

Sickness Absence Policy and Procedure

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WeST Vision, Mission and Values

[Westcountry Schools Trust - Our Vision, Mission and Values](#)

Providing Accessible Formats

This policy has been written in a dyslexia accessible format, which can also support the needs of other neurodiverse groups. If you are unable to use this document and require it in a different format, please contact Human Resources who can provide alternative accessible formats by request.

WeST Policy Suite

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HR Helpline: 01752 891754 ext. 1765

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Policy quick read

Purpose

- To manage employee's absence from work due to ill health and/or where an employee does not attend work regularly and reliably due to ill health.
- Applies to all WeST employees regardless of terms and conditions (not agency staff, contractors, or volunteers).

Reporting Absence

- Notify line manager on the **first day** of absence (subject to local arrangements).
- For absences over **7 days**, a **Fit Note** is required.
- Maintain regular contact with line manager during absence.

Trigger Points for Action

1. 3 periods of absences in any rolling 3 months.
2. 6 periods of absences in any rolling 12 months.
3. 8 or more days in any rolling 12 months.
4. A discernible pattern.

Meetings and Process

- **First Absence Meeting:** After a trigger point is reached.
- **Second Absence Meeting:** at the end of the agreed monitoring period if required, or; employee exceeds any trigger point again within the following 12-months.
- **Formal Absence Hearing:** to consider if an employee is able to fulfil their contractual obligations.
- **Appeal:** in the event employee wishes to appeal against decision made at a formal hearing.

Support & Adjustments

- Reasonable adjustments considered at all stages.
- Occupational Health referrals used to assess fitness for work, support return to work and advise on reasonable adjustments.
- Counselling and redeployment options available.

Sick Pay

- Based on terms and conditions of role (Teachers: Burgundy Book; Support Staff: NJC terms).
- Sick pay may be withheld for misconduct, non-compliance, or abuse of the scheme.

Responsibilities

- **Employees:** Report absence correctly, provide documentation where required, maintain contact, attend meetings and take steps to minimise their absence.
- **Managers:** Inform employees of the policy and required standards, monitor absence, hold return to work meetings, ensure fair application of policy, consider reasonable adjustments, seek advice from HR and Occupational Health.

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1. Delegation of Authority

The Trust is committed to ensuring a consistent, fair, and equitable approach in all staffing matters, and will not discriminate either directly or indirectly on the grounds of an employee’s gender, age, disability, gender re-assignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy, maternity status, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

In order to achieve this aim, there needs to be a clear delegation of authority throughout the structure of the Trust and for this purpose the term “Responsible Officer” shall apply as per the levels below:

Delegation Key	
Line Manager	Person with formal line management responsibility as defined within the job description.
Level One	<p>If the employee is based within a school, the person with authority to act will be a Trust Headteacher, or an appropriate senior member of staff from the Trust Executive Leadership Team</p> <p>If the employee is based within the Core Services Team, the person with authority to act will be a member of the Executive Leadership Team</p> <p>If the employee is a Headteacher and dismissal is a potential outcome the person with authority to act will be the CEO, otherwise, the person with authority to act will be a Director of Education or the Deputy CEO</p> <p>If the employee is a member of Executive Leadership Team, the person with authority to act will be the CEO, unless they have acted as the Line Manager, in which case the person with authority to act will be the Chair of the Trust</p> <p>If the Employee is the Chief Executive Officer, the person with authority to act will be the Chair of the Trust</p>
Level Two	<p>Where Level One was the Headteacher the person with authority to act will be the Director of Education or Deputy CEO</p> <p>Where Level One was a member of the Executive Leadership Team the person with authority to act will be the CEO</p>

	Where Level One was the CEO or the Chair of the Trust, the matter will be referred to a Trustee Appeal Panel
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The Trust reserves the right in exceptional circumstances to vary the composition of the delegated authority / panel in order to ensure that meetings proceed without undue delay. In these circumstances the Trust will ensure that the responsible officer maintains appropriate standards of separation and confidentiality.

2. Introduction and Purpose

This policy is for managing employees' absence from work due to ill health and/or where an employee does not attend work regularly and reliably due to ill health.

