



Snowflake School

‘Improving the quality of family life’

Attendance Policy

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Policy

The aim of this policy is to establish clear guidelines and procedures regarding attendance for all members of staff that:

- Ensures fairness
- Improves attendance and morale
- Reduces stress on colleagues
- Guarantees best use of limited and finite resources
- Provides clear rules and procedures for reporting absence
- Develops a shared understanding of the scale and impact that absence has on staff and pupils at Snowflake School
- Promotes our mission and values

We reserve the right to amend this policy at any time to ensure that its operational needs are met.

The school management aims to fairly and sensitively balance the needs of staff with the needs of the school and the pupils. All school staff are expected to be on duty while school is in session according to their contractual working time unless they have been granted 'Leave of Absence' or are too ill to report to work. Breaks for school staff will run according to the published schedule.

Staff

8:30 a.m. – Start of the school day

4:00 p.m. – Finish of the school day: **Four days a week**

5:00 p.m. – Finish of the school day: ALL STAFF – **One day a week** for training, you will be told in advance which day training is held

Lateness

All staff have a start time **of 8.30am**. The expectation is that staff members are ready to work in their classrooms, etc, at this time. Staff are welcome to help themselves to breakfast/a drink, etc, upon arrival at school, but this must take place before the **8.30am start**, with staff rooms vacant by this time. Staff lateness is monitored, so any member of staff signing in after this time will be classified as late for work, with this lateness logged on our staff absence management system, 'MySAM'.

Full Time Staff

Full time staff are expected to be in school before the start of the day at 8:30 a.m. The time before and after pupils are in school is very important for a variety of activities including daily planning and coordination with other members of staff. Within the current meetings cycle there is a staff meeting for all staff which are designated for various forms of whole school development.

As part of Performance Management and 'Professional Development Reviews', staff may ask to receive a copy of their attendance records at the end of each school year. This record contains a detailed breakdown of all absences and can be used to record 'points of action' should there be areas of concern. This policy addresses 'Absence due to Illness' as well as 'Leave of Absence' (or special leave as it is sometimes known).

Absence Due to Illness

The aim of this policy is to provide a sensitive and supportive approach towards absence due to illness which is fair:

- to the absent employee
- The interest of the school in terms of its overall effective performance to other staff within the school
- When informing your Line Manager of your absence, you should also provide information regarding any meeting that may need covering or rescheduling, including cover needs relating to individual pupils. The person responsible for arranging cover will then ensure that work is handed over to the suitable person or place it on hold in your absence

A **short-term** absence is one in which there is no apparent chronic underlying condition, e.g., flu, sore throat or stomach upset.

A **long-term** sickness is a continuous period of several weeks or months or repeated shorter spells. The absence may be related to an underlying cause or specific problem e.g. an operation or series of treatments in hospital, rest at home due to back problems, stress or depression. For long-term absences, a member of the senior management team will keep in touch with the employee while he/she is absent. This contact will be conducted in a sensitive manner in order to provide support to the absentee and will be an opportunity to share information between the employee and school.

It is important that we are mindful of managing sickness and absence for the benefit of the employee, school and pupils. Long term or frequent absences may, in certain circumstances, lead to the termination of your employment with the school.

Sickness Absence Reporting Procedure

- On the first day of absence, phone the school to state that you are unable to come to work and the reasons for this. **Staff should phone their Line Manager at 7:30am** to give ample opportunity to arrange cover where appropriate.

You should notify your Line Manager personally by telephone informing them of:

- The fact of your sickness absence.

- Text messages, e-mails, messages through social media or messages left with colleagues will not satisfy our sickness absence notification requirements and may result in any absence being deemed unauthorised. Cases of unauthorised absence may be dealt with under our Disciplinary procedure and may result in loss of pay to which you may otherwise have been entitled to for the period of unauthorised absence
- Notification must be made by yourself, unless your incapacity is such that this is not possible, in which case you should authorise a family member or friend to contact the school on your behalf
- In the event that you will be unable to work the following day, please inform the school **before 3:00 p.m.** Again, this gives the school the maximum opportunity to make cover arrangements. In the event of a long-term illness with a doctor's certificate, please phone to let the school know what your likely absence will be and email the certificate to the School Office. Staff need a certificate if they are absent for more than seven days, including weekends.

Upon your return to work, even if you have been out for only one day, please report to the Line Manager before starting work and ensure your absence is recorded on 'MySAM'.

