

Wellbeing and Attendance Policy and Procedure

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Wellbeing and Attendance Policy

1.0 Introduction to the Policy

Cumberland Council is committed to creating a working environment which puts health and wellbeing at the heart of everything we do. The Council recognises the importance of having good standards of attendance at work to maintain high levels of service delivery for the community we serve. The council also understand that work demands and personal circumstances can impact on the Wellbeing of our employees

The Council is committed to providing a healthy and safe work environment which promotes good mental and physical health and provides appropriate preventative support which can be tailored to the range of different roles and services within the council.

This policy has been designed to promote a compassionate and proactive approach to the health and wellbeing of all employees, recognising that early intervention and support at a local/line manager level can enable people to manage their health and attendance better. Line managers are empowered to create healthy workplaces, supporting employees to be well in work and making reasonable adjustments to help people to stay in work where they are experiencing long term health conditions and/or disabilities.

To support this policy the council has invested in a range of health and Wellbeing tools, resources and services and developed a clear procedure for notification and management of absence. Training will be provided to all managers on the implementation of the policy and procedure and guidance.

2.0 Scope

This document sets out the Council's Wellbeing and Attendance Policy to be followed by managers to manage attendance. Under this policy managers are empowered to use their discretion with supporting advice from HR. This policy underpins the associated Wellbeing and Attendance Procedure.

The policy applies to all employees of Cumberland Council (whether employed permanently or on a fixed-term basis, full-time or part-time, annualised hours or zero hours, term-time or part-year, supply or working on a casual basis) covered by Green Book, Burgundy Book and Chief Officer conditions of service and will not supersede any contractual rights which are included within these. The Council does not intend for this policy and procedure to create any additional contractual rights.

Please note, the term '**manager**' across all documents also refers to **headteachers/school leader** in school and education settings. The term '**HR**' across all documents refers to **the HR Advisory Team** in a council setting, and **HR Provider** in school and education settings, unless stated otherwise.

3.0 Policy Aim

The aim of this policy and procedure is to provide clear expectations of attendance and the approach that will be taken where employees are unable to achieve these expectations due to their ill health.

Specifically, the policy aims to:

- a) Provide a framework to assist with managing sickness absence
- b) Promote early intervention to offset absence
- c) Enable a consistent approach and use of available tools and services
- d) Empower line managers to seek innovative solutions
- e) Help managers and employees understand their role and responsibilities

4.0 Principles

Management of attendance should be person centred. This means prioritising wellbeing and being **compassionate** towards an employee's individual needs and circumstances. Managers are not limited to a prescriptive list of support options, instead, are encouraged to be **innovative** and **ambitious** to find bespoke solutions that **empower** and best support employee Wellbeing, taking account of individual needs. Managers and employees are expected to be proactive in taking action to work **collaboratively** together to support wellbeing at the earliest appropriate opportunity.

Managers should always apply the above principles consistently and equally, ensuring they value the health and wellbeing of all employees.

5.0 Roles and Responsibilities

Employees	Managers	HR
Make every effort to maintain satisfactory levels of attendance at work.	Foster a workplace culture where Wellbeing is embedded in working practices.	Provide training, advice and guidance on this policy and procedure to managers.
Notify their manager if they must leave work or are unable to attend work.	Manage employee attendance consistently in accordance with this policy and attached procedure.	
Maintain regular and meaningful contact with their manager (or the next level of management if the manager is not available) recognising personal circumstances.	Maintain regular and meaningful contact with employees during their absence; keeping them up to date with team developments, vacancies, and any other relevant Council/School updates.	Coach and support managers to ensure the policy and associated procedure are applied consistently and fairly.
Take personal responsibility for their own health, safety, and wellbeing, and engage with any support offered as required (either through their own GP, the Council/School, or another source such as the Occupational Health Service) to improve health conditions.	Conduct return to work interviews with the employee following every period of absence.	Monitor and update the policy and procedure in its application and ensure it reflects the operational needs of the Council/School, changing legislation and best practice as required.
	Ensure all employees are aware of this policy and other relevant Council/School policies and support available.	

