

Charter.

Sickness Absence Management Policy

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1. Scope

This policy applies to all employees within The Charter Schools Educational Trust (the 'Trust') excluding those on probation. Staff still within their probationary period, with poor attendance will be managed under the Trust's Probation policy, although the requirements to report sickness as defined in this policy and procedure will still apply.

2. Rationale

The Trust is committed to the provision of high-quality education for all pupils but also to ensure we promote health, safety, and wellbeing in our workforce. To achieve both, we have a duty and a moral responsibility to manage sickness absence in a fair and consistent way which supports individuals when they are off work and enables them to return to work when they are fit to do so.

3. Aims

Throughout this policy the Trust emphasises proactive support and management for staff in the event of their ill health. This applies whether they are at work or absent.

Line managers have specific responsibilities to manage staff sickness, and staff also have a personal responsibility to look after themselves and their health.

Line managers specifically need to give due consideration to the Trust Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy and our statutory responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010. This includes the need to consider reasonable adjustments for employees with a disability.

In addition, due to the confidential nature of sickness absence, Headteachers and line managers are reminded of their statutory obligations under the Data Protection Act (GDPR) 2018 and the Access to Medical Records Act 1988.

In implementing this procedure consideration should be given to employees who are:

- Pregnant or have recently given birth
- Undergoing gender reassignment
- Suffering from mental and physical health conditions
- Suffering from a terminal illness
- Absence which is due to a one-off operation or illness (see below)

- Absence which may be due to a recognised industrial injury sustained during employment

In these particular cases, line managers are encouraged to seek specialist HR support and guidance.

4. Statutory Sick pay and Occupational Sick Pay Sick pay

The Trust Sick Pay Policy outlines the eligibility criteria for Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) and Occupational Sick Pay (OSP), but it should not be interpreted as indicating the amount of sickness absence to which an employee is entitled.

5. Notifying Absence due to sickness

In the event of absence due to illness or any other unforeseen circumstance, all staff should telephone their school staff absence line before 7:00am in person on the first day of their absence.

Trust Central Services staff should email their respective line manager.

The message should include the reason for absence and, if possible, an indication of the likely length of absence and contact number. Unforeseen absences should be notified as early as possible to the staff member's line manager. Appropriate cover for teaching staff absence should be communicated to the Subject (secondary) /Phase group (primary) leader, and the Cover Coordinator where appropriate as soon as possible. It may be that one phone call back is needed to gather any essential information to cover the absence, but this should only be if absolutely necessary.

Where an employee seeks medical advice about an illness which is suspected or alleged to result from the nature of his or her employment, the employee must report relevant information to their line manager at the first opportunity.

In the event of a member of staff suffering from an infectious disease, they must notify their school immediately.

6. Medical Suspension

The Headteacher may at any time suspend an employee pending a medical report, if in their view, the employee's state of health is likely to cause risk to themselves, pupils, or other staff.

Any period of medical suspension will be on full pay and will not count against contractual sick pay entitlements.

7. Self-Certification or Statements of Fitness to Work (Fit notes)

the event of absence due to illness, a self-certification form should be completed on the day of return. This should be sent to the School Business Manager and should cover the first 7 days of absence due to illness - including weekends. This form should be completed from day one of absence.

Any absence after the first seven days will need to be covered by a Statement of Fitness to Work, known as a 'fit note' signed by a doctor, physiotherapist, nurse, pharmacist or occupational therapist and forwarded to the line manager. A fit note used to be known as a sick note – it is the same form. The employee must continue to submit fit notes during school closure periods.

If an absence continues beyond the period covered by the initial fit note, further fit notes must be submitted to give continuous cover for the period of absence. On return to work employees must complete the Trust's Sickness Self-Certificate in respect of the first seven days or less if not covered by a doctor's (or other medical professionals listed above) fit note.

If the doctor's fit note does not specify the period of absence covered, it will be classed as covering a period of seven calendar days only. All fit notes should be sent to the line manager who will send them on to the School Business Manager. In turn, the School Business Manager will ensure that Trust HR are notified for payroll and employee record purposes.

Failure to provide a self-certification form or a "Fit note" will result in the absence being treated as unauthorised and is likely to result in pay being deducted for those periods not properly covered.

