



SICKNESS ABSENCE POLICY

NOTIFICATION

Any staff absent due to illness must inform their Manager/Team Leader by telephone in person at least one hour before their shift is due to start on the first day of illness, if on an early shift. If on a late shift the Manager/ Team Leader must be informed by 8am. Staff should inform their Manager/Team Leader of the reason for their injury or illness, their expected length of absence from work, contact details and any outstanding or urgent work requiring attention.

Leaving of messages on answerphones does not guarantee that the message is received. If a message is left a second call must be made during the first day of absence to ensure that the message has been received.

Contact by e-mail or text message is not acceptable and only in extenuating circumstances should someone else call in for a member of staff e.g. if the member of staff has been hospitalised, imprisoned, or is suffering from severe mental health issues.

Failure to comply with the Company sickness notification procedure will result in the absence being considered as unauthorised leave and will therefore be unpaid.

During the first five working days of sickness absence staff must contact the Manager/Team Leader by 3pm each day to indicate whether or not they will be returning to work on the following day to enable alternative staffing arrangements to be made. If there is some uncertainty, it is likely that staff returning from sickness absence will be asked to work a late shift, to ensure that the nursery is sufficiently staffed the following morning. For sickness covered by a medical certificate they must telephone the Manager/Team Leader by 3pm on the day before the certificate runs out to confirm that they will be returning to work.

All staff must complete a self-certification form for any sick-leave up to five working days, and obtain a doctor's fit note for longer periods of sickness.

Any staff becoming ill on holiday must telephone on the first day of illness and obtain a doctor's fit note for the whole period of sickness.

All fit notes must be forwarded to the General Office.

Staff attending hospital will normally use half a day's sick leave, unless the appointment states that a full day is required. Appointment cards must be shown to the Manager/Team Leader. (If staff do not wish to return to work following an appointment they may request time back or annual leave in the usual way.)

STATEMENT OF FITNESS FOR WORK

These have replaced the Medical certificates which were previously issued by GP's.



In future staff will either be advised that they are :

Not fit for work – which has the same meaning as the sick note and is the doctor's advice that someone is too ill to work

May be fit for work – which advises the patient that they may be able to return to work with suitable support from their employer.

Should staff receive a '**may be fit for work**' statement then their Manager will discuss the suggested adjustments indicated by the doctor with them and should it be possible to accommodate these, then they may return to work. Should this not be possible then the statement will be used as if the doctor had advised '**not fit for work**'.

RETURN TO WORK INTERVIEWS

Each time an employee returns to work following an absence due to illness, a return to work interview will be carried out by the Manager/Team Leader as soon as is practical and the General Office informed.

PAYMENT DURING SICK LEAVE

During the first 6 months of employment York Childcare Ltd (YCL) offers full time staff 5 days paid sick leave. Any sick leave above 5 days within this period will then only attract Statutory Sick Pay (SSP), if qualifying. Throughout this policy, part time staff's entitlement will be on a pro rata basis to full time staff and any reference to entitlement will be pro-rated accordingly.

After completing the 6 month probationary period, YCL offers all full time staff 20 days paid (ie. company) sick leave within any 52 week period of time. This is known as a rolling or cumulative sick leave system. The sick leave year starts on the first day an employee is off sick and keeps moving subject to further sickness absence. It means that if at any point in time, a member of staff is off sick for more than 20 days within any 52 week time period, the additional days will be paid at the SSP rate, if qualifying.

For the first 20 days of sick leave (5 if within probationary period), SSP will be topped up to full basic pay by YCL. Any further period of sickness will be covered by Statutory Sick Pay only, if the absence qualifies for SSP.

Management have the discretion to increase or reduce sickness payments beyond these limits.

SICKNESS MONITORING

Any member of staff who is absent from work regularly or on 5 or more occasions in any one year period will be given the support of sickness monitoring to ensure their health needs are not being overlooked. They should expect to be contacted from time to time by their Manager in



order to discuss their wellbeing, expected length of continued absence from work and any work that requires attention. Such contact is intended to provide reassurance and will be kept to a reasonable minimum.

The employee will be notified in writing that their sick leave is being closely monitored, and a meeting will be arranged with the employee and their Manager for an informal discussion about their health needs.

Certain recommendations may be made following this conversation, such as advising an employee to seek professional medical advice. It may also be beneficial to write to the employees' doctor for a professional opinion as to whether it is in the best health interests of the employee to continue trying to meet the demands of the post. Employees will be asked to give their written permission for their doctor to be contacted. However, if this consent is not forthcoming and the required information from a doctor cannot be provided, this could lead to:

- medical capability assessment
- commencement of disciplinary procedures (according to the circumstances) for not complying with company policy

The Management Board will be kept informed by the General Manager as to which employees are being monitored.

If an employee's absence through illness suggests that further help is needed YCL will attempt to arrange this.

It may also be appropriate to ask an independent doctor or occupational health specialist for a professional opinion.

ABSENTEEISM

If, following the sickness monitoring, it is decided that the level of absence is too high to be acceptable to YCL then the situation will be reviewed. If there are no acceptable health related reasons for the absence the Company may treat this as a conduct issue and deal with this under the disciplinary procedure.

PROLONGED ILL HEALTH

YCL is a small organisation with a small work force split into small units. Unfortunately, for this reason, prolonged periods of absence cannot be accommodated indefinitely.

Should an employee be absent from work due to prolonged ill health, a review of their suitability for the post may be required. YCL reserves the right to engage the services of an occupational health specialist to identify whether an employee is medically able to return to work.



If, after review, it is concluded that the employee is unable to continue in his/her present role, the issue becomes one of capability and will be dealt with under YCL's Sickness Absence Procedure.

Under Review