

BYRCHALL HIGH SCHOOL

Sickness Management Policy for Employees in Schools

CONTENTS

A	Sickness Management Policy
1.	Introduction
2.	Policy Statement
3.	Roles and Responsibilities
3.1	The Chair of Governors
3.2	The Headteacher or Senior Manager with delegated responsibility
3.3	Employees
3.4	Role of Human Resources
B	Sickness Management Procedure
1.	Introduction.....
2.	Absence reporting during sickness absence
3.	Communication during sickness absence
4.	Return to Work interviews
5.	Absence triggers
6.	Sickness Management process
6.1	Stage One – First Sickness Management Meeting
6.2	Stage Two – Second Sickness Management Meeting
6.3	Stage Three – Sickness Management Hearing
6.4	Appeals
	Appendix 1 - Further Management Guidance
1.	Occupational Health Referrals
2.	Review Periods
3.	Statement of Fitness for Work (fit notes)
4.	Disability illness and reasonable adjustments
5.	Medical redeployment
6.	Ill-Health retirement
7.	Confidentiality and Data Protection
8.	Medical Suspension
9.	Pregnancy related illness
10.	Infectious diseases
11.	Industrial disease, accident or assault at work
12.	Fertility treatment
13.	Terminal illness
	Appendix 2 - Sick Pay and Conditions
1.	Teachers
2.	Support Employees
3.	Conditions
	Appendix 3 – Supporting Documents
	Sickness Reporting and Certification Procedure
	Sickness Reporting form
	Guidelines on Return to Work Interviews
	Return to Work Interview form
	Guidelines on Sickness Meetings, Hearings and Appeals
	Guidelines on Statements of Fitness for Work
	Disability and reasonable adjustment guidelines

Maternity Information for Teachers
Maternity Information for Support Employees
Exclusion Guidance for Communicable Diseases
Incident Reporting and Investigating Procedure
Incident Report Form
Appendix 4 - Useful Sources of Information

A Sickness Management Policy

1. Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to provide a fair and consistent approach to managing sickness absence, which encourages good attendance from employees. The Governing Body recognises that promoting good attendance not only creates a more stable working environment for employees, but also ensures the quality and continuity of education provided to children. In contrast, low levels of attendance can lead to poor morale, general dissatisfaction and stress amongst employees covering absent colleagues.

The Governing Body has a responsibility for the health, safety and wellbeing of employees and aims to develop a positive culture of attendance. Whilst employees are not expected to attend work if they are too ill, absence levels need to be managed. The policy provides schools with a fair and supportive mechanism to deal with both short term and long term sickness issues, and includes a range of supportive measures to help employees who are absent due to sickness, to return to work. It must be acknowledged, however, that there may be cases where continued poor attendance levels cannot be sustained by the school, and the policy provides for appropriate steps to be taken in these circumstances.

2. Policy Statement

The Sickness Management Policy enables Governing Bodies and Headteachers to effectively manage all cases of sickness absence. The process ensures that each employee is considered on an individual basis in a thoughtful, sensitive and caring manner. A monitoring system is in place to trigger the process and throughout this all relevant information including occupation health reports will be taken into account.

The aims of this policy are to:

- Provide a framework for fair and consistent treatment of all employees and good people management practices;
- Support and encourage employees to maintain good attendance;
- Assist employees back into work following a period of long term sickness absence;
- Provide a structured process for the review and management of sickness absence; and
- Develop the role of senior managers in monitoring and reducing sickness absence levels amongst employees for whom they are responsible.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

In order to achieve a culture of attendance, governing bodies, headteachers and employees have specific responsibilities. Considerations in deciding the role of the Headteacher and senior managers in the process will include:

- Whether it is reasonably practical for a senior manager to be responsible for managing the process; and
- Whether the headteacher or staffing committee is to be responsible for dismissal decisions

3.1 The Chair of Governors

The Chair of Governors will be responsible for initiating and applying this policy where the employee is the Headteacher.