- Following an absence, the school Admin Team will hold a brief 'return to work' meeting after any period of sickness absence. During the meeting, we will discuss the reasons for and cause of your absence, consider your Fit Note(s) (where appropriate), establish that you are in fact fit to return to work and discuss whether there is anything the school can do to assist you
- If you wish to return to work prior to the date noted on a Fit Note in cases of long-term absence or serious health conditions, you may be required to attend a medical examination and/or asked to agree to a medical report being prepared by our nominated approved healthcare professional to confirm you are fit to return to work before you may return
- The Headteacher is responsible for approving and classifying all absences, including whether any absence is paid or unpaid, as per this policy.

Absence Escalation Policy

If Absent for 5 days in a school term, this will trigger a **First Absence Meeting** with Assistant Head. If absence levels do not improve this will trigger a **Second Absence Meeting** with the **HR & Admin Manager**. If absence levels do not improve this will trigger a **Third Absence Meeting** with the **Headteacher and HR & Admin Manager** for possible disciplinary dismissal, or alteration of paid hours. Please see the appendix for the full Absence Escalation Policy.

These interviews will seek to establish whether an individual is experiencing difficulties and explore ways in which the school can further support staff so that sickness and absence are reduced. They are confidential and are referred to in the school capability procedure. The Head Teacher reports to the Trustees on all matters relating to staff absence, and general statistics are then included within the Head Teacher's report. Staff may be referred to the Occupational Health doctor to seek medical advice.

Work Related Illness

A work-related illness, aka an occupational disease, is a health condition that results from an employee's work duties or exposure to hazardous conditions or substances at work. Examples of work-related illnesses including Carpel tunnel syndrome, Bursitis, Tendinitis, Rotator cuff syndrome, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), Respiratory illness, Black lung disease, Cancer including mesothelioma / asbestosis.

Work Related Injury

A work-related injury is an injury caused by a condition in the workplace. Either animate or inanimate. Examples: Falls, bites, trips, bumps etc.

An accident is 'work-related injury' if any of the following played a significant role: the way the work was carried out, any machinery was involved, substances or equipment used for the work or the condition of the site or premises where the accident happened. RIDDOR is the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995. By law it is required for Snowflake School to report specified incidents in the workplace. There is no obligation by Snowflake School to pay a staff member their full standard salary if they are off work due to illness or injury. Even if that injury or illness was caused by an accident at work. If employee needs time off because of an accident at work, the employee will only have the [right to Statutory Sick Pay](#).

Sick Pay

Snowflake School aims to follow the best practice and all government guidelines in the application of sick pay. In recognition of the nature of the work that Snowflake staff are engaged in, management have established a local policy regarding pay during a period of sickness absence. **Please see the 'Paid Leave Thresholds' in the appendix.**

Sick Day

Employees and employers need to be aware of the potential health risk of working through health or illness conditions that require rest and time to recover, therefore if an employee is too sick to come in then they do not work. Working from home when unwell could compromise employee cognitive abilities and decision-making, leading to work errors and under-performance.

Working from home

Home working consists of working based at home rather than at the normal place of work and may involve using IT systems to perform work and to remain in contact with managers and employee. It is carried out to an agreed work pattern on a permanent, regular, part-time, temporary or ad hoc basis. The employer's and employee's obligations under health and safety legislation continue to apply even when the employee is working from home. Both employer and employee should ensure that working from home meets the law regarding the workstation and its positioning in the home. An employee working from home must be for a genuine reason, must be agreed in advance and must be as productive via email and phone and as available as if they were at School.

Leave of Absence

Leave of Absence (or special leave as it is sometimes known) is principally short-term assistance for employees in coping with unforeseen emergencies or major domestic problems. Other forms of Leave of Absence include compassionate leave to attend a funeral, leave for religious observance purposes and leave for public duties. **Leave of Absence is not for holidays or to extend a holiday or to secure cheaper travel fares.**

As we have 13 weeks of breaks each year, staff should make arrangements for medical appointments etc., outside of school hours or during school holidays. We recognise that this is not always possible and in special circumstances staff will be granted 'Leave of Absence' upon production of evidence. In the case of an emergency appointment, it is understood that a Leave of Absence request for evidence will not be possible nor these situations will be dealt with on an individual basis.

Requests for Leave of Absence will always be treated individually, sensitively and with flexibility. Leave of Absence will be offered with or without pay in line with this policy which was developed in accordance with *Policy and Guidance for Schools for Leave of Absence for School Employees*. The granting of leave of Absence to one colleague should not be seen as precedent for all cases – every application is seen individually. All leave in term time will be considered in the context of the needs of pupils in the school. If a teacher or tutor is granted Leave of Absence, there is an expectation that work plans will be left for whoever is covering.