This policy is based on good practice to ensure a consistent and effective approach. The application of this policy will be fair, equitable, objective and will not discriminate either directly or indirectly on the grounds of an employee's gender, age, disability, gender re-assignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy, maternity status, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

This policy applies to all employees within the Trust, regardless of terms and conditions of employment (e.g. both Teacher and Support Staff). It does not apply to agency workers, contractors or volunteers.

The intention is that this policy does not erode contractual terms protected under TUPE.

3. Determining Who Will Hear the Matter

3.1. Absence Meetings

Where there are concerns about an employee's absence(s) due to ill health and action is to be taken in accordance with this policy, the employee's manager should usually deal with the matter. Please refer to the section above, Delegation of Authority.

The line manager, with support from HR, will be responsible for arranging the meetings, writing to the employee and arranging for a suitable person to attend to take notes.

3.2. Formal Absence Hearing

Formal Absence Hearings must be conducted and chaired by those that have delegated authority to dismiss as detailed in the scheme as detailed above.

The Responsible Officer will be responsible for arranging the hearing, writing to the employee and arranging for a suitable person to attend to take notes.

4. Sick Pay Scheme - NJC Support Staff in Schools

Conditions for Westcountry Schools Trust employees are contained in employee's statement of particulars (Contract of Employment). This sets out the eligibility for sick leave and conditions where sick pay is payable. To receive sick pay an employee must:

- notify their manager on the first day of absence
- provide a doctor's Statement of Fitness for Work (Fit Note) by the eighth day for absences over seven calendar days
- provide consecutive Fit Notes to cover the whole period of absence prior to the previous Fit Note lapsing, where there is a continuing sickness absence
- undertake any examination that the Trust and/or school may require by an approved medical practitioner nominated by the Trust and/or school, where prolonged or frequent absences occur.

Sick pay may not be paid if the manager has reason to believe that the absence of the employee is due to:

- an abuse of the sickness scheme
- the employee's own misconduct or neglect
- active participation in professional sport
- working for another employer
- non-compliance with the conditions and eligibility details referred to above
- conduct that is prejudicial to an employee's recovery.

In these circumstances, sick pay will be suspended and the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure will be followed.

5. Sick Pay Scheme - Teachers

To receive sick pay, a teacher must meet the conditions and eligibility detailed in the 'Conditions of Service for School Teachers in England and Wales' (commonly known as the 'Burgundy Book') and in addition, must:

- notify the employer on the first day of absence, in-line with local reporting procedures;
- provide a doctor's Fit Note by the eighth day for absences over seven calendar days;
- provide consecutive Fit Notes to cover the whole period of absence prior to the previous Fit Note lapsing, where there is a continuing sickness absence, even if this covers holidays or school closure;
- undertake any examination that the employer may require by an approved medical practitioner nominated by the Trust, where prolonged or frequent absences occur;
- declare to the Trust any entitlement or alteration to any benefits received.

Sick pay may not be paid if the manager has reason to believe that the absence of the teacher is due to:

- misconduct
- non-compliance with the conditions and eligibility details referred to above
- conduct that is prejudicial to recovery
- active participation in sport as a professional, unless the school decides otherwise.

In these circumstances, sick pay will be suspended and the Disciplinary Policy will be followed.

In the case of absence due to an accident, injury or assault which is attested by an approved medical practitioner to have arisen out of and in the course of the teacher's employment, further provisions may apply which are detailed in clause 9 of the Burgundy Book.

6 Trigger Points – Sickness Absence

Managers should ensure an accurate record is kept of absence from work due to ill health and the trigger points below should be used to determine when absence from work is beginning to have an impact either on the service/school and/or colleagues. All absences due to ill health (including pre-arranged absences for planned procedures) are counted towards trigger points.

- Trigger Point 1 3 or more single days of absence and/or 3 periods of absence in any rolling 3-month period
- Trigger Point 2 6 or more single days of absence and/or 6 periods of absence in any rolling 12-month period
- Trigger Point 3 8 or more days of absence in any rolling 12-month period
- Trigger Point 4 A discernible pattern e.g. regular absence on a particular day or certain weeks during the year (School holidays/term time, Easter break, Christmas)

7. Employees with a Disability

The Equality Act 2010 ('The Act') gives employees with a disability certain legal rights. The onus of proof is on the employee to show that they meet the requirements of section 6 of the Act which looks at whether an employee has a physical or mental impairment that affects the employee's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities and whether the adverse effect is substantial and long term. It should be noted however, that some employees are covered by the provisions of the Act from the point of diagnosis when they have a progressive condition such as HIV, cancer or multiple sclerosis.