3.2 The Headteacher of Senior Manager with delegated responsibility

The role of the Headteacher is to:

- Decide whether a senior manager will be responsible for managing the process up to the stage where a decision may be made about an employee's future employment with the school.

The role of the Headteacher or Senior Manager with delegated responsibility is to:

- report all occasions of sickness absence including reasons for absences and return to work dates, for those employees they are responsible for;
- treat employees in a fair and consistent manner and adopt a supportive approach when dealing with sickness absence;
- monitor absences of those employees they are responsible for and take appropriate action under this policy;
- maintain regular and supportive contact with absent employees;
- ensure that any follow up action and review periods which are decided upon during the sickness management process are appropriate and carried out in a timely manner;
- document the outcome of reviews and notify employees in writing;
- seek advice and guidance, when necessary;
- be accountable for managing staff absences, including the completion of paperwork, ensuring that any issues are dealt with appropriately and on time;
- hold return to work interviews with employees after every period of absence irrespective of the length, investigating any underlying cause of absence;
- agree, implement and monitor appropriate support interventions with the employee;
- provide informal support and conduct sickness management meetings when appropriate;
- refer an employee to the occupational health service provider – Health Management Ltd – where appropriate (see Section 7); and
- undertake risk assessments, where appropriate.

3.3 Employees

The role of employees is to:

- attend work when fit to do so, and meet the school's expectations in terms of attendance levels;
- when not fit to attend work, to follow the Sickness Reporting and Certification Procedure correctly;
- notify school if fit to return to work during school closure periods;
- attend meetings held under this policy and appointments with the occupational health service provider when appropriate; and
- inform their doctor if they are employed in more than one job.

3.4 Role of Human Resources Representative

The role of Human Resources Representative is to:

- advise and support schools on the interpretation and application of this policy in accordance with the SLA;
- advise on the process for referrals to the occupational health service provider;
- advise on ill health retirements; and
- advise and support headteachers on risk assessments and well-being initiatives that support a 'fit for work' approach.

B Sickness Management Procedure

1. Introduction

This procedure is designed to support and encourage employees to maintain good attendance and to provide headteachers with a fair and consistent framework for dealing with sickness absence.

The procedure applies to all cases of sickness absence and the sickness absence management process will be followed when the triggers in Section 5 have been reached. It is recognised that flexibility and judgement will be necessary depending upon the nature of the absence, particularly in respect of long term absences and a supportive approach will be taken throughout the process.

Where this procedure refers to the Headteacher, the responsibility may be delegated to the person who has management responsibility for the employees, in accordance with the management arrangements within the school.

2. Absence reporting and recording

On their first day of absence, an employee must report their absence in accordance with the school's Sickness Reporting and Certification Procedure (see attached)

It is important that they do so because this could affect their entitlement to contractual sick pay.

In exceptional circumstances the employee may wish to keep the details of their illness confidential and, should this arise, the manager should contact the occupational health service provider who will agree with the employee what information can be released. Also, in very exceptional circumstances, the employee may want to speak to a manager of the same gender; this will be arranged through the Headteacher where possible.

3. Communication during sickness absence

The employee must keep their manager informed during their absence as detailed in the Sickness Reporting and Certification Procedure (see attached)

If an employee is ill continuously for eight or more calendar days and the absence is likely to be for a long period, then the employee and manager should agree regular dates for the employee to keep the manager informed. The frequency of contact will vary depending on the likely length of absence. During periods of long term

absence, it may be appropriate for the manager to visit the employee at home. This gives the manager an opportunity to maintain positive communication links by keeping up to date with employee's current situation and supporting their recovery. The manager should keep senior management informed via the Head's PA.

4. Return to Work interviews

Managers should conduct a return to work interview with an employee following a period of sickness. The interview should take place irrespective of the length of absence and be carried out as soon as possible following the employee's return to work, ideally on their first day back, but no later than three days after their return.