Employees	Managers	HR
Engage collaboratively with their manager to achieve supportive actions and outcomes as outlined in their Wellbeing and Attendance Action Plan.	Carry out formal Wellbeing Support Meetings, as outlined in the associated procedure, ensuring employees are aware of their right to be accompanied by a recognised Trade Union representative or work colleague.	Work with managers to apply reasonable adjustments to support individuals in the workplace as necessary.
Attend Wellbeing Support Meetings and reviews.	Refer employees to Occupational Health in accordance with the associated procedure.	
Raise concerns with their manager, as soon as possible, if they believe their work is contributing to their illness, or if they sustain an injury during work.	Make HR aware of employees with repeated short term absences that are a cause for concern, or any absences exceeding 28 days.	Collaborate with managers, Occupational Health and Recruitment and Retention Partners to source alternative employment opportunities where appropriate.
Inform their manager or any other relevant parties, of any medical information that may pose a potential health and safety risk to themselves or others e.g., if they have been issued with medication that restricts their capacity to carry out normal working activities. This could be for example, medication that creates drowsiness (not limited to) anti-depressants and pain relievers.	Make HR aware of employees with repeated short term absences that are a cause for concern, or any absences exceeding 28 days.	
	Record all sickness absence accurately and in a timely manner on the HR System and in line with agreed data retention procedures.	To provide quality assurance of wellbeing support hearing documentation prior to any meeting which may result in a dismissal.
	Attend and complete all necessary training in relation to this policy and associated procedure.	
	Advise Health and Safety where an employee sustains an injury at work and carry out any investigations and reporting, as required.	
	Maintain the duty of confidentiality and comply with the Council's Data Protection Policy.	

6.0 Sick Pay Entitlement

Sick Pay entitlements are calculated differently depending on whether employees terms and conditions are governed by the NJC for Local Government Services (**Green Book** for core Council and School support staff employed by the Council) or the Conditions of Service for School Teachers in England and Wales (**Burgundy Book** for teachers).

Occupational Sick Pay (OSP) provisions (for **Green Book staff) are as follows:**

During 1st year of service	1 month's full pay and (after completing 4 month's service) 2 month's half pay
During 2nd year of service	2 month's full pay and 2 month's half pay
During 3rd year of service	4 month's full pay and 4 month's half pay
During 4th and 5th years of service	5 month's full pay and 5 month's half pay
After 5 years' service	6 month's full pay and 6 month's half pay

Occupational Sick Pay (OSP) provisions (for **Burgundy Book staff) are as follows:**

During 1st year of service	Full pay for 25 working days and after completing four calendar months' service, half pay for 50 working days
During 2nd year of service	Full pay for 50 working days and half pay for 50 working days.
During 3rd year of service	Full pay for 75 working days and half pay for 75 working days.
During 4th and subsequent years of service	Full pay for 100 working days and half pay for 100 working days

For **Green Book** employees, the rate of sick pay is calculated by deducting from the employee's entitlement on the first day, the total number of days absence during the twelve months immediately before the first day of absence.

For teachers (**Burgundy Book** Terms and Conditions) entitlement renews on 1st April each year and count back is only considered if an absence is continuous on the 1st of April.

If employees do not meet the expectations of this policy and procedure, the Council/School reserves the right to withhold Occupational Sick Pay and they will only be entitled to Statutory Sick Pay.

Separate guidance and template toolkits are available for managers/headteachers to assist them in applying this policy and procedure– Guidance Toolkit (Appendix 1) and Templates Toolkit (Appendix 2).

Wellbeing and Attendance Procedure

1.0 Introduction to the Procedure

This document sets out the Council's Wellbeing and Attendance Procedure to be followed by managers to manage attendance, and for employees to engage with if they are not fit enough to work. This procedure sits alongside the Wellbeing and Attendance Policy which outlines the ethos underpinning the Council's approach to attendance management and supporting Wellbeing. Managers/Headteachers are expected to take a compassionate approach when implementing this procedure, to make reasonable adjustments in exceptional circumstances, recognising the challenges of some health conditions.