8. Employees who "May be fit for some work."

If the doctor advises on the Statement of Fitness for Work that an employee 'may be fit for work' the line manager will discuss with the employee ways of helping them get back to work. This might include discussing a phased return to work or

amended duties. If it is not possible to provide the support an employee needs to return to work – for example, by making the necessary workplace adjustments – or an employee feels unable to return then the Statement will be used in the same way as if the GP advised that the employee was 'not fit for work'.

9. Notifying a return to work

Whenever possible, notifications for returning to work should be made as far in advance as possible so that the line manager can plan working arrangements/cover. Notification of intention to return is to be made by telephone (via the Voice Mail system if necessary), you should leave a contact number so your line manager may agree your date on return in line with policy.

10. Return to Work Interview

When an employee returns to work following sickness absence of more than one day in duration, the line manager will meet with the employee. The purpose of this meeting is to determine the reason for the absence, the current situation, and where appropriate to help and support. It is also an opportunity to identify any difficulties that the employee has in carrying out the duties of the post.

The return-to-work discussion should be held as soon as possible after the sickness absence. It will be private and confidential. The manager needs to maintain a balance between concern for the employees' welfare without being too intrusive into their personal circumstances, and the needs of the organisation for them to be at work. The manager will:

- Establish the cause of illness and make certain the employee is fit to work
- Ensure the employee's self-certification is complete
- Discuss the employee's sickness absence record if necessary
- Determine if a sickness review meeting is appropriate.

11. Management of sickness absence

For the management of sickness absence, the Trust will adopt the following measures (known as 'Trigger Action Points'). This allows a process to be followed to assist staff and the Trust in managing their sickness absence.

Trigger Action Points

One or more of the following occurs:

- Repeated short-term absence of five or more working days over a rolling four-week period
- Short-term absence of eight working days over a rolling eight-week period
- Three occasions of absence of any duration within two terms
- 12 or more working days, or 6 or more episodes in any rolling 12-month period
- Unusual/identifiable patterns of absence
- Any absence over 28 days in length

12. Maintaining contact whilst on sick leave short and long term

There is a mutual obligation on staff and line managers to maintain contact whilst an employee is on sick leave. The reason for this is twofold:

- To enable the line manager to offer support and manage the absence appropriately on behalf of the Trust and the school
- For the staff member to keep their line manager up to date on their condition and prognosis.

Employees cannot refuse to communicate with their line manager or another designated manager whilst on sick leave, except in very rare circumstances, in which case the employee should ask somebody to speak on their behalf, e.g. a spouse/partner or union representative, confirm this in writing and give the reasons why.

Absence beyond one day

For what you believe will be a short-term absence, you should contact your line manager each day to provide them with an update on your health and a probable date of return until a medical statement/fit note is produced.

Should you fail to report absence then your line manager or a member of the administration team will contact you by phone or will write to you to ask you to make contact. If you do not comply with this request, then your occupational sick pay will be withheld for the duration of the absence, and you may be subject to disciplinary action.

Absence longer than 8 days

You should agree with your line manager the best method to maintain contact if your absence is likely to be long term. Ideally, you should contact your line manager every fifth working day of absence throughout any period of illness to report on

your health and indicate your expected date of return. If this is not possible, you should advise your manager of the reason.

Even if you are given a “fit note” for an extended period, you should contact your line manager on a weekly basis to provide an update on your progress. If this is not possible, you should advise your manager of the reason and agree on what would be reasonable.

If you are in hospital

If you are in hospital, you should follow the same reporting process. If, however, you are too ill to contact your line manager, you should decide on someone to make contact on your behalf. Contact should be made on the first day of your absence, saying how long you expect to be in hospital and leaving a contact number. You must provide your line manager with hospital admittance and discharge certificates as soon as possible. No other certificates are required during your stay in hospital. If you are still absent after the initial hospitalisation period, you will be expected to provide self-certification forms and fit notes as appropriate.

Attendance at meetings

Throughout this procedure, if an employee indicates that they are too unwell to attend an informal or formal meeting under this procedure or any other, they will be referred to Occupational Health for advice and given the option to:

- Meet in a neutral venue; or
- Attend via a telephone conference; or
- Provide a written submission; or
- Request that the meeting takes place in their absence.

13. Occupational Health Referrals

The involvement of the Trust’s occupational health (‘OH’) provider in individual cases can be crucial to understanding the impact of a medical condition upon an individual’s ability to perform their normal duties and to support an employee’s return to work, and it is in the best interests of both the school and the employee.