Employees are not covered by the Act if any impairment is as a result of an addiction e.g. alcohol, nicotine or any other substance (unless originally prescribed). However, there may be underlying health issues resulting from addiction that may lead to the employee being covered by the Act e.g. liver disease, lung cancer.

Where an employee is covered by the Act, managers have a legal responsibility to consider making 'reasonable adjustments' that will assist the employee to reduce and minimise absence and remain at work carrying out the job they were appointed to. It is important to emphasise that adjustments need to be **reasonable** given the circumstances. This does not mean that the manager needs to find completely different work for the employee unless it is reasonable to do so in the circumstances.

Managers need to manage the absences of employees covered by the Act appropriately and can seek guidance from their Occupational Health provider as to what adjustments to the

work/workplace could be considered. Managers will determine whether suggested adjustments are reasonable given the circumstances and may seek advice from HR.

Any absence from work by an employee with a disability which is not connected to the disability should be dealt with in accordance with this policy in the usual way. There will be some cases where the employee's disability prevents them from regularly attending work even though all reasonable adjustments have been put in place. Certain conditions apply if the employee is not attending work due to the disability, covered by the Act, of someone the employee cares for. Further advice should be sought from HR.

8. Absences that should be Recorded Separately

In the following circumstances, the manager should determine whether it can be justified that these absences should be included in assessing the meeting of trigger points e.g. where reasonable adjustments have been made but absence levels are still unsatisfactory:

- any pregnancy related absence (note: if pregnancy related absence occurs during the four weeks prior to the expected week of childbirth [EWC] maternity leave is automatically triggered)
- absence that arises as a consequence of the employee's disability covered by the Act
- absences resulting from an accepted accident at work unless resulting from the employee's negligence or carelessness at work.

9. Specific Long Term, Serious or Life-Threatening Illness

At the Responsible Officer's discretion, the stages and outcomes of this policy may be modified for employees who have a specific long-term illness. Discretion may also be used to allow the employee to be accompanied by their partner or support worker in a supportive role if it aids the managing absence process.

10. Procedure

10.1. Reporting Sickness Absence

On the first day of absence, the employee must contact their manager prior their normal start time, but no later than fifteen minutes after the normal start time (unless it is extremely

extraordinary circumstances). This is subject to local variation in arrangements to suit the particular school or setting. This is to:

- confirm the reason for not attending work
- advise what date they were unable to attend work (even if it was not a normal working day)
- advise the likely return date, where possible.

In situations where the employee's manager is unavailable, the employee must contact another suitable person in the workplace to confirm the points listed above.

The employee should attempt to personally telephone their manager. In exceptional circumstances and only if the employee is unable to telephone personally, they should arrange for someone else to telephone their manager on their behalf to explain why they cannot attend work as well as why they could not speak directly to their manager. Text messages, emails or messages left with colleagues will only be accepted where local agreements to do so allow.

Where an employee fails to report for work and/or maintain appropriate contact during a period of sick leave this may be considered as the employee being absent without leave. In these circumstances, action under the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure may be considered once efforts to contact the employee have been exhausted.

Where the manager has concerns about the regularity of an employee's absence or the reasons for the absence given, the employee may be instructed to submit a Fit Note from the first day of any absence. The cost of the Fit Note will be met by the Trust.

The manager is required to:

- record the first day of absence even if that was not a working day for the employee, ensuring that disability and maternity related absences are recorded appropriately
- review the employee's absence against the trigger points and determine whether any action should be taken
- consider any health, safety or wellbeing issues associated with the absence
- where the absence is due to an accident or injury that occurred at work, record and investigate the incident as required in line with the Injury Allowance Scheme

- ensure that an appropriate risk assessment is completed for any absence where the work environment may impact on the employee's well-being and consider what action may be taken.

Timely and accurate recording of absence is essential to ensure correct payment of contractual and/or statutory sick pay where applicable.