The purpose of the interview is to discuss the reasons for the absence and to ensure that the employee is fully recovered and capable of performing their duties. Such discussions give the manager and employee the opportunity to talk about any possible underlying circumstances that may be a factor causing the absence. These interviews ensure that those circumstances are taken into account in setting any action plan, and more importantly, in ensuring that the employee is adequately supported in order to maintain regular attendance at work.

Managers should refer to the Guidelines on Return to Work Interviews (see attached) before conducting such interviews.

Following the interview, the manager should complete a Return to Work Interview form (see attached) which is a record of what was discussed and actions agreed. The manager will then keep the signed form for their records and give the employee a signed copy.

5. Absence Triggers

Trigger points are a key part of the sickness absence procedure to ensure that managers have the opportunity to investigate any possible underlying reasons for absence at an early stage and that there is a consistent and fair approach to sickness management.

These thresholds highlight employees who have a certain amount of unplanned absence and helps to ensure effective support and management.

The sickness management process will be started when an employee's absence level reaches the following trigger points:

- three occasions of absence in a rolling 12-month period; and/or 95% attendance.
- The employee's absence falls outside of these thresholds, but their level of absence is a cause for concern. This may be where, for example, there is a regular absence pattern that falls just outside the thresholds in the policy.

A rolling 12-month period is counted from the first occasion of sickness absence.

In certain circumstances, following advice from the occupational health service, a higher level of sickness may be accommodated as a reasonable adjustment under the Equality Act.

At a return to work interview where a trigger point has been reached, management will advise the employee that the sickness management process will commence and a Stage One sickness meeting will be arranged. For further information refer to the Guidelines on Sickness Meetings, Hearings and Appeals (see attached)

6. Sickness Management Process

The sickness management process should be implemented when absence levels reach the triggers as detailed in Section 5. Management must always consider offering appropriate support mechanisms during the sickness management process. This may include such services as fast track physiotherapy.

Employees whose absence is long term should be referred to the occupational health service after a continuous period of absence lasting four weeks, unless the prognosis is clear. For further information, see Appendix 1, Section 1.

6.1 Stage One - First sickness management meeting

The manager and employee will discuss the need for an action plan for improving attendance, and what this should include, and a review period will be put in place as detailed in Appendix 1, Section 2. The manager will inform the employee that failure to improve their attendance will result in a second sickness management meeting being held and ultimately may put their employment at risk. An employee can be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague at the meeting.

The manager will record the outcome of the meeting and inform the employee in writing.

6.2 Stage Two - Second sickness management meeting

If the employee's attendance has not improved in the review period, the manager will arrange a Second Stage sickness management meeting. The manager and employee will discuss the need for an action plan for improving attendance, and what this should include, and a further review period will be put in place as detailed in Appendix 1, Section 2. The manager will inform the employee that failure to improve their attendance may lead to their employment being terminated. An employee can be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague at the meeting. The manager may be supported by an HR representative at the meeting.

The manager will record the outcome of the meeting and inform the employee in writing.

If an employee is unhappy with how the sickness management process has been handled under Stages One and Two, then they should raise their concerns by using the grievance procedure. The grievance should be submitted within five school working days of the sickness management meeting taking place.

6.3 Stage Three - Sickness Management Hearing

Before arranging a hearing, the manager should undertake a review of the case and the current circumstances, to ensure that it is appropriate to proceed to this stage.

If the employee's attendance has not improved in the review period, the manager should arrange a sickness management hearing.

The hearing will be chaired by the Headteacher or a member of the Staffing, or other appropriate Committee of the Governing Body.

The Headteacher or the Committee will hear the case and decide whether it is appropriate to extend the review period or to dismiss the employee. The employee has the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague at a sickness management hearing.

