Skene School Attendance Management Protocol

The following protocol outlines the steps that are to be followed in circumstances of sickness related absence.

Notification of absence

Within Skene School employees should notify the Head Teacher of any absence due to illness or otherwise. The method of communication is to text or call Amanda Blackwood as early as possible. You are asked to keep trying until you have had a reply/acknowledgement. Any illness absence notification should be on or prior to the first day of absence.

* An employee unable to come to work must notify the Head Teacher by telephone or text by **8:30am at the very latest**, please ensure you have had a reply. Please phone the school absence line 01224 472915.

In cases where employees do not have access to a telephone e.g. if they are in hospital, they should ensure a family member/friend makes contact with the school to keep them informed.

* It is not acceptable to advise a colleague of an absence.
* It is not acceptable to advise of your absence on the school WhatsApp group chat.

When notifying the school, employees should give an indication of the reason (for HR records) and of how long they expect to be absent for as well as any measures they are taking to ensure an early return to work e.g. doctor/hospital appointment.

Normally staff will also give an indication of the work classes would undertake. As this is not always possible it is essential that an up-to-date work record/plan is kept in school.

For short term absences, if an absence is to continue for more than a day, it should be communicated to the Head Teacher by 2pm the day before the next day of absence, if possible. Alternatively, employees can continue to phone into the school on 01224 472915 on a daily basis before 2pm and update the school of their attendance.

If the absence is long term and covered by a doctor’s fit note, employees should only phone in with updates from doctor’s appointments when fit notes have been extended. Fit notes should be emailed or posted in for the attention of the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher will keep in contact with employees who are on long term absence either via a quick phone call or an email.

Certification Requirements

When an employee is absent, Julia Minshull or Amanda Blackwood will record the sickness absence on the AskHR portal.

Employees should end their sickness absence themselves through their ESS account as this will also self-certify the first seven days of their sickness absence. During your absence, you will receive an email with a link to your ESS account. Please check this on your return and enter the required dates and details.

A fit note from an employee’s GP is required for all absences which exceed 7 calendar days. This should be sent to Julia Minshull (Mon-Wed) or Amanda Blackwood (Mon-Fri).

Sickness/Dental Appointments

Aberdeenshire Council’s expectation is that all appointments should be made out with school hours, if this is not possible then the employee must notify the school in advance of the appointment. It is not acceptable to inform the school of an appointment on the day of the appointment unless it is an emergency appointment.

Family Illness

One day’s paid special leave is available by request, to care for a close relative/ spouse/partner/child/foster child who has been takenill suddenly or been injured and is unableto look after themself, and to make carearrangements for further days if necessary.(The leave may be taken as one full day oras an afternoon plus the following morningif required). However, employees shouldendeavor to have alternative arrangementsalready in place so that leave is not required.If the employee is facing an extreme familysituation, then please refer to CompassionateLeave. Forms for absence can be requested from Julia Minshull.

PROCEDURES

Below is the information about the protocol that will now be operating within Skene School regarding absence from employment in accordance with the corporate Attendance Management Procedure.

Return to Work Meeting/Attendance Meeting

On each occasion an employee returns to work following a sickness absence, their line manager must arrange to discuss that absence with them. This will be a face-to-face meeting between the employee, on most occasions this will be a brief meeting.

The purpose of the return-to-work meeting is to:

* Welcome the employee back.
* Give a brief update on any school and class news.
* Review the employee’s absence record and highlight the short term/long term absence triggers, if appropriate.
* Discuss any monitoring periods that may need to be implemented and agree monitoring meeting dates.
* Ensure the employee has complied with the absence notification and certification procedures.
* Determine if there is any need for further action such as counselling, guidance, occupational health referral, etc.
* Address work related issues which may be causing ill health.

The Return to Work Checklist will be completed by the line manager for every return to work meeting and this will be retained by the line manager. If an employee is being placed on absence monitoring, this will be confirmed in writing by the line manager with details of the monitoring period. A copy of this letter will also be retained by the line manager.

Sickness absence Trigger Levels are:

* Absent for 10 calendar days, or for a total of three occasions over a rolling 6-month period.
* Absent for 16 calendar days or for a total of 5 occasions over a rolling 12-month period.
* Where a regular pattern of absence emerges, e.g. Monday absences, or repeated absence where certain duties are to be undertaken.

Line managers will be notified by email from HR when an employee’s absence level reaches a trigger point.

If a line manager was not aware an employee had met an absence trigger level when undertaking the return-to-work meeting, they should arrange an attendance meeting with the employee. The outcome of the attendance meeting will be confirmed to the employee in writing. A copy of this letter will be retained by the line manager.

Full copies of the Attendance Management Policy can be found on Arcadia.

Employee Assistance Programme

Telephone advice, support and counselling or face to face counselling can all be arranged by accessing our Employee Assistance Programme via this link:

[Employee Assistance Programme, Counselling Service (sharepoint.com)](https://aberdeenshire.sharepoint.com/sites/Arcadia/services/Pages/Business%20Services/HR%20and%20OD/Health%20and%20Safety,%20Wellbeing%20and%20Risk%20Management/Wellbeing/Employee-Assistance-Programme,-Councelling-Service.aspx)

**Skene School Attendance Management Procedure**

Sickness Absence Trigger levels reached; meeting with Head Teacher to discuss attendance monitoring.

Employee Absence

Phone school before 8.30am; Julia Minshull/Amanda Blackwood will log absence on ESS account.

Under 5 days’ absence

Over 5 days’ absence

Employee to end sickness absence through ESS account.

Fit Note required from employee’s doctor.

Return to work meeting with Head Teacher

Employee to end sickness absence through ESS account.

Return to work meeting with Head Teacher

Employee has further absences.