



## **Employee Responsibility**

Little Discoverers Nursery staff should of course strive to achieve 100% attendance, but we believe this should not fall below 95% attendance. Employees have a responsibility to help their own recovery by making doctors' appointments and getting the correct help. It is the employee's responsibility to be aware of the procedure to follow when reporting sickness or absence from work.

### **Sickness absence reporting procedure:**

Reporting sickness absence should be done using the following guidelines. Failure to follow these guidelines could result in disciplinary action.

On the first day of absence, employees must:

1. Text message/ring the manager on 07415160018 at the earliest convenience so the manager can arrange cover.
2. A text message to management or communication through other staff will not be accepted.
3. A brief description of your illness will be asked for by management.
4. The employee who will be absent must be the person to speak with management unless you are hospitalised or incapacitated, then and only then will it be acceptable for a family member to call for you.
5. If the employee is aware that the illness is likely to last for more than one day, they must discuss this with management when calling the setting.
6. Any absences lasting 3 days or more you must provide a sick note completed by a medical professional for the period of absence.
7. Employees must call the setting again no later than 1pm that same day to discuss upcoming days.

### **Exclusion Periods:**

Working with children means that employees are in contact with illnesses that can be highly contagious. We take the health of our staff and children very seriously, therefore if employees have any contagious illness, they must adhere to the same exclusion periods as the children. This will ensure that staff are able to recover appropriately and that this illness is not passed on to other staff, children, or parents. The manager will advise employees of any exclusion times required, following advice from Public Health England.

### **Return to work Interview:**

After returning to work from any sickness/absence leave. A 'return to work' interview will be undertaken by the employee and management.

During the return to work interview the following will be discussed:

1. The reason for absence
2. Whether adjustments to the role (on a temporary or permanent basis) are required and what they are. These might include adjusted work patterns, start, and finish times and changes of duties.
3. Future requirements and expectations, e.g., improved attendance



4. The return-to-work interview should be recorded and signed by both the manager and employee and a copy attached to the employee's file.
5. How many days have been taken off as sick since starting with Little Discoverers Nursery 6. Bradford Factor score will be discussed

Where an employee's record of attendance gives cause for concern because of the duration or frequency of absence, this will be brought to the attention of the employee through a discussion with management. The trigger to this will be based around the Bradford factor score.

Throughout any stage of discussions on sickness absence, employees may be accompanied by a work colleague.

If it is deemed that the amount of sick leave taken by the employee is becoming regular and no action is being taken by the employee to help themselves, this may be classified as misconduct and will be dealt with through disciplinary action.

### **Short-term sickness absence; with no underlying health conditions**

This is defined by patterns of sickness absence for which there is no common underlying problem. Short-term absence may be short periods of one or two days occurring frequently.

The manager will use their discretion in deciding which path to follow depending on individual circumstances.

Absence of this nature can be identified by the use of the Bradford factor and may be classed as a trigger for further investigation.

### **Long-term sickness absence:**

For the purposes of the policy, long-term sickness absence is defined by the setting as absences lasting over one month. Where absence last over 14 calendar days or more the manager will contact the member of staff concerned, obtain an initial assessment of the problem and offer any further help or assistance. This informal contact may be maintained with the employee's agreement until one month's continuous absence.

### **Long Term sickness absence or absence with an underlying health problem:**

This is defined as a period or pattern of sickness absence for which there is a common underlying health cause. This type of sickness absence will normally present itself as long-term sickness – a long period or periods of sickness absence normally with a high number of days absence but over few episodes. However, it can in some cases present in a different pattern, e.g. a number of short periods of sickness absence.

In using this guidance, the manager should use their discretion in deciding which path to follow depending on the circumstance of the individual employee.

Where appropriate after further assessment of the problem, the manager will arrange a face-to-face meeting or telephone conference between themselves and the member of staff. The meeting should:

1. Seek to confirm the reason and nature of the absence and its likely duration.
2. Ensure that the member of staff is aware of Little Discoverers concern regarding their health and necessary absence from work.



3. Consider offering alternative duties or a shorter working week if this would enable a quicker return to work subject to medical advice.
4. Give consideration to any personal problems being encountered and discuss possible ways of helping the individual resolve these.
5. Advise the employee that in their best interest they may be asked to see a registered medical practitioner or occupational health provider.
6. Alternatively, and if appropriate, gain agreement from the employee to contact their Doctor or specialist in order to establish the likely length of absence and the long-term effect on capability in relation to job performance and attendance at work.

If all other avenues have been investigated, the absence continues or, following return to work, the attendance record does not improve, a subsequent meeting will be arranged. At this point, unless there are reasonable grounds to believe there will be an improvement in the foreseeable future., the manager should inform the member of staff that long-term sickness absence due ill health may put their employment at risk and the possibility of termination by reason of capability or suitability to work with children might have to be considered, taking into account any medical information available.