Referrals to OH will be made at the line manager’s discretion in consultation with the School HR Business Partner, involving the individual and informed by the following criteria:

- Where the absence appears to be related to stress, anxiety or depression

- Where the absence has lasted (or is likely to last) for at least four weeks
- Where an employee has been absent on a frequent, short-term basis (a useful indicator would be when the trigger point, defined in section 11 above, has been reached)
- Where discussions with the employee indicate that the employee's health may be having an impact on their ability to carry out the job
- Where ill health follows an accident that has either caused, or is likely to cause, a significant absence from work or otherwise impact on work or attendance
- Where the individual may be suffering from an industrial or occupational disease or condition, or where there has been an injury at work, physical or non-physical
- Where it is suspected that the employee has a notifiable disease
- When the absence appears to have been triggered by the instigation of other procedures (such as the disciplinary and capability procedure).

The contents of the referral and the subsequent report must be shared with the employee. In considering the referral, OH may wish to obtain a report from the employee's own doctor(s) but will obtain the employee's written consent before doing so. In the event of a refusal, decisions about the employee's future employment will be made based on the information available at the time.

14. Informal Procedure

Informal Sickness Absence meeting

An informal sickness absence meeting will be arranged with an employee by the line manager whenever it is considered necessary and/or when their absence record falls into the categories set out on the action trigger points above.

In preparation for the meeting the line manager will confirm which action trigger point has been reached or that the record shows a pattern of absence or some other factual data which identifies cause for concern.

The line manager will keep notes of the meeting with any actions to be taken resulting from it.

There is no entitlement for the employee to be accompanied at an informal sickness absence meeting.

Monitoring Period Following Sickness Absence Interview

After conducting an informal sickness absence meeting, the line manager will review or monitor the employee's attendance for a further period. Normally this will be for a period of one month and not usually longer than three months. Further meetings may take place during the monitoring period if there is more sickness absence.

The line manager will continue to review the employee's absence record and its effects on the work of the school and attempt to establish reasons for the absences, identify any underlying trends, and seek to offer any assistance to the employee (e.g. referral to Occupational Health Services) with a view to both supporting the employee and improving the employee's attendance record.

During the monitoring period the manager may require that any period of absence is covered by a medical certificate (fit note). If the employee has a fit note which states they 'may be fit for work' the advice will be discussed and consideration given as to how it impacts upon the job, the workplace, pupils, and colleagues. The GP's advice and comments and any other action that could facilitate a return to work will be considered with due regard to the Equality Act 2010. Options may include a phased return to work, altered hours, amended duties, or workplace adaptations.

A further meeting may be held to review the support in place at any appropriate time. If it is not possible to provide the support suggested by the GP, the note will be used as if the GP had advised 'not fit for work'. It may be deemed that the employee is therefore unfit for work, but HR advice should be sought at this stage.

The manager in consultation with the Headteacher and/or School HR Business Partner as appropriate may, during the monitoring period, consider whether a risk assessment is required to ensure the health and safety of the employee in the light of the reason for their ill health.

Where the line manager is of the view that the employee's attendance has not improved to acceptable standards after the review period the manager, in consultation with the Headteacher and/or School HR Business Partner should either inform the employee that the issue will:

- Be referred to Stage 1 of the formal procedure; or
- If there are exceptional circumstances, extend the review period.

Either decision will be confirmed in writing.

15. Formal Procedure

There are two stages in the formal process. The type of case (i.e. long- or short-term absence) will determine the need to move either through the stages (short term absence) or in some circumstances directly to Stage 2 (long term absence). The procedure can end at any point if there is sustained improvement. This will be determined by the Headteacher, with HR support when required.

If further concerns arise within 12 months of a Stage 1 meeting being held, the procedure may resume at Stage 2.

Before starting the formal procedure, line managers will satisfy themselves that sufficient reasonable action has been taken under the informal procedure to:

- Consider seeking medical advice from Occupational Health
- Seek HR advice where appropriate
- Consider whether the employee has a disability under the Equality Act
- Consider any support or training and adjustments that have been requested or implemented and the outcome of these actions
- Ensure that the employee has been consulted and supported throughout the informal process.

As part of the process of long-term absence management, a home visit may be required. Home visits must only be conducted with the express support and guidance of the School HR Business Partner who would normally accompany such a visit.

