

Woodland Corner

Sickness Absence Policy

Woodland Corner recognises that employees may be absent for a variety of reasons. This policy sets out the framework for dealing with employee sickness absence.

This policy does not form part of employees' contracts of employment, and it may be amended at any time.

Procedure

- Employees must report any sickness absence to the pre-school manager before 8am by telephoning or messaging using the manager's personal mobile. The employee must let the manager know the reason for their absence and how long they expect to be absent.
- If the manager is unwell, she should notify the Business Manager.
- Any sickness absence of less than seven days requires the employee to complete a self-certification form, available from the manager.
- Employees must obtain a "Statement of Fitness for Work" from their GP (or eligible healthcare professional) for sickness absence of more than seven days. This should be forwarded to the manager as soon as possible. If the absence continues, further medical certificates must be provided to cover the whole period of absence.
- A return-to-work interview with the manager may take place for an employee returning to work following sickness absence. This is at the manager's discretion and will not happen in all circumstances. However, a return-to-work interview is advised where the absence has exceeded 10 days and/or where the nature of the illness means that duties on return to work may need to be altered. The purpose of this interview is to establish the reason for and cause of the absence, to confirm that the employee is fit to return to work, and to assess whether any reasonable adjustments are needed.
- For any period of long-term sickness absence (continuous absence of more than four weeks), Woodland Corner may request medical records and/or request employees attend an appointment with an Occupational Health advisor. Woodland Corner management will invite employees on long-term sickness absence to attend regular 'keeping in touch' meetings, which employees should attend if fit enough to do so. Long-term sickness absence may ultimately lead to dismissal, taking into account any relevant medical information available to the employer.

Sick Pay

Employees may be entitled to statutory sick pay (SSP) where they meet the qualifying criteria. SSP will be paid in accordance with Department for Work and Pensions requirements and no payment will be made for the first three working days in a period of incapacity for work.

Employees with more than three months' service will be paid in full for up to a maximum of five sessions in any 12-month rolling period ("occupational sick pay"). A "session" is the number of hours that the employee was scheduled to work on the day(s) that s/he is absent due to sickness. Occupational sick pay shall be calculated on the basis of the first five sessions that an employee misses due to sickness absence(s). This does not affect any entitlement

employees may have to receive SSP for the same periods of sickness absence, although any occupational sick pay from Woodland Corner shall be inclusive of any SSP due to the employee.

Disciplinary action

Where an employee's attendance record gives cause for concern, for example because of the reason for absence or frequent short-term absences, the manager will notify the employee of their concerns and require them to attend a review meeting.

Suspected abuse of sick pay will be dealt with using Woodland Corner's disciplinary procedure.

Record keeping

All records relating to staff absence and sickness will be maintained by the Business Manager and will be stored confidentially and securely.

Woodland Corner will comply with and follow all relevant provisions of the Access to Medical Records Act 1988.

Time off for medical appointments

Absence for medical appointments (e.g., GP, dental, hospital appointments) is not classed as sickness for the purpose of this policy. Reasonable time off is allowed to attend these appointments, but staff are expected to arrange appointments to minimise disruption to the setting (for example, by booking appointments outside of working hours or at the beginning or end of the day where possible).

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Woodland Corner

Held on (date) 28 th January 2026	
Signed on behalf of the Management Committee	Jess Brown
Role of signatory (e.g. chairperson etc.)	Chairperson
Review date	January 2027