Attendance at Work Procedure.

5. Future action

Summarise any action that you have agreed should take place e.g. referral to Occupational Health, adjustments to working arrangements etc.

6. Completion of formalities

You should complete the Trigger form, ensuring that you note and follow up any future action you have agreed. Give one copy to the employee and retain the original copy ensuring that it is kept securely and confidentially. If you have reviewed an employee under Stage 3 or 4 of the procedure, a copy of the Trigger form must be sent to the member of SLT with responsibility for staffing.



Document Title	STAFF ATTENDANCE POLICY
Status	Statutory
Source	Various
Review Period	3 Yearly
Last reviewed on:	November 2021
Next review due by:	November 2024

Document History

Version	Review Date	Author	Change/Notes
1.1	09/11/2021	D Lewis	Version Control added and document layout changed Policy now covers sickness absence (last reviewed in 2018), discretionary leave (last reviewed in 2019) and career breaks (last reviewed in 2016)
1.2	January 2025	K Ateaque	Tracked changes largely on sickness procedures, changes for discretionary leave, unauthorised absences and sick pay

Approvals

Date of FGB Approval	Approving Committee
11/2021	Resources Committee
07/12/2021	Resources Committee

The latest version of this policy may be accessed through our website –No



Flexible working request

Name:

Date:

I wish to exercise my statutory right, provided by the Employment Relations Act 2023, to request flexible working.

I meet the eligibility criteria:

- I have not made a request to work flexibly under this right during the past 12 months



If you're unable to tick this box, you're not statutorily entitled to make a flexible working request. However, we may still consider your request.

(Fill in if relevant) I made a previous request for flexible working on:

Current working hours:		Current working days:	
Proposed working hours:		Proposed working days:	
If your request doesn't involve a change of working hours/days, explain here how you would like your working arrangements to change:			
I would like these arrangements to start from:	<i>Please note: it might take up to 2 months for the school to reach a decision (possibly longer, if we agree a longer decision period with you).</i>		
How will the new arrangements affect the school?	I think this change will affect the school, my colleagues and my work as follows:		
How can the new arrangements be accommodated?	I think the effect on the school, my colleagues and my work can be dealt with as follows:		

Please submit your completed form to: Dr D Lewis, dlewis@bournemouth-school.org