



CARLTON
ACADEMY TRUST

Carlton Academy Trust Attendance Management Policy

Approved on behalf of trustees:

Roger Butterfield

Date:

October 2023

Date of next review:

October 2026



Glossary

CEO: Trust Chief Executive Officer
COT: Chair of Trustees
HOS: Head of School
HRD: Trust Director of HR
SSP: Statutory Sick Pay



Section One: Responsibilities and General Information

Policy Aims

This policy sets out procedures the trust employs to reduce levels of absence levels across the trust, including support provided to employees who are unable to attend work due to ill health. This policy applies to employees and is not relevant for agency workers, consultants, self-employed contractors, or volunteers.

Sickness absence can vary from short intermittent periods to a continuous period of long-term absence. The purpose of this policy is to set out our procedures for reporting sickness absence and managing sickness absence fairly.

Absence may result from a disability. At each stage of attendance management procedures consideration will be given as to whether reasonable can be made, or other aspects of working arrangements can be altered to support a return to work.

Reporting Absence

On each day of absence, staff must contact the relevant person/s at the school by no later than 7 am for teaching staff and 7:30 am for non-teaching staff, detailing the reason for their absence. This procedure should be followed for absences up to one working week in duration, after which a doctor's note will be required.

Failure to follow this procedure may result in treated as unauthorised and pay being withheld.

Evidence

For sickness absence of up to five working days in duration, employees must complete a self-certification form which is available from schools and Trust Human Resources.

For absence greater than five working days, employees must obtain a certificate from your doctor (Statement of Fitness for Work) stating that you are not fit for work and the reason(s) why. This should be forwarded to the school/trust as soon as possible. Where absence continues, further medical certificates must be provided to cover the whole period of absence.

When a doctor provides a certificate saying that an employee 'may be fit for work', the school/trust will discuss possible additional measures that may be needed to facilitate a return. This may occur at a 'Return to Work' interview. Where appropriate measures cannot be taken, the employee will remain on sick leave, and a further review date will be set.

Where there are concerns about the reason for absence, or frequent short-term absence, we may require a medical certificate for each absence regardless of duration. In such circumstances, the school/trust will cover any costs incurred in obtaining these certificates.

Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence will be dealt with as a disciplinary matter. Any absence that has not been notified according to the sickness absence reporting procedure will be treated as unauthorised absence.

Contact During Absence

Staff on sick leave will be contacted by the school/trust on a regular and appropriate basis to discuss wellbeing, expected length of absence, any work requirements, etc.

Where staff have any concerns whilst on sickness absence, they should feel free to contact the school/trust at any time.

Sick Pay

Sick pay is made on the basis indicated in terms and conditions of employment. The trust reserves the right to withhold sick pay in specific circumstances when it has reason to believe absence is not genuine, pending an investigation.

Employees must not participate in any other form of work (paid or unpaid) during their normal working hours without the prior authorisation of the trust.

SSP is paid by the school for up to a maximum of 28 weeks. To qualify for SSP an employee must be absent for at least four or more consecutive days (including weekends and bank holidays) and earn an average of not less than the lower earnings limit for National Insurance contributions.

There is no entitlement to paid time off for non-essential medical or surgical procedures, with any leave of absence requests made to HOS who will decide according to prevailing business needs.

Attendance Triggers

Staff attendance will be formally reviewed and monitored when it reaches trigger points:

- Five consecutive days' absence.
- Three or more separate absences in a rolling six-month period.
- Five days total absence in a rolling six-month period.
- Seven or more day's sickness absence in any 12-month period.

Other trigger points may be used at the discretion of the school/trust when any pattern of absence causes concern.

Occupational Health

The school/trust may at any time require employees to consent to an Occupational Health medical examination by a doctor or other suitably qualified medical professional nominated by us at our expense. These are used to establish:

- An employees' ability to carry out their role or perform alternative duties.
- When an employee may be able to return to work, or if they are able to.
- Whether an employee is covered under the provisions of the Equality Act (2010), and if any work adjustments or modifications could be made to assist them in carrying out their duties.

Employees must consent to any Occupational Health report being shared with the school/trust so that the findings can be discussed with our advisers.



