



Water Orton Primary

Information for staff on absence procedures

This document is written and published to summarise the procedures adopted by the school to manage sickness absence and requested leave of absence.

Please refer to the full policies listed below for detailed information:

Leave of absence policy

Sickness absence management policy

These policies can be found in the staff area of the school website and are available as a hard copy from the school office. They outline the sick pay and leave of absence arrangements for support staff and teachers.

Sickness absence

Procedure for keeping in touch when you are unable to attend work:

- If you are unwell and unable to attend work you should inform the headteacher and the deputy head teacher by 7am at the latest on the first day of absence.
- Messages should be sent via text message direct to the head and deputy. DO NOT send messages on a group or in whatsapp.
- If you know that you will absent in advance of the day, please inform the head and deputy ASAP.
- On the first day of absence, you should indicate the expected length of absence as well as the reason (cold symptoms, Covid, sickness, injury) as this needs to be recorded on the absence system.
- You must contact the head and deputy to inform them of your return.

- If you are absent for an extended period of time you should make contact to update school on day 4. On day 8 you should seek advice from a doctor and obtain a fit note. (Please note that under the current Covid guidelines this period has been extended to 28 days to reduce pressure on frontline NHS services). If an absence is longer than 8 days you should make weekly contact with the head or deputy (this will be agreed depending on your circumstances)
- Following a period of absence of any length of time you may be asked to attend a return to work meeting with the head or member of senior staff.

Failure to report an absence may affect pay and may ultimately lead to disciplinary action.

Long term absence is defined in the Warwickshire County Council Policy as an absence longer than 4 weeks.

Recording and monitoring absence

The school keeps records of staff absences and monitors these in line with the Warwickshire agreed policy. This helps us to support staff who are unwell, notice patterns and ensure that undue pressure is not placed on those who remain in work.

Absences are monitored over a 12-month rolling period from September to September.

The school will inform ALL staff of their current sickness record periodically. Once part way through the year and once at the end of the summer term.

The Warwickshire Policy outlines thresholds of concern relating to staff absence. These are:

- 3 or more separate episodes of absence in any 6 months
- 5 or more episodes in any 12 months
- 10 days or more in 12 months
- A noticeable pattern, regardless of the number of days or periods of absence (e.g Monday or Friday regularly taken as sick)

If any of the above thresholds are met the head may choose to follow the staged staff absence process as outlined in full in the Warwickshire Policy.

At any stage in the absence monitoring process a member of staff may be supported by a trusted colleague or by a union rep. The school is able to provide support by referring staff to counselling, HR support or Occupational Health. Please ask if you think you would benefit from support.

What does not count as an absence?

- Pregnancy related absences
- Absence related to an accident at work
- Current special case – absence due to testing positive for Covid19

These absences will be recorded on the school's HR system but will not count towards any absence monitoring thresholds.

Requesting a Leave of Absence

The school receives regular requests for leave of absence from members of staff.

In outlining key aspects of the leave of absence policy below we aim to deal with requests fairly and consistently.

Leave may be requested for a range of reasons including routine medical appointments, family celebrations or compassionate leave.

We always take a sensitive approach to requests for leave and rarely refuse reasonable requests made in advance. We will be flexible and understanding towards individual circumstances.

In the Warwickshire agreed policy there is not the assumption that requests for leave will be granted. The policy lays out clearly whether leave should be paid or unpaid.

Reasonable notice must be given when requesting leave. Emergency leave should be requested as soon as possible to allow for alternative arrangements to be made in school.

All leave (except for emergency leave) must be requested using the Leave of Absence request form. This can be found on the school website in the staff area or collected from the school office.

Outlined below are some common leave request scenarios with both the Warwickshire policy and school stance listed. Further details can be found in the full leave of absence policy.