The position will be reviewed periodically, every 3 months, and ultimately it may become necessary from a business perspective to consider termination of employment. Reasons for termination could include failure to engage with medical services or attendance does not improve over an agreed period of time. In these circumstances, Little discoverers will:

1. Review the employee's absence record to assess whether or not it is sufficient to justify dismissal.
2. Consult the employee.
3. Obtain up-to-date medical advice through occupational health.
4. Advise the employee in writing as soon as it is established that termination of employment has become a possibility.
5. Meet with the employee to discuss the options and consider the employee's views on continuing employment.
6. Review if there are any other jobs that the employee could do prior to taking any decision on whether or not to dismiss.
7. Allow a right of appeal against any decision to dismiss the employee on grounds of long-term ill health.
8. Arrange a further meeting with the employee to determine any appeal.
9. Following this meeting, inform the employee of its final decision.
10. Always act reasonably towards the employee.

Any decision to terminate employment will be taken by management, making sure the capability procedure has been exhausted.

### **Sick Pay**

Any sick leave taken by employees will be either unpaid or Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) will be paid in accordance with the Department for Work and Pensions requirements.

### **The Bradford Factor**

1. The Bradford factor (BF) is a recognised way of monitoring individual sickness absence on an ongoing basis. The Bradford Factor calculates a score based on the number of times an employee is absent and the number of days they are absent in a rolling 12 month period.



2. The formula used to calculate an employee's BF is:

**Number of occasions absent <sup>2</sup> x Total number of days absent = Bradford Score**

e.g. An employee has been off on 5 separate occasions in a 12 month period totaling in the amount of 7 days the score will be worked out as below:

5 (number of times they have been off)  
 X 5 (number of times they have been off)  
 X 7 (total amount of days off in a 12 month period)  
 = 175 (BF score)

3. Depending on the BF score, different steps will be considered in order to manage the employee's absence.
4. Short term absence can be very disruptive to a service and can severely affect the performance of the organisation and the services we provide. Short term absence can also put adverse pressure on colleagues as short term absences are unpredictable. Repeated short term absence can also be the symptom of a more serious health, work-related issue (e.g. stress or bullying) or personal problems, and so monitoring it using the Bradford Factor can help avoid these problems.
5. The Bradford factor helps by monitoring sickness absence on a rolling 12 month period and picks up when an employee reaches a certain score as laid out in the table below. Each step can then be taken to help manage the absence appropriately.
6. Each period of absence will be assessed individually and the potential action as laid out in the table is by no means definitive. Where there are repeated absences for the same reason in quick succession (i.e. within two working days), these will be linked by management to ensure the score is not artificially raised by an employee attempting to return to work and then having to go off again. Employees are encouraged to work with their manager to resolve sickness absence problems before the BF score becomes exceptionally high. Any action taken will be firstly informal and then becomes progressively more formal until the capability / disciplinary process is required.
7. Sickness relating to maternity, disability or industrial injury will also be recorded as it still has an effect that needs managing.
8. Below is the BF table which shows the scores and potential actions at each score. These are provided for guidance in order to ensure consistency but consideration should be given to the particular circumstances of the individual in each case. The process can be triggered at any level within the table where there is good reason to do so.

| Bradford factor points total in 12 month rolling period | Action |
|---------------------------------------------------------|--------|
|---------------------------------------------------------|--------|



|                  |                                                        |
|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>0 - 50</b>    | Return to work Interview with Manager.                 |
| <b>50 - 100</b>  | Capability of Employee meeting.                        |
| <b>100 – 200</b> | Meeting with management and potential verbal warning.  |
| <b>200 – 300</b> | Meeting with management and potential Written Warning. |
| <b>300+</b>      | Follow next stage of Disciplinary process.             |

9. The same scores will apply to employees who are on a part-time contract.

#### **Bradford Factor (BF) actions:**

Return to work interview with manager:

1. All employees will be asked to attend a back to work meeting on their return to work to determine how that member of staff is feeling and if they are okay to be back at work. A form will be filled out showing questions asked and answer given by said member of staff. Both management and the employee will sign the document and this will be kept in the employee's file in the filing cabinet where the employee can access them on request.
2. The aim of the return to work interview is to:
  1. Confirm/ establish the cause of absence
  2. Ascertain whether the employees work environment was a contributing factor in the sickness absence.
  3. Allow discussion of the general attendance record of the employee.
  4. Provide the opportunity to discuss ways in which the employee can be further supported by their colleagues, manager and the organisation.
  5. Ascertain whether the employee's return to work can be aided by different duties in the immediate short term.
  6. Any actions identified at the return to work interview should be acted on without delay.

#### **Disciplinary procedure**

1. Please refer to our settings disciplinary procedure.

#### **Appointments**

- Appointments should be taken out of work hours
- If it is an emergency appointment that cannot be booked out of work hours then you should return to work after your appointment



- An appointment letter should be emailed/messaged to the nursery manager before the appointment
- Manager should be notified of any appointments in advance.

#### **Late arrival to work**

- All staff should be in the nursery by 8.00am daily, afternoon staff 12.00pm
- Saima Natha will monitor staff arrival in the morning which will be noted and reported to manager on a daily basis
- On a weekly basis if a member of staff is more than 1 minute late then a review will be carried out
- 15 minutes will be deducted from your hours

**Updated: September 2026**