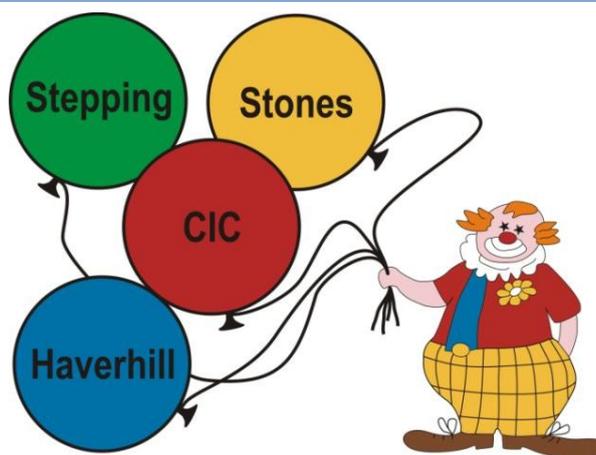


General Welfare Requirement: Safeguarding and Promoting Children's Welfare

The provider must take necessary steps to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.



51 Staff Sickness and Absence Policy

Policy statement

This staff sickness and absence Policy Statement at Stepping Stones recognises that employees may be absent from the organisation for a variety of reasons. To ensure that all staff are treated in a consistent and equitable manner, this document provides the framework for dealing with such circumstances. Absence: whether due to illness or any other circumstances is defined (for the purpose of this document) as the non-attendance of workers when they are contracted to attend.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.3 Keeping safe 1.4 Health and well-being	2.1 Respecting each other	3.4 The wider context	4.2 Active learner

Procedures

Any sickness/absence should be reported to the Manager by 7.30am, by telephoning the preschool landline (01440 703833 and all staff should take a note of this) giving a clear indication of the nature of the illness/absence and a likely return date. The staff member (absent due to illness) is required to ensure cover for the Pre-School. (It is the responsibility of the staff member to ensure their absence has been received by the Manager- so a left message or text is not acceptable).

Any sickness absence of less than seven days (short-term sickness/absence) requires an employee to complete a 'Self-Certificate' available from any Doctor's Surgery or downloadable from www.direct.gov.uk. 'Self-Certificates' are enforced at the Manager discretion and is dependent on an employee's previous record of short term sickness/absence). Sickness absence which exceeds seven days (long-term sickness/absence) requires an employee to obtain a 'Fit Note' from their GP and attend a 'Return to Work Meeting' with the Manager.

A back to work meeting will take place after each period of long-term sickness/absence and before the employee can return to work. The back to work meeting will be held within an agreed timeframe once the employee indicates their request to return to work. The Manager must offer a return to work meeting to the employee within two working days of their request to return to work. The fit note and back to work meeting is to establish the reason for and cause of the absence, to consider whether there is anything the Manager or organisation can do to help (make reasonable adjustments) and to confirm that the employee is fit to return to work. If the employee is deemed unfit for work then they must return to their GP and the cycle of absence, fit note and back to work meeting will be repeated until the employee is able to return to work or a formal process will be triggered and if appropriate their employment may be terminated. This formal process will also be triggered if an employee's explanation for absence is not forthcoming, considered to be unsatisfactory or if absence is not reported following the needed procedure listed in this policy.

- If long term sickness /absence prevents an employee returning to work or is recurrent or if frequent illness or absence exceeds recommended short term illness/absence within an agreed timeframe a more formal process will be triggered (agreed absence and timeframes can be agreed and extended on the advice of an employee's GP).
- A fit note can be obtained from a GP or hospital (the employee may be charged for the fit note if requested or completed before the 7th day of absence).

At Stepping Stones we adhere to Government recommendations -

If an employee is sick twice for 4-7days in a relatively short period (within a 3 month period) or sick for 4 or more short periods in a 3 month period, a formal process will be triggered.