Separate guidance and template toolkits are available for managers/headteachers to assist them in applying this policy and procedure, and to employees to assist with application – Guidance Toolkit and Templates Toolkit.

2.0 Notification and Certification of Absence

The first point of notification of sickness provides an opportunity to discuss the absence, the employee's wellbeing and any actions which can be taken to support the employee.

When notifying of sickness absence the employee must:

For Council employees - telephone their manager, within 1 hour of their expected start time. If the manager is not available, employees should contact their deputy/nominated contact to report their absence and provide a contact number for their manager to call them back.

In exceptional circumstances - a designated person may notify the manager of the employee's absence, and/or this can be notified by text and email. In such circumstances, managers should take a pragmatic and compassionate approach and seek advice from HR if needed.

Local arrangements for notification of absence can be agreed by line managers. It is the line managers responsibility to inform employees of these.

For School employees telephone the school before 07:30am. If the call is not answered, employees must continue to phone until contact is made.

Employees should check their school's own notification procedure to ensure they are notifying their absence in the correct way. For example in schools there may be a nominated contact other than the Headteacher, and they may require a text/email follow up.

When reporting an absence, all employees are expected to provide the following information if possible:

- The nature of their absence, the date their absence began and estimated return date (if known).
- Agree how they will maintain contact their manager during their absence. Whether their absence is related to an incident at work.

2.1 Fit Notes

Employees must ensure that any of their absences over 7 calendar days (including weekends) are covered by a medical certificate (fit note). Employees must send this to their manager as soon as possible following it being issued by the medical practitioner. Employees should also allow adequate time to book a follow up medical appointment if they require a further medical certificate (fit note).

If there's a delay getting a fit note, the employee should contact their manager to explain:

- why there's a delay – for example, difficulty booking a doctor's appointment
- when they are likely to get the fit note

3.0 Wellbeing Support Meetings

Wellbeing support meetings are an important part of this procedure and can be either informal or formal meetings. Managers do not need to wait until an absence occurs before calling an informal Wellbeing support meeting and should act quickly if they have concerns around an employee's Wellbeing. The purpose of these meetings is to provide a safe space to discuss any Wellbeing concerns and put preventative measures and support in place.

Where the long term absence or short term absence procedures are instigated, Wellbeing support meetings will be formal meetings as described in section 5.22, 5.31 and 5.4 below. A minimum of five days' notice must be given. Managers can also arrange informal meetings alongside the formal meeting schedule for example, to keep in touch.

Wellbeing support meetings should be documented through the Wellbeing and Attendance Contact Log AT1.

4.0 Return to Work

Managers should maintain the agreed contact with the employee throughout their absence. Managers or a nominated deputy must carry out a return to work wellbeing support meeting on the day of return or as soon as possible thereafter, regardless of the length of absence.

The return to work wellbeing support meeting should be an informal chat between an employee and their manager (or nominated deputy such as a supervisor) whereby both parties can ensure the employee is ready to return and has any support they need.

Managers should take a person centred approach to planning the return to work taking account of the length and reason for absence. Managers should take a flexible approach, informed through occupational health where necessary. Please refer to the guidance to ensure all supportive options have been considered with the employee including any reasonable adjustments where required.

For School employees – Return to work wellbeing support meeting (AT2) to be completed and sent to your HR Provider/School Admin Team to be stored on the employee's personnel file.

For Council employees – Return to work Wellbeing support meeting form to be completed through employee's iTrent record.

Please see Return to Work (Inc. Phased Return) Guidance for further information.

5.0 Absence Management

It is expected an employee will do their utmost to facilitate a return to work at the earliest opportunity. We are supportive of activities which can aid rehabilitation and recovery; however, it is not expected that anyone who is absent from work due to sickness or injury to:

- a. Participate in any sports, hobbies, social or other activities which could aggravate the illness or injury or delay recovery.
- b. Engage in any other activity not mentioned above which is likely to delay their recovery or prolong their absence.
- c. Where there is management agreement to undertake secondary employment, a fit note must be provided where the employee is able to attend other employment but not their Council role(s).

