

SUPPORTING STAFF ATTENDANCE GUIDE

A straightforward employee guide to sickness reporting, attendance reviews, and support

1. Scope & Core Principles

Ebor Academy Trust works closely with Trade Union Partners to develop and implement a fair, supportive, and effective suite of people policies. This guide is designed to help you understand your rights and what to expect under the Supporting Staff Attendance Policy.

Eligibility: This policy applies to all staff employed directly by Ebor Academy Trust. Self-employed workers, volunteers, and agency workers are covered by their own respective guidelines.

Exclusions: Sickness absence under this policy does not cover pre-arranged authorised annual leave, family leave, or absences due to maternity, paternity, shared parental, adoption, or dependent care leave.

Confidentiality: Discussions and sensitive medical or personal information about your sickness will be treated with strict confidentiality and handled securely in line with Trust data protection policies.

2. Sickness Reporting & Certification

If you are unable to attend work due to illness or injury, you must follow these essential reporting procedures:

- **First-Day Reporting:** Contact your school or function using local procedures as early as possible. Explain the nature of your illness/injury and advise when you are likely to return. If you are too unwell to make contact yourself, a family member or representative may do so on your behalf, and you must make contact yourself as soon as you are able.
- **No Setting Work:** You are not expected to set work for pupils while you are absent on sick leave.
- **Becoming Ill at Work:** If you are taken ill or injured while at work, you must report to your line manager. A half-day absence will be logged if you leave work part-way through the working day.
- **Certification (Fit Notes):** For any sickness absence exceeding 7 calendar days, you must obtain a formal 'statement of fitness for work' (Fit Note / doctor's note) and forward it to your line manager promptly. It is your responsibility to ensure your entire period of absence remains certified.
- **Unauthorised Absence:** Sickness absence that is not correctly reported, or where there are grounds to believe the absence is dishonest, may be treated as unauthorised. This will be handled under the Disciplinary Policy, and your sick pay may be withheld until policy compliance resumes.

Absence Review Points (Trigger Points)

Your line manager regularly monitors absence levels. You will be referred to a formal review process if you hit any of the following triggers:

ABSENCE REVIEW POINTS (TRIGGER POINTS):

1. 3 or more periods of sickness absence in a rolling 6-month period.
2. 5 or more periods of sickness absence in a rolling 12-month period.
3. A cumulative total of 15 or more working days of absence across 2 or more occasions in a rolling 12-month period.

Note: A repeated pattern of absence or general concerns may also lead to an informal review.

3. Supporting Your Return & Health Needs

Ebor is dedicated to supporting your recovery and ensuring a happy, healthy working environment. The policy includes several key support mechanisms:

- **Return-to-Work Meeting:** Your line manager will hold a brief meeting with you upon your return to discuss your recovery, explore any support or workplace adaptations you may need, and complete a standard return-to-work form.
- **Phased Return to Work:** If recommended by medical professionals or Occupational Health, the Trust supports a phased return (e.g. reduced hours or lighter duties), normally spanning up to 4 weeks, to help you gradually transition back to full duties.
- **Disability-Related Adjustments:** Under the Equality Act 2010, Ebor will implement reasonable adjustments to remove or reduce workplace disadvantages. Time off for medical appointments related to your disability (e.g. treatment, rehabilitation, or check-ups) is normally granted as paid time off.
- **Pregnancy-Related Sickness:** Sickness absence caused by pregnancy is recorded but is strictly excluded from any absence reviews and will not trigger formal procedures.
- **Medical Appointments:** Routine medical and dental appointments should be booked outside working hours where possible. If term-time appointments are necessary, they should cause minimal disruption. Paid time off is granted to attend cancer screenings.
- **Occupational Health Referrals:** To support your health and guide decision-making, the Trust may refer you for an Occupational Health assessment. You will be consulted prior to referral, and your rights under the Access to Medical Records Act 1988 will be explained (including your right to consent and to view any medical reports before they are supplied).

4. The Sickness Management Procedure

If your absence triggers the review thresholds, Ebor will manage your case through the following supportive and structured stages:

Stage / Process	Notice & Rules	Potential Outcomes / Warnings
Informal Review	10 days' written notice.	A collaborative discussion to understand your health pattern, discuss supportive adjustments, and explore whether Occupational Health advice is needed.
Stage 1: First Formal Attendance Review	10 working days' written notice. Right to be accompanied.	If attendance remains a concern, this formal meeting may result in a formal Attendance Warning (live for 6 months).
Stage 2: Second Formal Attendance Review	10 working days' written notice. Right to be accompanied.	If absence levels do not reach acceptable standards, a final meeting may result in a Final Attendance Warning (live for 6 months).
Stage 3: Final Attendance Review Meeting	10 working days' written notice. Right to be accompanied.	A final case examination. If standard improvement has not been met, you will be referred to a formal Ill-Health Capability Review Hearing.
Long-Term Sickness Review (Absence of 20+ working days)	Sympathetic monitoring. Usually reviewed every 8 weeks.	Active support to explore phased return, redeployment, or ill-health retirement. If a return is unlikely within 3 months, a capability hearing is convened.

5. Ill-Health Capability Hearings & Representation Rights

The Capability Panel

If sickness absence cannot be resolved or sustained, an Ill-Health Capability Review Hearing is convened. The panel consists of a senior leader Chair (Headteacher/Director), an impartial senior leader, and an HR representative to provide guidance. You will receive 10 working days' written notice, and the panel can decide on outcomes ranging from continued monitoring to dismissal with notice.

Right to be Accompanied

You have a statutory right to bring a companion to any formal meeting (including formal reviews and capability hearings) under this policy. Your companion must be a **recognised** trade union representative or a workplace colleague. They can address the panel to put forward and sum up your case, ask questions, and confer with you privately, but they cannot answer questions directly on your behalf.

Right to Appeal

If you believe a formal attendance warning or a capability dismissal decision is unfair, you have the right to appeal under the Ebor Standard Appeal Process. You must submit your appeal in writing to the Director of People & Culture within 10 working days (for warnings) or as specified in your outcome letter, clearly stating your grounds.

**This guide is non-contractual and represents a summary of Ebor Academy Trust's Attendance Policy. Please refer to Self Service HR for the full policy documents.*