10.2. Absences for More than Seven Days

The employee is required to:

- provide their manager with a Fit Note from their doctor covering all of the days from the eighth calendar day of the absence through to the last working day before they return to work, regardless of whether these are their working days or not.
- discuss with the manager any recommendations in the Fit Note that would enable them to return to work.
- attend any appointments made as a result of a referral to Occupational Health.
- maintain contact with and keep their manager informed about their progress and the likely return to work date; and attend any meetings if required to do so.

The manager is required to:

- consider any recommendations in the Fit Note and establish whether these are reasonable, taking advice where necessary
- maintain an appropriate level of contact with the employee, meeting as necessary to ensure that the employee's absence is managed and that appropriate support to help them return to work is available.
- refer the employee to Occupational Health as appropriate
- refer to the trigger points and determine appropriate course of action in accordance with this policy
- keep a written record of all actions taken

10.3. Long-term Sickness Absence

When an absence is for more than 28 calendar days, it will be considered a long-term absence. Occupational Health should be considered to support with managing the sickness absence in order to provide an assessment on the employee's fitness for work and advise on any reasonable adjustments, including those to facilitate a potential return to work.

During a long-term absence, Occupational Health could be considered either before, or during an absence review meeting depending on the circumstances. Further advice should be sought from Human Resources.

10.4. Reasonable Adjustments

Some Fit notes and/or Occupational Health reports may suggest adjustments that could be introduced to assist the employee to return to work. The manager will need to determine if the suggested adjustments are 'reasonable' and can be accommodated in the workplace given the nature of the work carried out by the employee. If the suggested adjustments cannot be accommodated, the employee remains unfit for work and should continue to provide Fit notes during the absence.

10.5. First Absence Meeting

When a trigger point has been reached, the manager will convene a First Absence Meeting with the employee. The employee may be back at work or still absent at this time. The purpose of the meeting is for the manager to:

- clarify the reason(s) the employee was absent from work or is still absent from work
- ensure the criteria under the relevant sick pay scheme have been met, where the employee is eligible
- ensure that the employee and manager have been keeping in contact
- if the employee is still absent, determine the likely date for a return to work
- discuss what steps the employee has taken to reduce their level of absence
- discuss the impact the employee's absence has on the service / colleagues and what arrangements might be put in place to cover work etc

- consider a referral to Occupational Health. This may include a referral to seek advice on the suitability of ill health redeployment
- set targets for reducing absence levels
- if it is determined that the employee has a disability covered by the Act (see Section 15 and 16), agree whether any reasonable adjustments could be considered or reviewed to reduce absence
- discuss whether the employee could access any support through specialist groups e.g. counselling
- at the discretion of the manager (after review of the employee's normal attendance pattern) arrange a date within the following 6-12 weeks for a Second Absence Meeting.

10.6. Second Absence Meeting

The Second Absence Meeting will be convened by the manager on the date agreed at the First Absence Meeting. If the employee's absence(s) has reduced, there may be no need for the Second Absence Meeting to go ahead if it was pre-arranged. The agenda followed at the Second Absence Meeting will be similar to that followed at the First Absence Meeting but in addition may also include the following points:

- seek further advice from Occupational Health. This may include a referral to seek advice on the suitability of ill health redeployment
- seek advice on whether Ill Health Retirement should be considered
- determine what has prevented the employee from reducing absence levels and if possible, determine likely future absence
- if the level of absence has not improved between First and Second Absence meeting, advise that the circumstances concerning absence will be referred to a Formal Absence Hearing at which time the appropriateness of continuing with the employee's contract of employment will be considered
- where it is determined the employee has a disability covered by the Act, consider whether any suggested adjustments are reasonable or review any already in place

- discuss any support through specialist groups e.g. counselling, that may be of benefit
- if the level of absence has reduced, advise the employee that if they exceed any of the trigger points again within the following 12 months from the last day of absence, the process will recommence at the Second Absence Meeting stage.

10.7. Formal Absence Hearing

The purpose of the Formal Absence Hearing is to consider whether an employee is able to fulfil their contractual obligation to carry out the job for which they are employed and whether continued employment is appropriate.