Prior to holding a hearing, Headteachers or Governors should refer to the Guidelines on Sickness Meetings, Hearings and Appeals. (see attached)

6.4 Appeals

An employee has the right to appeal if they are dismissed under the sickness management process. Appeals should be made in writing to the Clerk to the Governing Body within five working days of the date the employee received the letter confirming the outcome of the sickness management hearing. The letter should state the grounds on which the appeal is to be made. The employee will indicate which of the original documents used at the first hearing will be re-submitted.

The appeal will be heard by the Appeals Committee of the school's Governing Body. At least five working days' notice of the appeal hearing will be given. Part-time employees shall normally only be called to a hearing on one of their contractual days of work.

At least five working days' prior to the appeal hearing, the Management will indicate which of the original documents used at the first hearing are to be re-submitted.

If either side wish to deal with some aspect that was not included in the documentation previously provided, this is permissible. However, where this applies, the documentation should also normally be submitted to the Clerk to the Governing Body at least five working days in advance of the hearing in order that it may be forwarded to both parties.

The employee shall have the right to be accompanied to the appeal hearing by a companion of his/her choice who may be a trade union representative.

An HR representative will be present at the meeting to advise the Appeals Committee.

After careful consideration, a decision will be made by the Appeals Committee and confirmed to the employee in writing.

If the appeal by the employee is lost, any notice of termination of contract will continue. If the appeal is upheld, termination and any notice period will be rescinded.

The protocols for appeals can be found in the Guidelines on Sickness Meetings, Hearings and Appeals. (see attached)

APPENDIX 1

Further Management Guidance

1. Occupational Health Referrals

Occupational health advice plays an important role in supporting a healthy workforce and reducing sickness absence. Managers should refer an employee to the occupational health service provider, Health Management Ltd (HM), to obtain a medical opinion on the employee's condition. This information will help managers make informed decisions when managing sickness absence.

The manager should discuss their intention to make a referral with the employee, in advance of making the arrangements.

Managers should refer an employee to occupational health in the following circumstances:

- If they are absent due to stress, anxiety, debility or depression, the referral will be made as soon as an employee declares they are absent for one of these reasons. A referral can also be made if, based on what they have observed in the workplace, and on discussion with the employee concerned, a manager believes that an employee's health is being affected adversely by their work, such as mental health issues, upper limb disorders or back pain;
- If an employee has been absent for a period of four weeks or more and the recovery time is uncertain;
- When an employee does not return to work after a defined recovery time;
- Prior to a sickness management meeting or hearing for all long term absences, it may be necessary to seek advice from Health Management when dealing with short term or intermittent absence and will be essential if a hearing is being held;
- If the employee's doctor has indicated on the statement of fitness for work (fit note) that an assessment by occupational health is required;
- If the doctor has indicated on the fit note that the employee requires amended duties for longer than two months. This can be extended to three months if supported by Health Management;
- A return date is known but there are remaining concerns about the medical condition and the employee's ability to fulfill their contractual obligations;
- To consider a request for ill health retirement; and
- To consider whether someone is eligible for the fast track physiotherapy scheme.

Managers should refer to [Guidelines on Occupational Health Referrals to Health Management](#) (see attached)

2. Review Periods

Review periods will be determined on an individual basis dependent on each case; however, they will not normally exceed six months.

At the end of a review period, the manager should assess whether the employee's absence level has improved. The manager will inform the employee of the outcome of the review period in writing.

If there has been a satisfactory improvement, the manager will acknowledge this in the

letter. The manager will remind the employee that their attendance will continue to be monitored under the sickness management policy. If during the 12 months following the date of their sickness management meeting, their attendance level reaches the absence triggers outlined in Section 5 of the Sickness Management Procedure, a further meeting or, where appropriate, a hearing will be held under the process.

If there has been insufficient improvement, the manager will inform the employee that a second sickness management meeting or sickness management hearing will be arranged.

Further guidance on review periods is given in the Guidelines on Sickness Management Meetings and Hearings. (see attached)

3. Statement of fitness for work (fit notes)

A fit note is the informal name for a statement of fitness for work which is issued by a doctor. It has replaced the medical certificate or doctor's note. A doctor will advise whether an individual is 'not fit for work' or 'may be fit for work'.