Managers with any queries regarding an employee's conduct whilst absent from work due to sickness or injury are advised to speak to HR in the first instance and seek medical advice.

5.1 Representation

Throughout the short term and long term procedures, employees have the right to be accompanied by a TU representative or a work colleague at any formal meeting.

Employees are expected to advise their manager whether they will be accompanied by anyone at the meetings.

The manager should discuss with HR if a request is made by an employee to be accompanied by any other person not stated above.

Employees should contact their trade union as soon as possible before the meeting takes place to allow adequate notice.

5.2 Short Term Absence Procedure

Short term absence is any absence less than 28 calendar days. The short term procedure is intended to deal with recurrent short term absence and/or where there are emerging patterns of absence. **It should be noted that recurrent short term absence can often be linked to an underlying medical reason, disability and/or difficult personal circumstances and a referral to Occupational Health should be considered.**

5.21 Short Term Absence Threshold

Employees may need to take time off from time to time due to ill health. However, recurrent short term absence highlights potential underlying ill health or other Wellbeing or employment issues. This procedure introduces a threshold for intervention, to ensure that measures are put in place to support individual employees and also to clearly explain the consequences of recurrent short term absence, which may lead to dismissal. A staged approach has been taken to ensure that every opportunity is provided to support our employees and also to ensure transparency and consistency.

Short term absence intervention thresholds for a 12 month rolling period are listed below, however these can be adapted by managers, for example as a reasonable adjustment for someone with a disability.

- 2 working days per week = 4 days and/or 3 occasions
- 4 working days per week = 8 days and/or 3 occasions
- 5 working days per week = 10 days and/or 3 occasions

A pattern of absence causing concern is, for example:

- Regular absences occurring on the same day e.g. first or last day of the working week.
- Multiple absences pre or post annual leave.
- School holidays (Council staff).
- Public holidays.
- Payday.

Note: Presenting as sick on days where annual leave has previously been denied may be considered as a disciplinary matter.

If employees meet these thresholds, managers should discuss them during a formal Wellbeing Support Meeting as outlined below. At all times consideration should be given to potential and possibly undiagnosed underlying health conditions and/or disability, workplace infections and other work-related or non-work related factors.

If an employee meets the short term absence intervention threshold or there is a pattern of absence causing concern, their manager should arrange a formal Wellbeing Support Meeting at the earliest opportunity.

5.22 Wellbeing Support Monitoring Period

Stage 1 Wellbeing Support Monitoring

Where an employee meets the attendance threshold, a formal Stage 1 Wellbeing Support Meeting will be arranged by the manager under the short term procedure.

These meetings should be conducted compassionately in accordance with the Council's values. Employees should take the opportunity to share any information which is impacting on their attendance, in order for appropriate support and interventions to be put in place. Attendance expectations, review timescales and additional measures to support attendance will be agreed. This will normally be 6 months. Managers are encouraged to contact HR for advice if needed.

Stage 2 Wellbeing Support Monitoring

If recurrent short term absence continues following the Stage 1 Wellbeing Support Meeting and within the stage 1 monitoring period, a formal Stage 2 Wellbeing Support Meeting will be held. This will follow the same format as the Stage 1 meeting. A referral to occupational health may be needed. Attendance expectations, review timescales and additional measures to support attendance will be agreed. The monitoring period would normally be 6 months and a formal attendance warning letter may be issued.

Stage 3 Wellbeing Support Monitoring

Following the issue of a formal attendance warning letter, if there is further recurrent short term absence which does not achieve the attendance expectations provided in the formal

Stage 2 letter, a formal Stage 3 Wellbeing Support Meeting will be held. This will follow the same format as the Stage 2 meeting. An occupational health referral and report should be requested prior to this meeting. Attendance expectations, monitoring timescales and additional measures to support attendance will be agreed. The monitoring period would normally be 12 months and a final or further attendance warning letter may be issued.