The manager who has conducted the previous Absence Meetings will prepare a summary report which should include the reasons for the absence(s), an up-to-date medical opinion from Occupational Health, what adjustments have been looked at and/or introduced, the impact of the absence on the school/Trust and/or colleagues and what support measures have been considered.

A Formal Absence Hearing will be convened in any of the following circumstances:

- where there is evidence that an employee, due to illness, cannot carry out the duties for which they are employed
- following unsatisfactory conclusion of a monitoring period
- where the employee's pattern of absence illustrates an inability to attend work regularly and reliably
- where an assessment of an employee who contributes to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) has been made that meets the criteria for Ill Health Retirement
- where the employee is assessed by a Physician/Occupational Health Adviser as not fit for work in the foreseeable future and/or no indication of when the employee is likely to return to work and where no reasonable adjustments can be put in place to facilitate a return to work

- where there is sufficient concern for the employee's welfare and/or for the welfare of others with whom the employee may come into contact with, that the continuation of the contract of employment should be considered.

Where it is determined that a Formal Absence Hearing is to be convened the Responsible Officer in conjunction with the settings HR advisor will notify the employee in writing giving at least 5 days' notice, stating the details of the Formal Absence Hearing, the possible outcomes of the hearing, the employee's right to request to be accompanied and that the hearing may take place in the employee's absence if they fail to attend without providing a satisfactory explanation. A copy of the summary report and a copy of this policy must be included with the letter.

The manager is responsible for presenting the summary report at the hearing and they may be accompanied by an HR Advisor.

At least five days prior to the hearing, the employee will provide any relevant information that they wish to be considered at the hearing to the Responsible Officer. The employee will be given an opportunity to address the hearing and whether or not they wish to submit any relevant information.

The Responsible Officer will ensure that all relevant information presented at the hearing by the manager and the employee will be considered. There will be an adjournment to enable consideration of the information by the Responsible Officer and their advisor. The outcomes may include:

- to issue a final written warning with a review period of up to 12 months
- adjournment while further medical information/reasonable adjustments are looked into with a date set to reconvene.
- dismissal with notice on full contractual pay, pro rata to the hours worked, with adjustments as necessary for any national benefits received such as Statutory Sick Pay. During the notice period, employees will be expected to engage in any redeployment process.

The Responsible Officer will reconvene the hearing and confirm their decision verbally, unless valid reasons exist not to do so, and will write to the employee within five days to confirm their decision.

If the decision is to dismiss the employee, the appropriate period of notice should be issued in accordance with the employee's contract of employment. Where a final written warning or dismissal with notice is the outcome, the employee must be informed of their right of appeal and where to send the appeal.

Where dismissal with notice is the outcome, consideration should be given to assisting the employee in seeking suitable alternative employment within the boundaries of their capabilities during their notice period.

10.8. Appeal

If an employee wishes to appeal against the decision from the Formal Absence Hearing, they must do so in writing, stating the grounds for their appeal, within five days of receiving the written outcome.

An appeal is not a re-hearing of all of the facts but to determine if the original decision was reasonable given the circumstances.

An employee may appeal on the following grounds:

- the sanction given was too harsh given the circumstances
- the procedure was not fairly or correctly applied
- new information has come to light that would directly affect the decision made at the hearing.

The appeal should be sent to HR@westst.org.uk for all Trust employees. The Responsible Officer identified to deal with the appeal will make appropriate arrangements for it to take place. The appeal should be heard without unreasonable delay. A minimum of five days' notice will be given to allow for preparation.

The outcome of the appeal hearing may be to:

- adjourn and refer the matter back to the Responsible Officer if significant new information/evidence is provided, which was not available previously, and may change the original decision
- conclude a procedural irregularity occurred. Determine whether this had an impact on the decision-making process and outcome. If so, determine an appropriate sanction and make a recommendation to rectify the situation
- uphold the appeal and determine an alternative sanction/appropriate course of action
- reject the appeal and confirm that the original decision stands.

The decision will be given verbally to all parties at the end of the appeal hearing unless valid reasons exist not to do so. The decision will be confirmed in writing to the employee within five days. An appeal is not a re-hearing of all of the facts but to determine if the original decision was reasonable given the circumstances. The process ends with the decision of the Level 2 Responsible Officer.