If the 'not fit for work' box has been ticked on the fit note, the doctor will indicate the period of time the individual should not undertake any work.

If the 'may be fit for work' has been ticked on the fit note, the doctor will also add information on the functional effects of the individual's condition and what could help aid a return to work. The doctor will give advice on the individual's medical condition. If the doctor feels an assessment by an occupational health specialist is required, they will indicate this on the fit note.

The doctor will also indicate on the fit note which adjustments are required to help facilitate the employee's return to work. This may include:

- A phased return to work;
- Amended duties;
- Altered hours; or
- Workplace adaptations.

If an employee has more than one job with the school, the respective managers must speak to each other to ensure that the sickness management process is applied in a consistent manner.

4. Disability illness and reasonable adjustments

Sickness absence due to a disability will be recorded and managed under this policy. However, a higher sickness absence trigger may be accommodated as a reasonable adjustment under the Equality Act, following advice from Health Management.

Managers will consider whether any temporary or permanent adjustments could be made to improve levels of short term absence or facilitate a return to work in long term absence cases. When necessary, advice should be sought from the occupational health service on whether the employee is covered by the Equality Act. If an individual is covered by the Equality Act, the manager will need to show that they have considered reasonable adjustments.

Reasonable adjustments that could be made to assist in rehabilitating an employee back into the workplace or helping them to stay in work include:

- A phased return to work – this will be on basic pay and will normally be for no longer than four weeks. The phased return will require the employee to build up their hours to their full contractual hours; for example, in a four week phased return, the employee would be expected to work their full contractual hours in their fifth week;
- Altered hours which can include a change to working patterns;
- Change of work location – a management decision is required as to whether the doctor’s recommendation can be accommodated;
- Amended duties;
- Workplace adaptations; and
- Disability leave – this may be appropriate when an employee needs time to adjust to changes in their life caused by a new or existing disability. Examples of disability leave may include reasonable time off, with pay, for routine assessment of hearing aids or for training a new guide dog.

For further details on all the above points, please see [Guidelines on Statements for Fitness for Work](#) (see attached)

5. Medical redeployment

If it is not possible to make reasonable adjustments to the employee’s current role and the occupational health advice recommends redeployment, the Headteacher and manager will consider any alternative positions available.

6. Ill-Health Retirement

Employees who are members of the Teachers’ Pension Scheme or Local Government Pension Scheme may qualify for immediate payment of pension benefits if they are permanently incapable of carrying out their duties on the grounds of ill-health. For further information managers should contact the Head of Business and Finance.

7. Confidentiality and Data Protection

All information about an employee’s absence from work due to sickness or injury is confidential and must comply with the Data Protection Act. However, information on an employee’s case will be shared between those involved in its management.

A manager is responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of sickness records within the employee’s workplace. Records of absence will be stored securely, and access will be restricted only to those with a responsibility for managing or recording sickness absence.

Occupational health recommendations about the effect of an illness on an employee’s ability to work will be shared within the Human Resources representatives and with the relevant manager. Employees may share the information with their designated trade union representative.

8. Medical Suspension

Medical suspension is a last resort and may occur where a manager decides that due to

ill-health there is a risk to the employee, colleagues or students. All cases will be discussed with a representative of Human Resources. The employee will be informed of the reason for the suspension and this will be confirmed in writing to them.

A medical suspension is a short term measure which should only be used until medical evidence or opinion is received and acted on accordingly.

If an employee is suspended on medical grounds then they will receive pay based on an average of their previous 12 weeks' salary pending occupational health advice.

A medical suspension will not be put in place when a manager cannot provide support as stated under the 'may be fit for work' section of the fit note. In these circumstances, an employee will remain on sick leave. The employee does not need another fit note until the current one expires.