All **requests and authorisations** must be made using the 'MySAM', the school's online staff attendance platform. Leave of Absence should always be requested in advance. Employees should provide as much notice as possible of their request to enable proper consultation with staff to take place and cover to be arranged. Any request for Leave of Absence will be authorised or declined via 'MySAM', with a reason given if the request is not granted. It must not be assumed leave is granted until confirmation is received, and staff notified via email. This policy sets out clear guidelines for procedures when requesting Leave of Absence and will ensure consistency and fairness in the way requests are dealt with.

Conditions of Service Requirements

All school staff are required to be on duty while school is in session, according to their contractual working time, unless they are absent due to ill health. Exceptions to this are:

- where time-off in lieu arrangements are made for minor matters
- approved time for training
- approved time for Trades Union duties
- staff who have Leave of Absence approved in accordance with these guidelines

Role of the Trustees

The Trustees formally delegate the management of Leave of Absence to the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher ensures that decisions are properly recorded on the agreed standard forms and reported on a non-attributable basis. The Head Teacher is delegated to authorise Leave of Absence within this policy and at her discretion may grant up to 3 additional days Leave of Absence with or without pay according to individual circumstances. Beyond this, the Head Teacher may be required to refer requests to the Trustees (or relevant sub-committee) for consideration and decision. The Trustees may also wish to make arrangements for the approval of Head Teacher 'Leave of Absence' requests. In urgent situations this may rest with the Chair of Trustees.

Key Points for Staff

- Except in cases of serious urgency and circumstances not in the control of the employee (e.g., natural disaster, terrorism ect..) No employee may, without previous permission of the Head Teacher, be absent.
- Any application for special Leave of Absence shall be made to the Assistant Headteacher, in normal circumstances, not less than 7 days before the absence is required.
- An application for special leave should be made by email to the Assistant Headteacher.
- Application forms for special leave will be treated confidentially. They will be seen by the Assistance Headteacher and/or other members of authorised personnel.
- Where unpaid Leave of Absence occurs with the permission of the Head teacher, salary shall be calculated at a daily or part-daily rate for each school day of the period of absence.
- Where a teacher or tutor is absent for reasons other than sickness without the permission of the Assistant Headteacher as appropriate, deductions from salary shall be calculated at a daily or part-daily rate for each school day of an absence.

Care of Dependents

From time-to-time employees may wish or need to take time off work to care for dependents. Sometimes such care may be an urgent need as a result of an accident or death. At other times it

may be less urgent but still very important; for instance, planned hospital operations on a child needing the attendance of a parent at the hospital.

What follows is a list of maximum recommended levels of paid special leave for the more common situations that arise. Unpaid leave may also be granted.

	Salary payable for period not exceeding
Care of Dependents	2 working days - PAID
Serious illness of husband, wife, partner, child or dependent	2 working days - PAID
Death of husband, wife, partner, child or dependent	5 working days - PAID
Death of near relative of self, near relative of spouse	3 working days - PAID
Confinement in relation to pregnancy of wife or partner, or adoption of a child.	5 working days - PAID
Own Wedding	2 working days - PAID
Wedding of near relative	1 working day - UNPAID
Funeral of near relative	1 working day - PAID

Notes:

- *‘Near relative’ includes father, mother, grandparent, grandchild, sister, brother, child.*
- *Serious illness is defined only in terms of the level of care involved, demanding the employee’s presence.*
- *Partner means a person towards whom the employee has similar responsibilities as to a husband or wife, with regard to care of dependants’ matters.*

Public Duties

Public duties include duties such as jury service, acting as a witness in court, acting as justice of the peace or serving as a school trustee.