11. Timescales

The timescales detailed in the policy are in accordance with the statutory requirements and best practice. They must therefore must be adhered to unless both parties have agreed to an extension of time.

There may be a number of reasons why the time limits specified are too short and an extension may be required. Where an extension to the time limits is agreed, a written record of this decision should be made.

The time limits included in this policy may be varied by mutual agreement. The policy makes reference to a number of 'days' within which certain actions/events are to occur. A 'day' is defined as any Monday to Friday excluding public holidays as defined by ACAS.

If a concern is raised during a period of School closure, the timeframes indicated in the policy will commence from the first day of the school being open. Where a concern is raised immediately prior to a period of School closure, the availability of any person(s) who may need to be interviewed as part of any investigation will be taken into consideration by both parties when mutually agreeing any required extension to the timeframes.

12. Being Accompanied

Legislation determines that an employee has a statutory right to request to be accompanied at these meetings. To invoke that right an employee must make a reasonable request to the employer to be accompanied by:

- a paid official from a recognised trade union/professional association;
- a trade union representative;
- an appropriate work colleague.

Friends/family members are not permitted unless they fall under the above criteria and it is agreed as appropriate. It would not normally be reasonable for an employee to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union/professional association representative whose presence would prejudice the hearing and/or was from a remote geographical location if someone suitable and willing was available on site.

The employee is responsible for notifying their chosen representative of the meeting arrangement details. If the chosen representative is not available on the day proposed for the meeting, the employee must contact the line manager leading on the meeting to propose an alternative date within the following five days of the original date proposed.

13. Non-Attendance

If an employee fails to attend a meeting or hearing under this policy through circumstances beyond their control, such as certified illness, an alternative time and date may be offered. Alternatively, they may submit a written statement or nominate a representative to attend on their behalf.

Where an employee is persistently unable or unwilling to attend the meeting/hearing without good cause, it will proceed in their absence and a decision based on the evidence available will be made.

A failure to not attend a pre-arranged meeting or hearing may also lead to action under the disciplinary policy arrangements.

14. Employee Responsibilities

Employees have a contractual responsibility to attend work to carry out the requirements of their job. Employees have a responsibility, where necessary, to take any steps required to minimise their absence. Employees must take all reasonable steps to attend meetings as required and adhere to this policy.

15. Management Responsibilities

Managers are required to ensure that each employee is aware of this policy, understands the attendance standards required of them and the consequences of not attaining and meeting these standards. Action should be taken consistently to identify concerns and reinforce attendance standards before it becomes necessary to take formal action. Managers are required to manage the process effectively, fairly and reasonably. In addition, managers should create a healthy and supportive work environment where employees feel valued, want to come to work and have a good work/life balance; and follow up all absences with a return to work meeting when the employee resumes work, regardless of the length of absence.

16. Medical Suspension / Fitness to Work

In some circumstances, it may be necessary to suspend an employee on medical grounds in order to ensure they do not stay at work or resume their duties if there is a risk to the employee or any other person the employee may come into contact with. There may also be occasions where an employee's doctor has certified the employee as fit to return to work but given the nature of the work undertaken by the employee, the manager has concerns about the employee's fitness to return to/remain at work. In these circumstances, further advice should be sought on fitness to work from Occupational Health and the HR Department for any HR process being considered.

17. Accident, Incident or Injury at Work

Any accident, incident or injury arising out of a work activity should be reported using recognised local procedures and the manager should ensure the Health & Safety Accident Reporting System is completed. Absences occurring as a result of an accident, incident or injury at work should be monitored separately from trigger points but should be managed in

accordance with this policy. The Injury Allowance scheme may be applicable in these circumstances. In some cases, a RIDDOR referral may be necessary.

18. Recording of Information

A written record must be made of all meetings held during the application of this policy. Those involved in each meeting will be provided with a copy of any records made.

The manager will ensure there is a record of the process which should include all statements, records and evidence. All records will be retained confidentially, securely and in accordance with the Data Protection Act (2018) on the member of staff's personnel file.

19. Raising a Grievance during the Application of this Policy

If an employee is currently being managed under this policy and has a complaint related to either the person applying it and/or its application, the employee will raise a complaint under this policy which will be investigated. It may be necessary to suspend the application of the policy while the complaint is being looked into. Any delay to the application of this policy to deal with an employee's complaint should not exceed 10 days.