Preparation for Stage 1 Formal Sickness Absence Meeting

The Headteacher or an experienced member of the SLT will arrange a formal meeting with the employee giving them at least five days 'notice in writing of:

- The reason for the meeting and its time, date and location
- An outline of the concerns about attendance
- Who will be conducting the meeting and who else will be present (including HR)
- Copies of any documents to be referred to including any previous action plan
- The employee's right to be accompanied/represented by a work colleague or a trade union representative or official
- The requirement for the employee to provide 2 days prior to the meeting, the name of their representative (if applicable) and copies of any papers to be referred to by the employee (if applicable).

Stage 1 Meeting

At the Stage 1 Meeting the Headteacher or Executive leader (normally with the advice of the School HR Business Partner) will:

- Explain the purpose of the Stage 1 meeting
- Set out the standards of attendance expected of the employee and explain how the employee's attendance has been assessed as falling below these standards and the effect of this on service delivery
- Review the notes and outcomes of the informal procedure including any measures taken to support the employee and any work-related issues and any medical reports and advice received
- Give the employee and their representative the opportunity to explain any mitigating circumstances
- Try to establish the reasons (including any underlying causes) for poor attendance and seek agreement from the employee for any further referral to Occupational Health if this is required
- Confirm where appropriate that the poor attendance is due to an ill-health issue
- If appropriate inform the employee that they may wish to consult their pension scheme provider about ill health benefits
- Discuss the way forward and determine an action plan that clearly identifies:
 - The improvements necessary to achieve the expected standards.
 - The review (normally up to three months but may be longer depending on the nature of the absences)
 - How attendance will be measured and monitored and by whom
 - The support and training that will be provided during the review period.

Within 5 working days of completion of the formal Stage 1 Meeting (this may be extended if further information is required) the Headteacher/Executive leader will write to the employee to confirm the action plan and to advise the employee that if they fail to achieve the improvements in the review period a Stage 2 meeting may be arranged where dismissal for lack of capability due to ill-health could be considered.

Stage 1 Review Period

The Headteacher/Executive leader with the line manager will ensure that during the review period the employee's attendance is closely monitored. Normally weekly supervision meetings will be held between the employee and the line manager/SLT

member to ensure effective monitoring support and feedback is occurring and any further problems in attendance are identified and their reasons discussed.

The line manager/SLT member should keep notes of the monitoring process, and a copy may be requested by the employee. These notes may be referred to at Stage 2 of the formal procedure.

If at the end of the review period the employee's attendance has improved to acceptable standards, no further action will be taken. If, however, further concerns arise within the next 12 months the procedure may resume at Stage 2.

The decision to take no further action will be confirmed in writing by the Headteacher within 10 working days. This letter will also confirm that improved attendance must be sustained during the next 12 months and explain that if there are further issues the Sickness Absence procedure may be invoked at Stage 2. A copy of this letter will be kept on the employee's personnel file.

If at the end of the review period, the employee's attendance has not improved to acceptable standards then the Headteacher/Executive leader may refer the issue for further consideration under stage 2 of the formal procedure or in very exceptional circumstances the review period will be extended for a short further period, which will be confirmed in writing to the employee.

If the employee is in a Pension Scheme, they will be given a reasonable period to explore eligibility for an ill health pension award prior to convening a Stage 2 Meeting if this is requested.

Preparation for Stage 2 Meeting

The Headteacher will arrange for a formal stage 2 meeting to take place with the employee giving them at least five days' notice in writing of:

- The reason for the meeting, outlining the outstanding concerns about the employee's work attendance due to ill-health as well as the date, time and location of the meeting
- Who will be conducting the meeting and who else will be present
- Any document to be referred to in the meeting
- The employee's right to be accompanied and/or represented by a work colleague or trade union representative or official, and that any documents they wish to refer to should be copied to the Headteacher or Headteacher's delegate at least 3 working days in advance of the meeting; and
- The possible consequences of the meeting, i.e., that may result in the employee's dismissal on the grounds of lack of capability due to ill-health.

Stage 2 Meeting

The meeting will be chaired by a Headteacher/Executive leader who has not previously been involved with the matter and:

- Ask the Headteacher involved in the case to outline the ways in which the employee has been assessed as not meeting the expected work attendance standards due to ill health and the process so far under the Sickness Absence procedures
- Review in detail as appropriate the standards of attendance expected and the details of the Sickness Absence Interview meetings, records of home visits, medical reports, records of any other meetings plus other information relating to the action taken to date including measures taken by management to support the employee
- Discuss with the employee whether the employee has been assessed as achieving the required improvements
- Review the effect of the poor attendance on teaching and learning service delivery and work colleagues
- Explore as appropriate the potential for the employee to achieve a sustained improvement in attendance
- Give the employee and their representative every opportunity to answer the points made and to give an explanation or put forward mitigating circumstances; and
- Discuss any options regarding the employee's pension that may be available if requested.

