

GUIDANCE ON ABSENCE RELATING TO CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

ADVICE FOR MANAGERS AND STAFF

The health, safety and welfare of pupils and staff is of paramount importance to all education employers in the sector. The following guidance has been produced so employers and employees are aware of arrangements regarding the sickness absence scheme in relation to coronavirus (COVID-19).

The decision on whether an employee should attend work, if they believe they have been exposed to coronavirus, should be taken in conjunction with the Public Health Agency (PHA) guidance and medical advice at all times.

The following guidance applies to employees subject to NJC/JNC or TNC terms and conditions.

SCENARIO 1: No symptoms of coronavirus

- If an employee has no symptoms of coronavirus the current PHA advice is that staff can attend their workplace as normal.

SCENARIO 2: Symptoms of coronavirus

- If an employee is displaying symptoms of coronavirus they must self-isolate, they should refrain from attending work for a minimum of 7 days and follow medical advice (available via your GP or NHS 111). Any coronavirus absences will be excluded from any calculation of contractual sick pay. The employee will receive normal pay. There will therefore be no impact on absence trigger points or contractual sick pay.

Definition of COVID-19 Symptoms

- Fever of 37.8 and above and/ or
- Recent onset of a continuous cough
- An employee must not return to work for 7 days or until their symptoms have gone (whichever is later). If an employee's symptoms are continuing after 7 days they should seek advice from their GP or NHS 111 before returning to work.
- The employee must keep their Principal/Line manager informed throughout this period.

SCENARIO 3: Employee is directed by their Principal/Line Manager not to attend their place of work due to a temporary closure relating to coronavirus

- If an employee is directed by their Principal/Line Manager not to attend their place of work due to a temporary closure relating to coronavirus they shall receive their normal

Please Note

*This guidance includes current advices from the PHA and may be subject to change. In the event of new information or guidance a further update will be issued. Please also refer to the **Guidance for Educational Settings** page at the following link: <https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/news/covid-19-coronavirus>*

pay. Where possible these employees should work from home or other agreed workplace and return to work when directed to do so.

SCENARIOS 1, 2 and 3 will apply to both substitute teachers and non-teaching staff providing emergency cover for the period of time they have been engaged to work.

Importance of medical advice

- Where no symptoms are present and/or the medical guidance from the PHA or your GP does not direct you to stay at home, you will be expected to attend work as normal.
- If an employee has any concerns regarding their attendance at work they should discuss this with their Principal/Line Manager who will contact the Employing Authority if necessary.

Certification information

- Staff may be required to provide evidence of the necessity to self-isolate and where applicable diagnosis. Staff will be afforded a reasonable period of time to provide evidence post recovery, of any isolation (e.g. medical correspondence). If diagnosed with an illness unrelated to coronavirus then the absence will revert to normal sickness scheme procedures.

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