<p>For service as Mayor/Mayoress, Justice of the Peace, elected Member of a Council or County Council,</p>	<p>The school will endeavour to grant employees' requests for unpaid time off for public duties. However, it reserves the right to refuse requests on a case-by-case basis, depending on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how much notice the employee has provided. • How much time off is required to carry out the duties. • how much time the employee has already had off for public duties; and • the organisation's business needs and the effect of employees' absence on the running of the business
<p>Jury service.</p>	<p>The school would ask employees to apply for a deferral where there are difficulties in making alternative staffing arrangements. If this is not possible, staff will be granted unpaid leave.</p> <p>If the employee is not required for any part or whole day in court, then they are required to return to work.</p> <p>Employees are also required to return to work if their jury service ends before the expected 10-day period (or such a longer period as the court may have indicated to the employee that they will be required for).</p> <p>Employees are also asked to provide evidence, e.g., the Summons, Order.</p>
<p>For appearance as a witness in a court or tribunal.</p>	<p>As for jury service where the court or tribunal requires attendance.</p>
<p>Appearance as a defendant in a court.</p>	<p>Normally this will be unpaid.</p>

Study/Exams and Conferences

All requests for support, paid or unpaid (including books, transport, subsistence costs) will be considered within the context of school in-service training and development policy and plans. The school training and development plan should accord with the principle of equality of opportunity, the service needs of the school and available budgetary provision.

Religious Observance

A wide variety of religious observances is practised within Snowflake. For some staff members, religious observance times fall on public holidays or weekends, or other times when the employee is not at work; in this instance, no paid day's leave will be offered. For some employees, religious observance times can fall on days when they are normally at work and cannot re-arrange working times or take annual leave to enable religious observance. In these cases, a maximum of **1 day per annum, time-off without pay can be requested for religious observance**. All such time-off must be notified to the Headteacher at the beginning of the academic year or as soon as possible thereafter.

Miscellaneous Matters

Employees of Snowflake School receive 13 weeks of paid holiday per year. Owing to this, employees are expected to make all arrangements such as general, non-specialist medical appointments, attendance at weddings or moving days, etc **within these 13 weeks' paid leave**.

From time to time an employee may request 'Leave of Absence' for a particular matter which cannot be arranged during school holidays. In general, these will only be agreed at the Head Teacher's discretion and will in all cases be unpaid.

The following outlines salary arrangements for exceptional leave requests which may be granted, at the Head Teacher's discretion:

Removal of household effects.	1 working day paid (the moving day)
Attendance at a ceremony for award of a personal degree or a degree awarded to an employee's child or any other reward of honours to an employee or near relative of an employee or spouse.	1 working day paid according to distance and circumstances.

Appendix

Paid Leave Thresholds

Sick Leave Entitlement				
PAID SICK DAYS	New Staff	Passed 6 Week Review	Passed 6 Month Probation	TOTAL
	0 DAYS	3 DAYS	3 DAYS	6 DAYS

Staff who do not use any sick days for 1 academic year will be gifted 1 paid day off the following term.

We may make a referral to Occupational Health in any of the above situations.

Sickness Absence and Time Away from Home

While it is recognised that during a period of sickness absence, time away from home or abroad (for example going on holiday or visiting family) may be therapeutically helpful, you are required to seek prior approval from us.

Please note that the requirements in your employment contract regarding requesting annual leave will continue to apply during any period of sickness absence.

Return to work plus management of absence and lateness model

Return to work meetings (RTW)