Stage 2 Decision

Following the discussions, the Chair will adjourn the meeting to consider the options available:

- a) Take no further action; or
- b) Set a further review period to allow additional monitoring. A further formal Stage 2 Meeting will be held at the end of this review period and if attendance is not satisfactory by that time, then the employee will be dismissed for lack of capability due to ill-health; or
- c) Dismiss the employee for lack of capability due to ill-health ensuring that alternative work options have already been explored or will be explored during the employee's notice period and that there is no prospect of their

return to work within a reasonable time frame or that they will be able to sustain their attendance.

Dismissal

If the decision at the Stage 2 Meeting is to dismiss, the Headteacher/Executive Leader will write to the employees to confirm their decision within 10 working days. The letter to the employee will include:

- Confirmation that they have been dismissed
- The grounds for dismissal and the reasons
- The required contractual or statutory notice due and the date that dismissal will be effective
- The employee's right of appeal.

In most cases, the employee will be on sick leave during their notice period and therefore a fit note should support their absence. If exceptionally, the employee is in work, it may be appropriate for them to remain at home on garden leave during their notice period.

Alternatively, payment may be made in lieu of notice if the contract of employment allows for this.

Appeals Against Dismissal

An employee has the right to appeal against a dismissal decision to the Trust Director of People (HRAppeals@tcset.org.uk). Any appeal must be submitted within 10 days of receipt of the letter confirming the dismissal and must clearly state the grounds for appeal.

The grounds for appeal are:

1. A failure to follow the Trust Sickness Absence Management procedures in a manner that materially affects the outcome of the process
2. The decision reached was unreasonable, meaning that a conclusion was reached based upon the circumstances that a reasonable person could have arrived at.

The purpose of an appeal hearing is to consider the grounds the employee has cited for their appeal and to decide if this decision was reasonable in all circumstances.

The appeal hearing will be held as soon as practicable, and the employee will have the right of representation at the hearing by a trade union representative or work colleague.

The Trust Director of People will arrange for a Chair to hear the appeal. This may be a Headteacher/Executive leader or Trustee who has not previously been involved in the matter. At the appeal hearing a decision will be made to:

- Uphold the appeal (i.e. to reinstate the employee); and/or
- Issue a lesser level of management action e.g. to drop the formal process or reduce standards of attendance required in the action plan; or
- Dismiss the appeal so that the decision to dismiss remains in force.

The decision of the Appeal hearing is final, and the employee has no further right of appeal. The decision should be confirmed in writing within 10 days of the appeal hearing.

16. Conditions impacting on Occupational Sick pay

During a period of sickness absence, a member of staff must not undertake any other paid or unpaid employment, including voluntary work, for any employer or organisation. The only exception to this is where such activity is on the recommendation of a medical practitioner and has been agreed with the Headteacher as being therapeutic and assisting towards their recovery.

Members of staff that engage in other employment (whether paid or not), and/or go on holiday during a period of sickness absence without the approval of an annual leave request by their line manager in advance, will be subject to disciplinary action.

The Trust may withhold Occupational Sick pay (OSP) where a member of staff is absent because of an injury sustained whilst participating in a professional sporting activity, working for another employer, or where their absence is a result of an injury caused by a third party.

Depending on the circumstances, OSP may be withheld where the absence arises from, or is reasonably attributable to the employee's own misconduct, negligence, or recklessness.

An employee's absence from work will not prevent the Trust from implementing formal procedures with which the employee is expected to cooperate. For

example, disciplinary, grievance, capability, redundancy, and other such Trust procedures.

An employee who is absent because of an injury caused by a third party will not be eligible to receive OSP under this scheme if damages might be recoverable from the third party. However, the Trust may pay the employee an advance, the amount of which will not exceed any entitlement under this scheme, subject to the employee signing an undertaking that the total amount of the advance will be refunded, or, if the damages paid are less than this total, the actual amount of damages received.

Where such an advance is refunded in full, the Trust will discount the associated period of sickness absence when calculating any future entitlement to sick pay under this scheme. Employees are expected to give their full cooperation to pursuing a claim for loss of earnings from the third party, through any applicable insurance policy that may provide for such a claim.