Type of Leave	Description	Outlined in WCC policy		School Response	
		Maximum no. of Days	Paid or Unpaid	Maximum no. of Days	Paid or Unpaid
Dependent	This leave may be requested to allow an employee to deal with an immediate crisis or set up alternative care arrangements when normal arrangements break down. The leave is intended to enable an employee to deal with an emergency situation and not to provide the care themselves. Leave can also be requested to attend medical appointments with dependents.	Up to 5 days per academic year	Unpaid for Dependents leave	Up to 5 days per academic year	1 day paid. Following days unpaid
Compassionate Leave	Sympathetic consideration will be given in the case of serious or life-threatening illnesses of a dependent. A dependent is defined,	Discretionary	Discretionary for Compassionate	Discretionary	Paid

	as the employee's parent, wife, husband or partner child, or someone who lives as part of the family, but not the employee's tenant, lodger or boarder. It also includes someone for whom the employee is the main carer.		leave (normally paid)		
Bereavement <i>Close relative</i>	A close relative is defined as a husband, wife, partner, son, daughter, father, mother, brother or sister.	Up to 5 days	Paid	Up to 5 days	Paid
Bereavement <i>Other relatives</i>	Leave will usually be granted for the employee to attend the funeral. However, at the Headteacher's discretion consideration will be given to requests for additional leave where the employee is the primary person making funeral arrangements.	Max 1 day	Paid	Max 1 day	Paid
Bereavement <i>Close friends</i>	Leave may be granted for attendance at the funeral of a close friend. Additional leave may be granted if travelling to the funeral. necessitates a longer period of absence at the Headteachers discretion.	½ day	Paid	½ day	Paid
Domestic crisis Emergency leave	The school recognises that circumstances may make it necessary and unavoidable for an employee to be absent due to a domestic crisis (including damage or disruption to property e.g. flood, burst pipes, house fire).	Discretionary	Unpaid	Discretionary	Unpaid
Fertility treatment	Each request will be considered individually in the context of the particular circumstances. Note: undergoing IVF treatment is regarded as pregnant for the period following implantation of the fertilized ova until the end of the protected period.	Discretionary	Paid	Discretionary	Paid
Cancer screening	Routine cancer screening (for example cervical cancer screening and breast examinations) should take place outside normal working hours. Where this is not possible, or where the screening is non-routine, leave of absence should be granted for the purpose of attending such appointments	As required	Paid	As required	Paid
Dental treatment	Emergency appointments only where it has not been possible to arrange them outside normal working hours.	Discretionary	Discretionary	1 day	Paid
Medical appointments and treatment	Emergency appointments or where it is not possible to arrange outside normal working hours e.g. hospital appointments	Discretionary	Discretionary	Discretionary / as required	Paid
Graduation	Leave may be requested for the employee to attend their own graduation	Discretionary	Yes	1 day	Yes

Moving house	Employees should make all efforts to move outside of their normal working hours. Where this is not possible or where an employee is moving to take up his/her post at the school, sympathetic consideration will be given to granting leave of absence.	2 days if job related 1 day (subject to impact on school)	Paid Unpaid	2 days if job related 1 day	Paid
Religious observance	The School recognises the importance of religious observance and will attempt to accommodate the needs of the employee.	Discretionary (Up to 2 days)	Discretionary	Discretionary (Up to 2 days)	Paid
Adverse Weather conditions	Where severe weather conditions prevail, employees are expected to make every effort to attend work, using alternative modes of transport where possible. Employees who are genuinely unable to attend work should where possible and with agreement of the Headteacher work from home.	Discretionary	Unpaid	Discretionary	Unpaid (unless school is closed)
Attendance at Interview	Leave of absence can be requested to attend interviews.	Discretionary	Paid	Discretionary	Paid
Jury Service	Employees are entitled under national conditions of service to receive paid leave of absence for jury service. Employees may be required to request a postponement when the service falls on key academic dates	Duration of service	Paid	Duration of service	Paid
Visits to new employers before commencement	Leave of absence can be requested to visit a new employer's workplace prior to the employee's commencement with them.	Discretionary	Discretionary	Discretionary	Discretionary
Wedding <i>Friends and relatives</i>	Only unpaid discretionary leave will be considered.	Maximum 1 day	Unpaid	Maximum 1 day	Unpaid
Other matters not covered by provisions	The Headteacher has the discretion to consider requests for leave of absence for any reason other than those detailed above or in the complete policy. Each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis and on its individual merits.	Discretionary			
Holiday booked in term time (including training days) will always be unpaid unless time is owing.					