Stage 4 Wellbeing Support Hearing

If attendance concerns continue within the final monitoring period, following the Stage 3 Wellbeing Support Meeting and where a final attendance warning has been issued, a Stage 4 Wellbeing Support Hearing will be held. At the Stage 4 Wellbeing Support Hearing, the full case will be considered, and outcomes could include the potential for a further review period, any reasonable adjustment, consideration of suitable alternative roles or dismissal.

If employees meet the required standard of improvement during the relevant monitoring period, there will be a further Wellbeing support meeting and normal monitoring will resume.

A compassionate and supportive approach will be adopted at all stages of this procedure. All Wellbeing meetings can be adjourned at any time at the discretion of the manager or the employee, for example to request support or to reflect.

Only once all reasonable supportive options have been exhausted, all available facts and medical reports have been considered and absence levels remain unacceptable, the Council/School may consider dismissal. Please note, decisions on an employee's future employment prospects should not be made where the medical evidence is out of date (i.e. this should normally be within 3 months of the meeting). A Stage 4 Wellbeing Support Hearing will then be convened and will be chaired by a Senior Manager/Panel of Governors.

Please see Short term and Long term Absence(s) Guidance and How to facilitate a Wellbeing Support Meeting for further information on Wellbeing Support Meeting discussions and monitoring periods.

If an employee's attendance levels deteriorate during the 12 months after the end their monitoring period, depending on individual circumstances, managers may consider restarting the wellbeing support monitoring period at Stage 3 or below, as appropriate. This will be at the same stage or lower than the previous Wellbeing support monitoring stage. Managers can seek HR advice if needed.

5.3 Long Term Absence Procedure

Long term absence is typically considered to last for 28 calendar days or more. Long term absences are often linked to an underlying medical reason and/or disability. The long term procedure is intended to support employees with health and wellbeing improvements that enables them to return to work and maintain sustainable attendance thereafter.

It is very important that managers are proactive in supporting their employees with potentially long term absence. Short term absence can lead to longer term absence without early intervention. When it becomes clear to managers that an absence may develop into a long term absence, consideration should be given to refer the employee Occupational Health and arrange a formal Wellbeing Support Meeting at the earliest opportunity.

Medical advice should be considered in conjunction with other information about the employee's circumstances to determine the timings and number of formal Wellbeing Support Meetings required, which will vary depending on the case.

5.31 Wellbeing Support Meetings – Long Term Absence

These meetings should be used to discuss an employee's underlying health conditions or wellbeing issues, and/or disability which may be contributing to the absence(s), including, but not limited to the following:

- Advice from Occupational Health and/or specialist medical advice;
- Reasonable adjustments and any other supportive measures that may be appropriate to best support their health and wellbeing on their return;
- Temporary variation(s) of contract;
- Review of their absence record;
- Redeployment – Alternative Employment Programme (AEP);
- Ill Health Retirement (long term absence)
- Next steps – any agreed support, actions and reviews to be documented in the employee's Wellbeing Support Plan (AT7).

Managers can seek HR advice if needed.

5.32 Long Term Absence Principles

It is a priority of the Council, where possible to support employees on long term absence back into their role or a suitable alternative role where it is not possible to return to their substantive role. When all reasonable supportive options have been exhausted and all available facts and medical reports have been considered and a return to work is not reasonably foreseen, the Council/School may consider dismissal and ill health retirement. Please note, decisions on an employee's future employment prospects should not be made where the medical evidence is out of date (approximately 3 months and older).

5.4 Capability due to Ill Health - Dismissals

For short and long term absences, a Wellbeing Support Hearing will be convened and chaired by a Senior Manager or above/Panel of Governors prior to any dismissal.

This will be chaired by a Senior Manager or above/Panel of Governors and the full details of the case will be considered. A decision will be made about the future employment of the employee, which could include dismissal, redeployment, a further final warning or no action. It is essential that an up-to-date occupational health report is provided to support the hearing.