All staff except SLG + Senior
Teacher + HR & Admin Manager

ADMIN



SLG + Senior Teacher + HR &
Admin Manager

HT



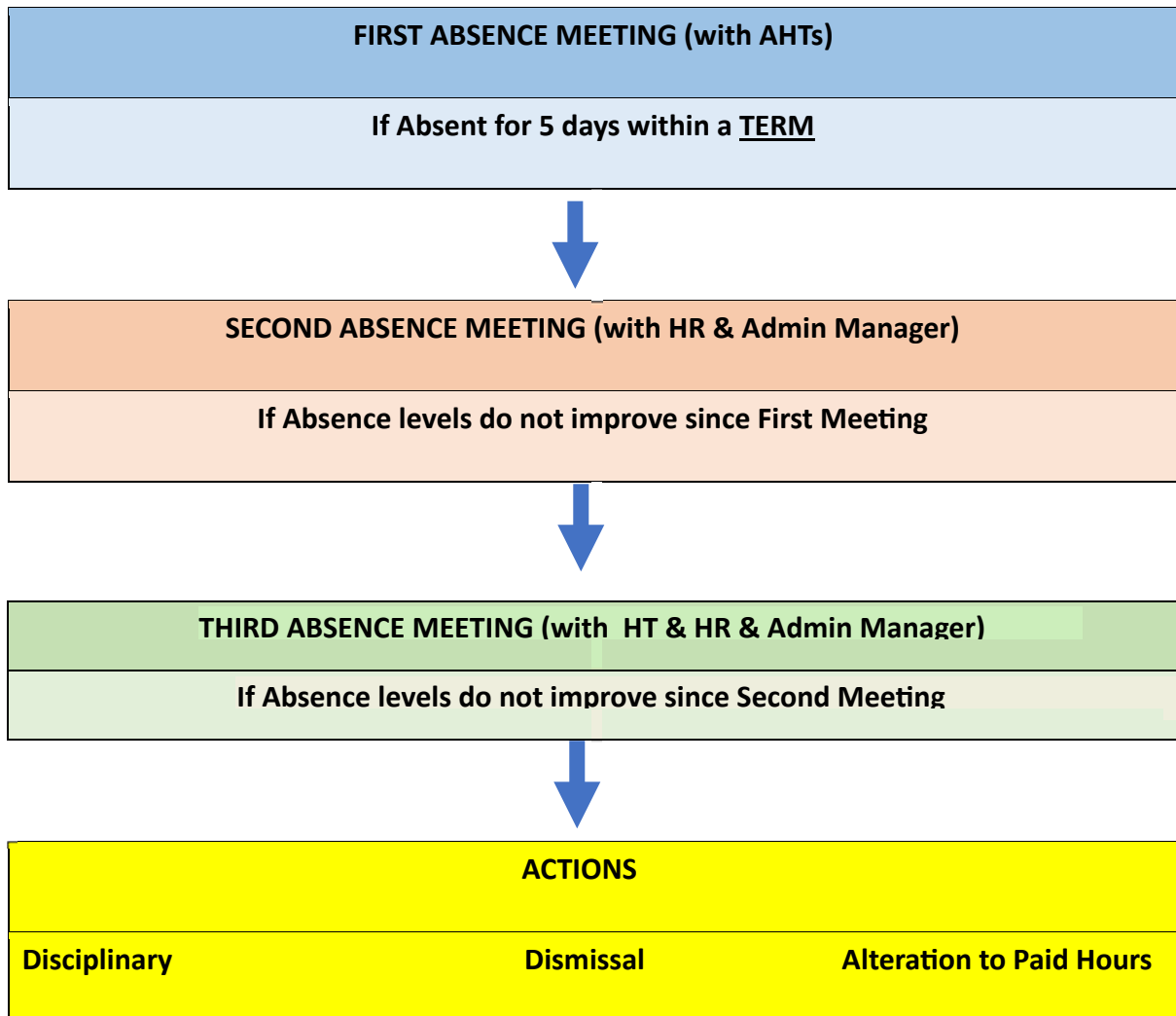
Bookkeeper + Gary + HT

CEO

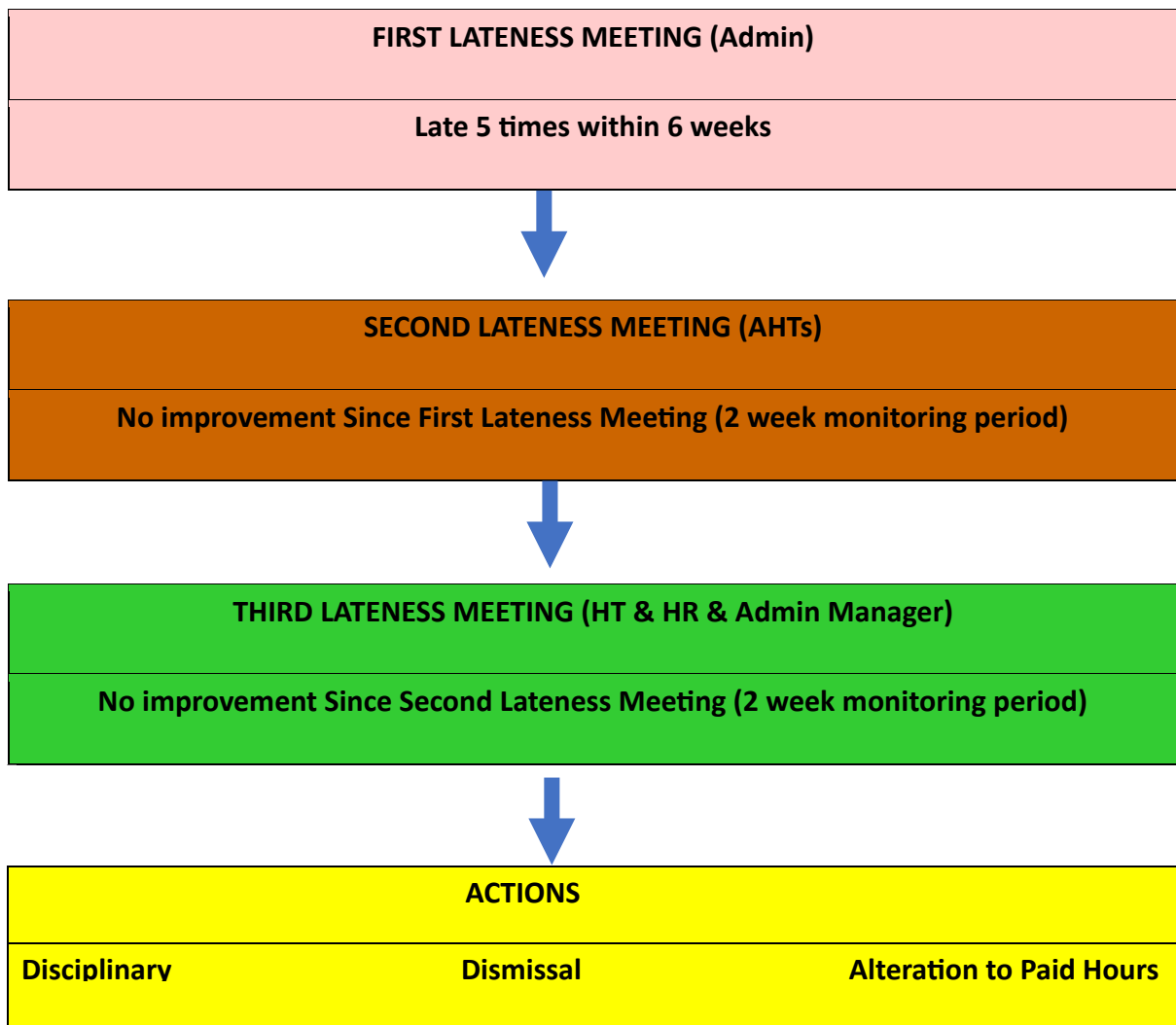
Admin Team + PA

HR & Admin Manager

