**Staff Attendance Policy**

**HARRIS PRIMARY SCHOOL**

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| **Approved by:** | Ian Groom | **Date:** September 2023 |
| **Last reviewed on:** | July 2023 |
| **Next review due by:** | July 2025 |

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| **INTRODUCTION** |

1.1 Good employee attendance at Harris Primary School enhances the service delivered, minimises staffing difficulties and ensures best value to the school. Senior Leaders have an essential responsibility to monitor attendance, to control absence levels, to encourage good attendance and to support employees with difficulties. Employees have a responsibility to keep any absence to a minimum. This policy is intended to create an understanding, amongst all employees at the school, of the importance of good attendance to the effective operation, performance and image of the school. This policy also helps to create an understanding of why it is crucial to show a commitment to achieving and maintaining a high level of attendance by the application of procedures which can be seen to be fair, consistent and open and within which the Trade Unions/Professional Associations are encouraged to participate.

1.2 These guidelines address the following areas in order to achieve significant improvement to levels of attendance.

* Appointments/Induction
* Monitoring
* Notification Procedures
* Management Action

1.3 **The procedures relating to repeated short-term sickness absence and long-term sickness absence are set out in separate documents.**

1.4 A commitment to high attendance can be reinforced in a variety of ways through:-

* The setting of a school policy in relation to attendance and a commitment to pursue action to achieve this from the School Leadership Team.
* Introduction of monitoring and management procedures
* Positive promotion of good health
* Genuine concern and interest in the health and well-being of employees

1.5 These guidelines have been written on the understanding that the Headteacher undertakes the day-to-day management of attendance, and the Attendance and Dismissal Committee of the Governing Body take on dismissal decisions. However, in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 2002 and its associated School Staffing (England) Regulations 2003 & 2009, the Governing Body may elect to delegate the power to make initial dismissal decisions to the Headteacher. If this is the case, there will be no Attendance and Dismissal Committee. Instead, the Headteacher will take the initial dismissal decision, and the appeal referred to the full Governing Body.

1.6 If this is the case, to preserve the integrity of the managing attendance process, the Governing Body should delegate the responsibility for the day-to-day management of attendance to another member of the School Leadership Team, thereby leaving the Headteacher available to consider what action should be taken at the end of the formal procedures, including dismissal.

1.7 In these cases, any reference to the role of the Headteacher within these guidelines should be taken to mean the member of the school Leadership team responsible for the day to day management of attendance (identified with an asterisk (\*) throughout these guidelines).

1.8 Nothing in these guidelines shall prevent an employee from exercising their statutory rights under employment law to register a claim with an employment tribunal.

1. **POLICY STATEMENT**

2.1 *"Harris Primary School is committed to achieving and maintaining a high level of attendance from all employees through the application of good management practice. The School Leadership Team will monitor overall levels of sickness absences regularly, will support employees during periods of sickness and will arrange for confidential reports to be submitted to Governors when required. Action will be taken in accordance with the guidelines and procedures adopted by the school to deal with unacceptable levels and frequency of sickness. All employees must understand the importance of good attendance and ensure that any sickness absence is kept to a minimum. They must also ensure that during any such absence they do not undertake any activity which is incompatible with the illness or which may delay recovery."*

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

3.1 Management of sickness absence is a sensitive issue and everybody involved in managing absence must maintain the appropriate level of confidentiality. This means that, discussions about an employee’s sickness absence levels, reasons for absence (and any discussions with or reports from the Occupational Health Unit or the employee’s GP) should be treated in the strictest confidence. Information should only be and only disclosed to those that need to be aware of such information (e.g. the employee’s line manager, the nominated person, the Headteacher, members of any Governors Committee convened to consider cases of repeated short term or long-term absence). In addition, records relating to absence management should be stored in the appropriate place, usually the employee’s personal file for paper-based records or the appropriate folder for electronic records.

**REASONS FOR ABSENCE**

4.1 Most of the reasons given for absence will relate to illness, but there may be other reasons for absence. In these instances, the School Leadership Team need*s* to establish the reasons, which may make people unable to attend. Some causes of absence may be a symptom of a problem within the school or a domestic difficulty for the employee. Managers should know their employees and be mindful of this when tackling attendance issues and deal with problems sympathetically.

4.2 These guidelines and the associated long term and short-term sickness absence procedures are designed to deal solely with sickness absence of the employee. Any absence in relation to the relevant Leave of Absence procedures (e.g. special leave, time off for dependents etc) should be dealt with in accordance with either the procedure for teaching staff or support staff as appropriate.