



# Whittlesford Out of School Club

## Staff absence and sickness policy.

### Our Aim.

WOSC seeks to provide a healthy, caring and safe working environment for all members of staff. It also seeks to offer guidance and support to staff through periods of sickness absence. The aim of this policy is to ensure members of staff who are sick are offered the support and guidance they need and to provide a framework for the effective and consistent handling of sickness absence at the club. In Addition, this document also includes the club's policy for other types of absence including parental leave, maternity leave, paternity leave, dependents leave and adoption leave.

The club will seek to make reasonable adjustments to the workplace and/or the member of staff's role if this develops during the course of their employment, a disability that has a substantial and long term adverse effects on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

This policy aims to minimise the impact of sickness absence on the efficiency and quality of the club's services and the morale and wellbeing of the other staff members. Staff experiencing ill health may, from time to time, require periods of sick leave. Such staff members have the right to be treated in a fair, consistent, confidential and sensitive way. Medical advice from the member of staff's doctor may be sought where a member of staff's sickness is giving cause for concern. Medical advice may also be sought before any decisions about a member of staff's future employment on health grounds are made.

The club relies on the trust and integrity of its staff members in the implementation of this policy and related procedures. Suspected abuse of the sickness absence procedures will be fully investigated. If misconduct is proven, the matter will be handled by the Wosc committee.

### It is the responsibility of all staff members to:

- i. Make themselves familiar with the absence procedures of this policy.
- ii. Inform the manager of the chair of committee depending on your role, as early as possible, and normally within one hour of their usual start time, if they are unable to attend work.
- iii. Keep a manager/chair informed of their progress and aware of any medical developments on a regular basis throughout the period of sickness.

### It is the responsibility of Wosc managers to:

- i. Ensure members of staff are made aware of the absence procedures when they join the Wosc team.
- ii. Ensure that the absence procedures are followed.
- iii. Ensure that the clubs agreed procedures for the recording of sickness absence and other absences of staff are followed
- iv. Ensure that members of staff who are absent through sickness are treated in a fair and consistent way, with sensitivity and confidentiality.
- v. Ensure that contact is maintained with members of staff who are absent for long periods.
- vi. Check if the absence may be due to other issues within the workplace.
- vii. Be aware of specific illnesses whereby members of staff have a statutory obligation to absent themselves from work.

## **Types of sickness absence.**

Sickness absence falls into two types: Short term sickness absence and long-term sickness absence.

**Short term sickness absence-** Wosc acknowledges that on most occasions staff sickness will fall into the category of short term sickness absence. For the purposes of this policy, short term sickness absence includes all uncertified and certified absence of up to a four-week duration.

A Wosc manager, in discussion with the chair of the committee, is responsible for handling frequent short-term sickness absences through discussion with the member of staff as detailed below. As part of this process the cause of the absences will be discussed with the member of staff and, if appropriate, the individual will be encouraged to seek medical help. On each occasion when a member of staff has been sick, the manager should speak to the individual on his/her return to work to ascertain whether any assistance/support is needed.

A member of staff will be required to submit a Medical Certificate from his/her General Practitioner to the manager for periods of absence exceeding 7 calendar days. Should the period of absence continue following receipt of a medical certificate, the member of staff is required to obtain a further certificate and contact the manager as early as possible before the day they are due to return to work, to advise of his/her continuing absence.

The Committee will support the managers in meeting with staff members on a more formal basis if absences are frequent patterns of absence emerge or abuse of the sickness procedure is suspected. An example of frequent absence could be six or more separate absences in any rolling twelve-month period. In such circumstances, the member of staff will be asked, in writing, to attend an exploratory meeting to discuss the absences. It should be noted that such a meeting would be completely outside the club's staff disciplinary procedure. If, however, there appears to be a case of misconduct, the matter will be handled by the managers with support from the committee.

**Long term sickness absence-** Long term sickness absence is defined by Wosc as any single period of sickness, in excess of four weeks. The manager should consult with the chair of the committee. If the absence extends beyond four weeks, the manager should consult the committee to discuss the most appropriate way forward. It is not possible, due to the varying nature of the absences, to treat all cases of long term sickness absence in an identical way. The club will give consideration to what is reasonable in terms of the length of absence and the expected period of recovery, taking into account appropriate medical advice.

The committee will endeavour to maintain the employment of the staff absent on long term sickness for as long as reasonably practicable. Retirement or dismissal on the grounds of incapability will, however, need to be discussed if all other options have been exhausted.

Staff members are encouraged to stay in regular contact with a manager throughout the absence so that cover can be arranged and extended where appropriate. If members of staff are unable to contact the manager on a regular basis they should ask a relative or friend to do so on their behalf. Likewise, the manager is encouraged to stay in contact with members of staff who are off sick.

Visits to staff at home should always be arranged in advance and in writing and staff should be given the opportunity to suggest an alternative venue and/or arrange for a third party to be present if they wish.

## **Returning to work.**

Members of staff who are signed off from work by their GP (i.e have submitted a medical certificate) are not expected to return to work before the date indicated on their last medical certificate. Should they consider themselves fit to return to work earlier than that

date, they do so, taking full personal responsibility for that decision. The manager or the chair of the committee will meet with that member of staff on their return to work. This will be an informal meeting to establish if the member of staff is fit to return to work or to establish if there are work related problems affecting his/her health.

Members of staff who have had a prolonged period of absence may require additional support to aid their re integration to the workplace, although such needs would normally be expected to have been identified prior to their date of return to work.

If the manager has any ongoing concerns regarding the member of staffs' health the committee is to be advised and an independent medical professionals advice sought.

### **Sick Pay.**

Wosc does not operate an occupational sick pay scheme. If you are ill for more than four consecutive days and meet the conditions stated on the GOV website, you may be eligible for Statutory Sick Pay (SSP). Please refer to <http://www.gov.uk/statutory-sick-pay/eligibility> . A SSP1 form will be issued to employees who do not qualify for SSP or where it is due to expire. This will allow you to apply for the employment support allowance through the job centre.

You must notify the manager of your absence from work due to illness or any other cause at least one hour before the start of your scheduled hours on the first day of absence. If you are absent for more than 7 consecutive days, you must provide a doctor's certificate. You are required to complete a self-certification note for sickness of fewer than 7 days.

### **Adoption pay.**

An employee who is adopting a child is entitled to time off with pay for attendance to 5 adoption appointments after being matched with a child. Statutory entitlements to adoption leave and adoption pay.

### **Maternity pay and maternity leave.**

An employee who becomes pregnant will be allowed reasonable time off with pay for attendance to antenatal clinics. Statutory entitlements to maternity leave and maternity pay will apply as appropriate.

### **Parental leave.**

Parents and individuals who have acquired formal responsibility for a child e.g. guardians, are entitled to take blocks of parental leave, subject to fulfilling certain criteria and agreeing dates at least 21 days in advance with the manager. Parental leave is unpaid.

### **Dependents leave.**

Employees have the right to take a reasonable period of time off to deal with an emergency involving a dependent. Dependents leave is normally unpaid.

### **Annual leave.**

Employees should agree the dates of their statutory annual leave with the Wosc manager, in all cases giving as much notice as possible. Annual leave cannot be guaranteed until it is agreed and signed off by the manager. The number of days holiday allowed is detailed in your contract.