5.5 Alternative Employment Programme

The Alternative Employment Programme can be used to identify suitable alternative roles where an employee is not able to continue in their role due to their ill health or disability. This is normally available for a period of 3 months. Further information can be found in the Alternative Employment Programme Guidance.

6.0 Industrial Injury

If the employee states their absence is due to an incident that happened at work, the manager must follow the Health and Safety Procedure, ensuring an incident form is completed, an investigation is carried out by the appropriate designated person. The absence reason should also be recorded as an accident on duty.

Please see Industrial Injury Guidance and Reporting, **Recording and Investigation of Adverse Events Procedure** for further information.

7.0 Pregnancy Related Absence

It is against the law (Equality Act 2010) to treat an employee unfairly because of a pregnancy-related illness. If an employee cannot come to work because of a pregnancy-related illness, they should notify their absence in the usual way, and they will get their usual sick pay. Managers are encouraged to be as flexible as they can in making reasonable adjustments to enable pregnant employees to continue working. Please see the Maternity, Paternity, Adoption and Parental Leave Policy for further information.

Managers must record pregnancy-related absences separately from other sickness absences. These absences should not be counted towards the attendance threshold outlined within this procedure.

8.0 Disability Related Absence

Employees may require time off related to a disability which is not appropriately classified as sickness absence for example, to receive treatment. The Disability Leave Guidance outlines the procedure which provides for up to 10 days of disability leave each year (manager can grant more than 10 days), either planned or unplanned. Where employees have disclosed a disability, managers should refer to the disability leave procedure to consider whether disability leave may be appropriate.

9.0 Absence Without Authorised Leave

All employees have a contractual duty to attend work in accordance with agreed working practices. If an employee does not follow the correct notification procedure (see section 2) they will be considered as absent without authorised leave or AWOL.

There can be many reasons which lead to absence without authorised leave, and this should always be approached sensitively. Please see Absent Without Authorised Leave Guidance for further information. Managers should seek HR advice if an employee is absent without authorised leave.

10.0 Third Party Accidents

Note: Schools should check with their HR Provider what their process for third party accidents is.

If an employee has an accident outside of work and a third party is liable for the absence, there is a contractual right to recover the payment of sick pay from the responsible party. The normal sick pay entitlement will apply.

11.0 Annual Leave and Sickness Absence

*Please note the following does not apply to School employees.

Employees will continue to accrue their holiday entitlement during any period of sick leave.

Where employees become ill during annual leave, they may request for their annual leave and/or bank holiday leave days to be rescheduled. In such circumstances they must follow the same notification procedures as set out above including providing a fit note for absences over 7 calendar days.

Employees may request annual leave whilst they are on long term absence. Such requests must be discussed and agreed with their manager before any holiday is taken. The period of absence will count as one period of sickness for the purposes of sickness monitoring and determining sick pay entitlement. However, where an employee's sickness entitlement has reduced to half or no pay or goes onto half or no pay during their sickness period, and approval is granted, they are entitled to receive full pay for this leave period.

For further information on annual leave and sickness absence, please refer to the **Annual Leave Policy**.

12.0 Other Time Off

The Council/School will support employees if they reasonably require other paid time off connected to a health condition which is not appropriately classified as sickness absence. Employees and managers should refer to the Other Time off Work Booklet for details of other leave provisions.

13.0 Directed Medical Absence

There may be times when an employee wishes to attend/return to work but due to their role it may be deemed a hazard, either to the individual concerned or to others e.g. for infection control.

Please see Directed Medical Absence Guidance for further information. Managers should seek support from HR if Directed Medical Absence is required for an employee.

14.0 Terminal Illness

The Council recognises that receiving a terminal diagnosis is a difficult time for employees, families, friends and colleagues. Everyone is individual and their experience of this will differ from an employee wanting to maintain privacy to openly talking about it.

Further information and support can be found in the Fast Track Ill Health Guidance.