If an employee has an unrelated complaint, then the employee should use the Grievance Policy and Procedure. As the matter is unrelated, there will be no need to put any absence process currently being applied on hold as the complaint can be dealt with in parallel.

20. Professional Standards/Statutory/Registration Requirements

Some professions have minimum standards of fitness to be able to carry out the role and all employees covered by these standards and managers of these staff should ensure they are familiar with the obligations e.g. Health Standards (England) Regulations 2003 (for staff in schools), Health and Care Professions Council's guidance on health and character (for health and social care professionals).

21. Employees Attending Work but Unable to Carry out all Aspects of Their Job

There may be situations where an employee attends work but is unable to carry out the full duties/requirements of their job, not as a consequence of a disability or ill-health but due to physical factors which are not related to their health. The physical factor may prevent the

employee from undertaking duties such as responding quickly and effectively to children's needs in an emergency; caring for vulnerable adults appropriately; or inhibiting the employee from carrying out personal care to clients. In these circumstances, the Capability Policy should be used to manage the situation after determining that no underlying health issues exist.

22. Pensions

Termination of employment under this policy does not mean that the employee's pension will be released automatically. The employee should seek further advice from their pension provider.

23. Redeployment

If the employee is dismissed with notice under this policy, the manager should take all reasonable steps to assist employees to find a suitable alternative job within the Trust.

24. Issuing / Retracting Notice of Dismissal

Where an appeal against dismissal is upheld, the notice issued to the employee will be retracted and the employee will be reinstated.

25. HR Advice and Support

The HR Team will provide advice and support to the Responsible Officer and any other manager/Governor/Trustee involved in the application of this policy at any stage. As part of which they may be in attendance at any meetings / hearings under this policy.

26. Confidentiality

Any parties affected by or involved in the application of this policy will be expected to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. Breaches of confidentiality will be taken seriously, especially if they hinder the application of the policy. Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in action being taken under the disciplinary policy arrangements.

Disclosure of information may also be a breach under the Data Protection Act (2018) and may lead to action being taken under the provisions of that Act, in addition to action being taken under the disciplinary policy.

27. Recording of Information

A written record must be made of all requests and meetings held during the application of this policy. Those involved in each meeting will be provided with a copy of any records made.

The Responsible Officer or their delegate will ensure there is a full and comprehensive file of the process which should include all statements, records and evidence referred to in the rationalising of the decision outcome. At the end of the process the file should be passed to HR who will ensure that it is stored confidentially, in accordance with the Data Protection Act (2018) on the personnel file.

