

# **ABY WITH GREENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL**

## **ABSENCE POLICY**

### **Policy Statement**

We are committed to improving health, wellbeing and attendance of all employees. We value the contribution our employees make to our success. So, when any employee is unable to be at work for any reason, we miss that contribution.

### **Key Principles**

The organisation's absence policy is based on the following principles:

1. We will support employees who have genuine grounds for absence for whatever reason. This support includes:
  - a. 'special leave' for necessary absences not caused by sickness
  - b. a flexible approach to the taking of annual leave.
  - c. access to counsellors where necessary.
  - d. rehabilitation programmes in cases of long-term sickness absence.
2. We will consider any advice given by the employee's GP on the 'Statement of Fitness for Work'. If the GP advises that an employee 'may be fit for work' we will discuss with the employee how we can help them get back to work.
3. We respect the confidentiality of all information relating to an employee's sickness. This policy will be implemented in line with all data protection legislation and the Access to Medical Records Act 1988.

### **Notification of Absence**

If an employee is going to be absent from work they should speak to the Chairman as soon as possible. They should also:

- give a clear indication of the nature of the illness and
- a likely return date

The Chairman will check with employees if there is any information they need about current work. If the employee does not contact the Chairman by the required time the Chairman will attempt to contact the employee at home.

An employee may not always feel able to discuss their medical problems with the Chairman. The Chairman will be sensitive to individual concerns and make alternative arrangements, where appropriate. For example, an employee may prefer to discuss health problems with a person of the same sex.

### **Evidence of incapacity**

Employees can use the Parish Council's self-certification arrangements for the first seven days absence. Thereafter a 'Statement of Fitness for Work' is required to cover every subsequent day.

If absence is likely to be protracted, ie more than four weeks continuously, there is a shared responsibility for the Parish Council and the employee to maintain contact at agreed intervals.

### **'May be fit for some work'**

If the GP advises on the Statement of Fitness for Work that an employee 'may be fit for work' we will discuss with the employee ways of helping them get back to work. This might mean talking about a phased return to work or amended duties.

If it is not possible to provide the support an employee needs to return to work – for example, by making the necessary workplace adjustments – or an employee feels unable to return then the Statement will be used in the same way as if the GP advised that the employee was 'not fit for work'

### **Return to work discussions**

The Chairman will discuss absences with employees when they return to work to establish:

- the reason for and cause of absence
- anything the Chairman or Parish Council can do to help
- that the employee is fit to return to work.

If an employee's GP has advised that they 'may be fit for work' the return to work discussion can also be used to agree in detail how their return to work might work best in practice.

A more formal review will be triggered by:

- Frequent short-term absences
- Long-term absence.

This review will look at any further action required to improve the employee's attendance and wellbeing.

**Absence due to disability/maternity**

Absences relating to the disability of an employee or to pregnancy will be kept separate from sickness absence records. We refer employees to our Equality Policy – covering family policies and disability discrimination policies.

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