15.0 Occupational Health

The Council/School's Occupational Health Service/Provider is available for managers to contact for assistance and advice which may assist with supporting an employee who is absent, or employees who have underlying health or wellbeing issues but remain in work. To make a referral to Occupational Health, managers must obtain consent from the employee.

The service will also work on the promotion and improvement of employee health and wellbeing, providing advice on reasonable workplace adjustments. Employees can also be referred for counselling where required and physiotherapy where available. Referrals must be made by management via their Occupational Health Provider at the earliest opportunity.

For Council employees Occupational Health operate an employee self-referral scheme for counselling. For steps on how to make a referral, please refer to the Self-referral for Counselling Guidance.

For School employees – Schools should contact their own Occupational Health Provider and follow their process for how to make a referral.

For Cumberland Council/Sovereign Cumbria County Council employees – Referrals can be made via the Occupational Health Service Portal - [Portal \(cumbria.gov.uk\)](https://portal.cumbria.gov.uk)

For Sovereign District Council employees (Allerdale, Copeland and Carlisle City) – Choose OH are the Occupational Health Provider for these employees and referrals must be made by managers using the Management Referral Form .

To enable you, as managers to receive an Occupational Health Report that provides you with the advice and guidance you require to support your employees, you will need to provide as much information as possible on the referral form. Please see Occupational Health Service Manager Guidance for further information.

16.0 Further Guidance and Support

As a manager, it is important to know they will not be the expert on every eventuality an employee may bring to them. However, it is important they become an expert in listening and signposting. Cumberland Council has policies on things like special leave and/or flexible working, should an employee require a period of time away from the workplace or adjustments to their usual working pattern/hours for personal reasons. Occupational Health can also help with signposting to specialist services available to employees, for example for drug or alcohol dependency, gambling awareness, domestic violence or stress, anxiety, and depression.

Note: Schools should contact their own HR providers for further information.

The Council's Wellbeing support and resources page provides details of external organisations and national helplines and websites who are available to provide support regarding a wide range of health and wellbeing issues. To access this information, please visit – [**Employee information - Health and Wellbeing - Wellbeing support and resources | Cumberland Council**](#)

- a. Health & Safety (departmental & corporate) – [**Corporate Health & Safety Information \(sharepoint.com\)**](#)
- b. For support and advice with the policy and procedure, managers can contact the HR Advisory Team either via the Portal PPL Home - HR Portal ([**service-now.com**](#)) or **0300 373 2754**.
- c. Trade Union Representatives play an important role in the Council/School and in providing support to their members – [**Trade Unions and Employee Relations | Cumberland Council**](#)

Where employees do not have access to the intranet, hard copy versions of the documents can be made available.

17.0 Summary

Task / Action	Timescale
Employee to report sickness absence	As soon as possible, generally within an hour of normal start time. Some business areas may have different notification procedures for operational reasons. School staff – before 07:30am if possible or as per school reporting procedure. Update manager after 3 days if still unfit for work.
Provide Fit Notes	Absence over 7 days – medical certificate to be sent to manager immediately after receiving from Medical Practitioner.
Keep in Touch	On a weekly basis, or as agreed with your nominated supervisor/manager/headteacher.
Return to Work Interview	On or before first day back after absence – before commencing other duties or as per school procedure. May be face to face or virtual, as appropriate.
Formal Wellbeing Support Meetings under Short term and Long term Procedure	Employees given at least 5 working days' notice of the meeting. Number and timings of meetings depend on the circumstances in each case.
Wellbeing Support Hearing	Employees given at least 5 working days' notice of the hearing, unless otherwise requested by employee to hold sooner.

Name of School:	
Date by which the school have adopted the policy and procedure:	
Signature of Chair of Governors:	

Version Control	Changes Made	Author
Version 1 – November 2025	New policy and procedure for Cumberland Council replacing the previous absence procedure. This policy and procedure also replaces the legacy policies of Cumbria County Council, Allerdale District Council, Copeland Borough Council and Carlisle City Council following the Local Government Reorganisation on 01 April 2023.	HR/OD