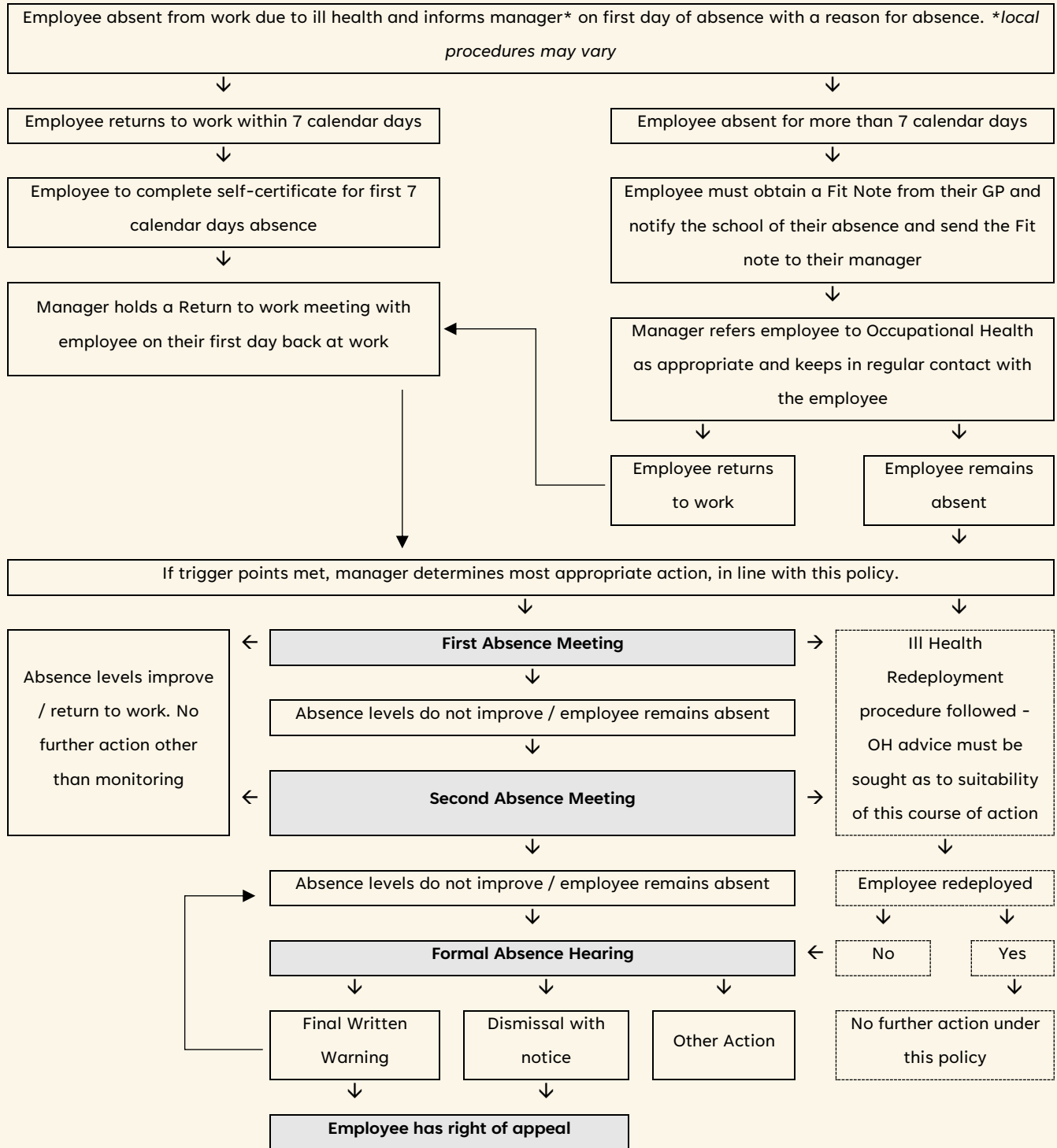
28. Support for Employees

Employees are encouraged to seek support from their trade union/professional association in the first instance.

Procedural guidance relating to this policy is available from HR. Where a referral to Occupational Health or the counselling service is necessary, this should be made by the employee's line manager.

Westcountry Schools Trust (WeST)

Appendix 1 – Flowchart



Policy History

Policy Date	Summary of change	Contact / Responsibility for Policy	Version/ Implementation Date	Review Date
27 November 2013	New Policy Date of consultation with recognised Trade Unions – November 2012 and September 2013	HR ONE	27 November 2013	
25 April 2014	Removed reference to counselling service and replaced with EAP contact details Section 19: added statement to the effect that it will be the responsibility of the employee (or their line manager) to request a hard copy of their Payslip from Payroll if they are unable to access it electronically.	HR ONE	25.04.14	
February 2017	Revised policy for academy schools based on LA policy previously consulted upon with trade unions	HR ONE	February 2017	
July 2017	Delegation of authority added to replace section 32 Delegated Responsibilities, in	WeST HR	September 2017	

	<p>relation to the new MAT structure (see section 2 & 3).</p> <p>The Trust's name change included.</p> <p>Removed reference to HR One Services.</p>			
February 2019	Periodic review	WeST HR	February 2019	Annually
March 2019	Approved by Trust Board subject to local consultation	WeST HR	March 2019	Biannually
April 2019	Implementation following local consultation	West HR	April 2019	Biannually
June 2023	Reference to Governors removed	WeST HR	September 2023	September 2025
February 2025	MINOR amendment to align with Trust SoDA – delegation key now reflects that only the CEO has authority to dismiss a headteacher	HR WeST	February 2025 – file name September 2023 v2	September 2025
September 2025	Update policy format to dyslexia friendly. Inclusion of quick read at the beginning of the document	WeST HR		Biannually or at change in Statutory guidance