9. Pregnancy Related Illness

Pregnancy related illness should not be used in any assessment of an employee's sickness record, for example, in a redundancy selection exercise or for disciplinary purposes. Such actions could leave a manager vulnerable to a claim of sex discrimination.

Managers should use return to work interviews and other mechanisms provided under this policy as a framework for a supportive approach.

A teacher who is absent due to a pregnancy related illness during the six week period prior to her expected week of childbirth will be required to start her maternity leave, and will be entitled to maternity pay and not sick pay.

A support employee who is absent due to a pregnancy related illness during the four week period prior to her expected week of childbirth will be required to start her maternity leave, and will be entitled to maternity pay and not sick pay.

Employees who are pregnant and are required to attend antenatal appointments will be treated in line with the School's Maternity Scheme for Teachers or Support Employees. (see attached)

10. Infectious Diseases

Where an employee has been in contact with, or is known to be suffering from an infectious disease, the manager should refer to the Exclusion Guidance for Communicable Diseases. (see attached)

Apart from in the circumstances described below, an employee who is absent because they have an infectious disease, will have their absence counted as normal sickness, and managed accordingly.

In accordance with the provisions contained within the Conditions of Service for School Teachers in England and Wales (Burgundy Book) where an approved medical practitioner attests that there is evidence to show a teacher's absence was due to an infectious or contagious illness contracted directly in the course of their work, they will receive full pay for the period of absence. The absence will not count towards the teacher's sick leave entitlement.

In circumstances where a teacher resides in a house where someone else is suffering from an infectious disease, and the medical advice is that the teacher should not attend work, the teacher will receive full pay and the absence will not count towards their sick leave entitlement.

In accordance with the provisions contained within the NJC for Local Government Services (Green Book), a support employee who is prevented from attending work because of contact with someone with an infectious disease, may be able to work at home, if this is appropriate, depending on the nature of their job. If home working is not appropriate, then the employee will remain on paid leave until appropriate advice supports their return to work. In some cases, this will include medical advice. In this situation, the employee will receive pay based on their average pay over the previous 12 weeks and not sick pay. The period of leave will be recorded as absent due to contact with an infectious disease.

11. Industrial Disease, accident or assault at work

Incidents of industrial disease, accidents or assault as a result of work activity must be recorded. The majority of schools record such incidents using the council's Incident Reporting and Investigating Procedure (see attached) and the associated Incident Report form, and are supported in dealing with the cases, as necessary, by the council's Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team.

Some of these incidents will also be reportable to the Health and Safety Executive within certain timescales. The Incident Reporting and Investigating Procedure provides further detail along with the incident report form. The manager must also contact the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team of the LA for those incidents to employees that may require reporting to the Health and Safety Executive.

Where it has been accepted by the school that a period of absence has been the result of any of the above incidents that occurred in the course of employment, this will be treated separately from normal sickness for the purposes of calculating sick pay entitlement. In accordance with the Green Book, Support Employees will not have one off set against the other. In accordance with the Burgundy Book, Teachers will receive the first six months of absence at full pay, followed by their normal sick pay.

Irrespective of the above mentioned special provisions for sick pay, absences of this nature will be managed in line with this policy.

12. Fertility Treatment

Employees will be allowed a period of paid time off to have fertility treatment. Further information about this is available in the Policy on Leave of Absence.

If an employee experiences a negative reaction after receiving treatment and is unable to return to work, the absence should be recorded as sickness and managed under this policy.

13. Terminal Illness

When dealing with terminal illness, managers should treat each case on an individual basis and in a caring and sensitive manner. Managers will need to consider that people are affected differently by illness, terminal or otherwise. For some employees, attendance at work may be relatively unaffected and they may be keen to continue working, others may find it impossible to work. For further information, refer to the Disability and reasonable adjustments guidelines. (see attached).