Return to Work Interviews

Staff will be invited to attend a 'Return to Work' interview, usually upon return from sickness absence. They are used to:

- Confirm details of the absence.
- Discuss any additional measures that may be needed to facilitate a return to work and any concerns or questions.
- Welcome the employee back to work and inform them of any changes in their absence.
- Establish whether the employee is fit for work, requires extra support or an Occupational Health referral.
- Demonstrate the trusts' commitment to the health and well-being of employees.

Long Term Absence Management

Is for employees who have been absent for 20 or more consecutive days, or when they have been unable to sustain regular and sustained attendance due to a long-term condition. The school/trust will maintain appropriate contact and arrange regular review meetings to discuss their continued absence.

Measures to facilitate a return to work following long-term absence include:

- Making reasonable adjustments to the workplace, working practices, or working hours.
- Consideration of redeployment and/or phased returns.

Any measures will be considered in relation to both the needs of the employee and in particular the operational needs of the school/trust.

Medical Suspension

It may be necessary to suspend an employee for medical reasons to protect their health or that of others. Suspensions will be for no longer than necessary, and made by the HOS, CEO, or other senior leader delegated this responsibility. Medical suspension of the CEO must be made by the COT.



Section Two: Attendance Management Procedures

Staff may be requested to attend a sickness absence meeting when they reach attendance triggers. The nature of these concerns will be communicated to staff within a reasonable period in advance of the meeting, so that adequate preparations may be made. A work colleague or trade union representative may attend to support you during the meeting. Staff must take all reasonable steps to attend a meeting. Failure to do so without good reason may be treated as misconduct.

Stage 1 Absence Hearing

This meeting may be used to:

- Establish reasons for absence and how long it is likely to last.
- Establish the likelihood of further absence (when absence is repeated).
- Consider whether medical advice is required.
- Consider what measures may improve health and/or attendance.
- Agree further actions and timing of any further meetings where required.

Staff will be provided with at least five day's written notification of the meeting, and employees have the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague.

Potential outcomes are:

- **Stage 1 Warning:** Attendance targets agreed, with failure to improve leading to a Stage 2 hearing.
- **Monitoring:** Up to 12-weeks with agreed targets.
- **No further action needed.**

Outcomes are formally recorded and shared with all in attendance.

Stage 2 Absence Hearing

This meeting may be used to:

- Establish reasons for absence and how long it is likely to last.
- Establish the likelihood of further absence (when absence is repeated).
- Consider whether medical advice/further medical advice is required.
- Consider the ability of the employee to return to or remain in their role, in consideration of their capabilities, business needs, and any reasonable adjustments.
- Consider redeployment and whether any reasonable adjustments can be made to facilitate this.
- Agree further actions and timing of any further meetings where required.

Employees will be provided with at least five working days' written notice of this meeting and have the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague.

Potential outcomes are:

- **Stage 2 Warning:** Attendance targets will be agreed, with failure to meet these leading to a Stage 3 hearing.
- **Monitoring:** Up to 12-weeks with agreed targets.



- **No further action required.**

Outcomes are formally recorded and shared with all in attendance.

Stage 3: Absence Hearing

This meeting is used to consider dismissal/continued employment status. It considers:

- Stage One and Stage Two absence meetings and any other relevant information from the employee of school/trust.
- Whether the member of staff remains on long-term absence and any changes since the last meeting in terms of a return to work, reasonable adjustments, or redeployment.
- Whether there is a reasonable likelihood of a return to work or achieving the required level of attendance, or it is appropriate to terminate employment.

Employees will be provided with at least five days' written notice of the meeting and may be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague. Potential outcomes are:

- **Extension:** With agreed attendance targets.
- **Termination of employment.** This will be confirmed in writing.

Appeals

Appeals may be made at any stage of formal procedures. They must be made within five working days of receipt of the outcome letter, outlining reasons for the appeal.

When the original decision was made by the HOS, any appeal will be heard by the CEO or other senior trust leader delegated this responsibility.

When the original decision was made by the CEO, any appeal will be heard by the COT, or any other trustee delegated this responsibility.

Appeal hearings will be held without undue delay. Employees will be provided with at least five working days' notice and may be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague.

The original decision may be confirmed, revoked, or replaced by a different decision, and confirmed in writing.

There is no further right of appeal following this stage.