The payment of OSP, or continuation of payment of OSP, is conditional on employees giving their full cooperation to actions designed to assist their return to work. This includes, but is not limited to: cooperating with workplace adjustments or other assistance that may enable a return to work, including alternative work; not engaging in activities or doing anything that may delay their return to work, (including failure to observe medical advice and/or treatment designed to aid their recovery or engaging in activity that may aggravate their condition); and attending appointments with the Trust's Occupational Health advisors, or welfare meetings with Trust **staff** whenever required.

All sick pay may be withheld in circumstances where employees are found to be engaging in activities which are inconsistent with the certified reasons for their absence from work.

17. Sickness and Annual Leave

Employees who are sick during a period of annual leave may have the leave credited if they provide a Statement of Fitness for Work (Fit note) or similar medical certificate from their GP or a local GP (if the employee is away from home) confirming the dates of the sickness. Self-certification will not be accepted as proof of sickness when employees are sick during a period of annual leave.

18. Sickness Prior and Following School Closure or Annual Leave

If you are absent from work due to illness on either the first or last day of any school term, or on the day before or after you have booked annual leave, then you may be required by your manager to produce a medical certificate (self-certification is not sufficient). Your GP may impose a charge for this, which may be reclaimed from TCSET.

19. Procedural Points and Specific Circumstances

Disability and Reasonable Adjustments

The procedures for managing sickness absence apply to all employees, including those with a disability. Employees are encouraged to inform the school if they have a disability, particularly where this may affect their ability to perform their current duties, in order that reasonable adjustments can be considered and discussed.

Attendance monitoring will distinguish between absences which are disability-related and those which are not, where this is known to the school.

Managers will seek HR and OH advice as necessary on reasonable adjustments to ensure that a disabled employee is not placed at a substantial disadvantage when compared with a person who is not disabled. Reasonable adjustments may include adjustments to the operation of the procedure where this is appropriate in the individual circumstances of the case.

Disability is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. To come within the definition of disability, the employee must have an impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the employee's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The impairment may be either physical or mental, meaning that conditions such as depression will be covered provided the effect of the condition on the individual meets the overall definition.

Pregnancy-Related Absences

Sickness absence which is pregnancy-related will be recorded in the normal way and will count against sickness entitlement but will be disregarded for the purposes of the trigger point for short term absence. An OH referral will usually also be

appropriate if such absences become frequent or otherwise where advice to management on suitable workplace adjustments would be beneficial.

Terminal Illness

The Trust recognises that cases of terminal illness must be handled with compassion and sensitivity, respecting the employee's dignity and privacy. The employee and their nominated representative will be given a senior-level contact within the school (or Trust shared services team, as appropriate) who can act as a conduit for relevant communications and ensure that any issues are dealt with promptly and efficiently.

The school will seek HR/pension advice on the options available regarding pension entitlement, death in service benefits and benefits for partners and dependents.

The Trust may give consideration to the extension of sick pay entitlement to alleviate financial worries.

Data Protection

The Headteacher, trustees, and any other manager involved with the operation of this procedure will ensure that any information relating to concerns about an employee's attendance are disclosed only to those who have a direct involvement in dealing with, or advising on, those concerns, emphasising the need for strict confidentiality.

Personal data collected as part of this process will be handled in accordance with the Trust's Data Protection Policy, with regard to rules around processing special categories of personal data. If the school is seeking to rely on 'legitimate interests' as the basis for processing personal data under this procedure employees will have the right to object to this. Employees can also find out more about how the school processes data about them in the workforce privacy notice.

Medical information can be particularly sensitive and, whilst it is essential for the school to have appropriate information about the nature of an employee's ill health in order to manage their absence accordingly, this will be balanced against an employee's desire for privacy over such matters. Where the employee is reluctant to discuss medical information that they view as sensitive with their line

manager, the employee may ask to speak to an alternative manager or an OH adviser instead.

20. Relationship with Disciplinary and Capability Procedure

On occasion, an employee may not be meeting the required standards of work either in terms of their attendance or their conduct/performance. In such cases, unsatisfactory attendance may be considered alongside conduct or performance issues in a joint formal meeting to avoid the complexity of instigating parallel procedures with similar stages and potential outcomes.

21. Monitoring & Evaluation

Sickness Absence is routinely monitored by managers within the Trust and is reported in the school 'keep in touch' meetings with the CEO held every term. Absence is reported to trustees at the main Trust board and is one of the Trust's key performance indicators. We evaluate sickness absence rates by considering national averages.