APPENDIX 2

Sick Pay entitlements and conditions

1. Teachers

Teachers' entitlements to sick pay are set out in the Conditions of Service for School Teachers in England and Wales (Burgundy Book) as follows:

During the first year of service:	25 working days full pay and, after completing four calendar months' service, half pay for 50 working days.
During the second year of service:	50 working days full pay and 50 working days half pay.
During the third year of service:	75 working days full pay and 75 working days half pay.
During the fourth and subsequent years of service:	100 working days full pay and 100 working days half pay.

In addition to this, the following local conditions apply:

During fifteenth and subsequent years of service:	138 working days full pay and 138 working days half pay.
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For the purpose of the sick pay scheme, service includes all aggregated teaching service with one or more Local Education Authorities.

2. Support Employees

Support employees' entitlements to sick pay are set out in the NJC for Local Government Services (Green Book) as follows:

During the first year of service:	One month's full pay and after completing four months' service two months' half pay.
During the second year of service:	Two months' full pay and two months' half pay.
During the third year of service:	Four months' full pay and four months' half pay.
During the fourth and fifth years of service:	Five months' full pay and five months' half pay.
After five years' service:	Six months' full pay and six months' half pay.

For the purpose of the sick pay scheme, service includes all continuous service with one or more Local Government Authority.

3. Conditions

The Headteacher/Governing Body has a right to terminate employment before sick pay is exhausted, providing that the sickness management process has been followed.

The Headteacher/Governing Body has the discretion to extend the period of sick pay in exceptional cases subject to agreement between the Governing Body and Local Authority; and following advice from the occupational health service.

It is possible that sick pay may be suspended and disciplinary action taken under the following circumstances:

- Falsification of certificates either self or statement of fitness for work;
- Failure to follow the schools Sickness Reporting and Certification Procedure without good reason;
- Abuse of the sick pay scheme;
- Deliberate behavior to prevent recovery;
- Employee's own misconduct, neglect or recklessness in undertaking any activities either in, or outside, the council's employment which has caused the individual to be sick;
- Where an employee receives an injury whilst working in their own time for private gain, or for another employer. This is a specific provision for support staff, in accordance with the Green Book.

Sick pay will **NOT** be paid in the following circumstances:

- Failure to attend an occupational health appointment without good reason – refusal by the employee to co-operate with the requirement to attend the occupational health service for assessment may result in salary payments being suspended, disciplinary action and decisions on the employee's ability to perform their duties being made by managers on the best evidence available;
- Where an injury is due to active participation in professional sport not connected to the employee's work duties;
- Elective and cosmetic surgery, which should be considered under the School's Leave of Absence Policy, unless this is needed for medical or psychological reasons. Managers are advised to seek advice from the occupational health service on this issue; or
- Where an employee is absent from work as a result of an accident and a financial settlement will be recovered from a third party. The Headteacher/Governing Body may require the employee to refund a sum equal to the sick pay paid during the period, but not exceeding the amount of the financial settlement received by the employee.

Managers should seek advice from Human Resources and the occupational health service where appropriate before taking action on any of the above.

APPENDIX 3

Supporting Documents

Sickness Reporting and Certification Procedure

Guidelines on Return to Work Interviews

Guidelines on Sickness Meetings, Hearings and Appeals

Guidelines on Statements of Fitness for Work

Disability and reasonable adjustments guidelines

Maternity Information for Teachers

Maternity Information for Support Employees

Exclusion Guidance for Communicable Diseases

Incident Reporting and Investigating Procedure

Guidelines for School's on Occupational Health Referrals

APPENDIX 4

Useful Sources of Information

Conditions of Service for School Teachers in England and Wales (The Burgundy Book)

NJC for Local Government Services (The Green Book)

Local Government Employers – School Support Staff

Local Government Employers – School Teachers

Useful Contacts for Schools

Schools Employee Help Directory

The contents of this document will be brought to the attention of existing and newly appointed employees on a regular basis.

The document will be available for reference purposes within the copy of the Employment Handbook for Schools retained within the staff room.

The application of the policy will be monitored by the Governing Body.