



POLLYANNA PRE-SCHOOL CIO

STAFF ABSENCE & MEDICATION POLICY

Statement Of Intent

This policy is to ensure that staff understand their legal obligations with regards to sickness and absences whilst employed at Pollyanna Pre-School CIO. This policy has been compiled in line with ACAS guidance: sickness and absence in the workplace; Employment law, Disability Act, EYFS statutory requirements, Ofsted requirements.

High levels of absence, including lateness and certified or uncertified sick leave, can:

- Have a detrimental effect on the children's emotional wellbeing due to inconsistent practice within the setting connected to the EYFS keyperson requirements.
- Reduce the range or standard of high-quality staff performance.
- Cause low morale and dissatisfaction.
- Cause undue stress/ fatigue to other members of staff.
- Indicate other, more deep-seated problems which may be internal or external but affect the member of staff's performance and/or wellbeing.

Staff arrival at the Pre-School or their absences must be recorded in the Pre-School register daily.

Absences will also be recorded to understand:

- How much time is lost during a working year of 38 weeks.
- Where and when absence occurs most.
- How often individual employees are absent.

The senior management will monitor absence by:

- Keeping details of individual records of sick absence, which are considered 'sensitive personal data' under the Data Protection Act 1998.
- Keeping accurate attendance records which show individual instances of absence, together with duration, reason and short-term certificated or uncertified sickness.
- This is a legal requirement under the Statutory Sick Pay (General) Regulations 1982.

Long term or continuous absence for sickness or sickness related absences at Pollyanna Pre-School CIO are taken very seriously as they affect the running of the setting, staff and children's wellbeing. Any member of staff who is absent for more than 20 consecutive working days or 20 accumulated working days over the 38-week working period will be cautioned and can expect a disciplinary as these absences can possibly affect performance.

All staff are required to update their health declaration forms every September or sooner if they have been ill and are taking medicines that may affect their performance. All new staff must complete a health declaration form before they begin their employment with the Pre-School. Any staff who do not declare an illness or the use of medicines may be cautioned and can expect a disciplinary. The senior management has a duty of care to all staff and children and aims to ensure that all staff are supported whilst they are employees of the Pre-School whilst also ensuring that staff are fit for their role and do not put at risk of harm another member of staff or the children.

A return-to-work meeting will take place when the staff member is fit to return to work. This meeting is to ensure that the staff member is fit to return to their job role and is an opportunity for senior management to raise any concerns regarding absences and the affect this is having on performance, continuity of practice and wellbeing. Consideration will be given as to whether the long-term absence or continuous absences are having a substantial and adverse effect on the staff member's ability to carry out normal duties as stated in their job description.



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Senior management may also decide to review the following:

- Working conditions
- Job role/description
- Induction and re-training
- Welfare
- Health and safety (including stress)
- Other more flexible working arrangements

Short-term certified or uncertified sickness

Although GPs are not obliged to provide patients with certificates for illnesses of seven days or less due to the nature of the work at the Pre-School, the staff member must provide reasons for their absence. If the illness is of a contagious nature, then please follow and adhere to the infectious disease policy.

Procedure:

If a member of staff needs to take off several days per week over a period of months it may not be reasonable for Pre-School management to accommodate this as it may jeopardise staff to child ratios therefore putting the Pre-School, it's staff and children at risk.

Non-medical absences: if the absence is due to a non-medical reason, then the employee must inform the senior management with 48 hours' notice.

If no explanation is given with regards to an absence, then the manager will meet with the employee, and a verbal warning will be given. If unexplained absences continue then disciplinary action will be taken.

Absences related to long-term sickness or continuous absences for ill-health:

The management will:

- Discuss the problem with the employee concerned by interviewing employees on their return to work.
- Consider alternative working arrangements, whether the job can be covered by other employees or temporary replacements and how long the job can be kept open.
- Review the employees' performance and how the sickness/absence has affected this.
- Review the effect the ongoing or long-term sickness/absence has had or is having on the business.
- Seek medical opinions from the employee's GP (with the employee's consent).

Members of staff must phone the manager by 7.30am on each day of absence and must inform the manager by 4pm if they are returning to work the next day or not, where reasonably practicable.

EYFS (3.21) Staff members must not be under the influence of alcohol or any other substance which may affect their ability to care for children. If practitioners are taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children, those practitioners should seek medical advice. Providers must ensure that those practitioners only work directly with children if medical advice received confirms that the medication is unlikely to impair that staff member's ability to look after children properly. All medication must be securely stored, and out of reach of children, at all times.

The senior management have the right to request sickness notes/certificates, medical confirmation or records, fit for work note.



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Reasonable Adjustments:

The Senior management is only under a duty to make reasonable adjustments for a disabled employee or an actual or potential disabled job applicant or a protected person eg. A pregnant member of staff.

Appraisals and supervisions may also provide an opportunity for staff to disclose a disability so that any necessary but reasonable adjustments can be discussed. All members of staff have a responsibility to share this information with the senior management.

In order to defend any claims of discrimination, the senior management will maintain records of employee absences. In relation to sick leave, this is a legal requirement under the Statutory Sick Pay (General) Regulations 1982. Any sensitive medical information about staff will be kept confidential and handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

When taking attendance management action against a member of staff, the senior management will ensure that they do not discriminate against a protected person. Protected people are a) those with a disability, b) pregnant women, c) long-term/terminal illness/condition. Disability and/or pregnancy related absences are dealt with differently and individually from other types of absence.

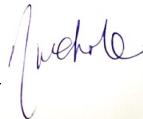
The law states: As a last resort, employers can dismiss an employee who is long-term sick, but before they can do this, employers must:

- Consider if an employee can return to work – eg working flexibly or part-time, doing different or less stressful work (with training if necessary).
- Consider the effects that the continuous absence has on the running of the business and the negative effects it may have on other staff and children.
- Consult with employees about when they could return to work and if their health will improve.

All Staff are requested to remember that they are working at a preschool with young children who are often vulnerable to illnesses and it is in the staff's own interests, the interests of the children and their families, and the interests of the Pre-School that all staff ensure that they maintain high standards of personal hygiene; do not return to work if they have a contagious illness; inform senior management of any contagious illness.

Review and Approval

This policy was reviewed and adopted on: 1st September 2025

Signed by Management Committee: _____ 

Print Name: _____ **Nikitta Wehrle**

This policy is reviewed **annually** or sooner in response to changes in legislation, guidance, or setting practices.