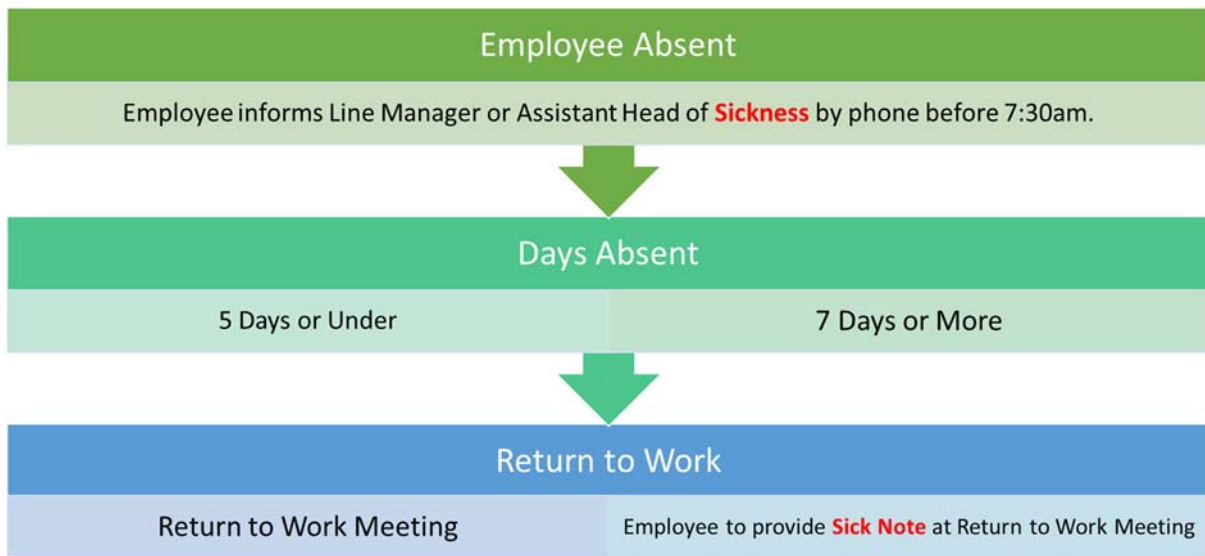
Absence escalation procedure



Lateness escalation procedure:



Sickness Reporting



Revision

Version Update	January 2025
Review due	January 2026
Reviewed By	Sumen Starr
Approved by Board of Trustees on	February 2025