The Manager can contact HMRC to arrange for an employee to be medically examined (this can be actioned once the employee returns to work).

HMRC report will give an opinion of the employee's fitness to work, state if there are medical grounds/reasons for an employee to have frequent or long-term absence and will help employers to decide if the employee is capable or incapable to work (the employer must obtain the employee's consent for a medical exam). However if the employer deems the medical exam is necessary and the employee withholds consent, then this will trigger a formal process.

Formal Process (In conjunction from Stepping Stones Disciplinary & Grievance Procedure)

Additionally, a sick employee will have their employment terminated

- If reasonable adjustments to their role, duties or hours cannot facilitate their return to work.
- If returning to work will not improve or worsen their health.

Advice on short and long term absence

National Insurance Contributions and Employers Office

HM Revenue and Customs

BA9 1AN

Enclosing

- Employees full name, address, and date of birth, gender and National Insurance Number
- Date of latest period and nature of absence (credited by a GP)
- Employee's written consent
- Copies of medical certificates or fit notes submitted to an employee within a 12 month period (naming the GP and GP Surgery address)
- Employee's occupation and main duties
- Reason for requesting an opinion
- Outcome of action already taken by employer
- Employees reason for their absence/s

Statutory Pay Disputes Team TEL: 03000560630

All records relating to staff absence/sickness will be stored confidentially and securely.

Sick Pay

- Normal statutory sick pay applies. Please refer to your individual contract of employment (Sick pay may be ceased as part of a formal process)

Maternity

- Absence relating to pregnancy will be recorded separately from sickness records. Employees are entitled to reasonable time-off with pay, to attend antenatal clinics. Statutory Maternity Pay will apply as appropriate. Staff should endeavour to make routine appointments outside of work time where possible.

Disability

- Absence relating to disability will be recorded separately from sickness records. We work within the framework of the 'Equality Act 2010' to ensure an inclusive and anti-discriminatory approach.

Time Off For Dependents

- In emergencies where normal childcare arrangements break down or where an employee is primarily or solely responsible for a child, dependent relative or partner who becomes ill or incapable, then an employee can request up to two days leave to organise appropriate care. This leave will be unpaid and the request should be made to the Manager as soon as a problem is identified

Time off for Medical Appointments

Where possible, appointments for Doctor, Dentist, Optician, Hospital etc. should be made outside of normal working hours.

Bereavement/Compassionate Leave

Please refer to individual contract of employment.

Annual Leave/Holiday Entitlement

Please refer in individual contract of employment.

For further Guidance on all matters relating to sickness and absence, including your rights as an employee and the relative legislation please refer to guidance found at

www.acas.org.uk and/or www.gov.uk/taking-sick-leave and/or www.direct.gov.uk

Gov.UK Sickness Guidance Library www.gov.uk/serach?q=Sickness

Gov.UK Statutory Sick Pay: Employee Fitness to Work

www.gov.uk/guidance/statutory-sick-pay-fitness-to-work--doctors-fit-note--statements-forwork

These sites were also used as a point of reference/guidance in the process of creating this document.

Please also refer to:

- Disciplinary & Grievance Policy and Procedure (Stepping Stones Childcare & Education CIC)
- Employment and Staffing Policy (Stepping Stones Childcare & Education CIC)
- Valuing Diversity and Promoting Equality (Stepping Stones Childcare & Education CIC)

Please note that all staff should read and be aware of the MASH & LADO posters within the setting.

This policy was adopted by	Stepping Stones Childcare & Education CIC
On	28.02.2017
Date to be reviewed	September 2020
Signed on behalf of the management	
Name of signatory	ELAINE MCMANUS
Role of signatory	MANAGER
Name of signatory	ANNE JESSOP
Role of signatory	DEPUTY

Review:

This policy is reviewed every year or whenever deemed necessary by the manager in the light of events and changes in the law.

This policy was given to staff to read on 18/08/2019 and acknowledged by staff electronically.