



Policy on Staff Absences

Policy Statement

Seed to tree child care understands that from time to time staff will be absent from work. It is our priority to have arrangements in place to ensure that the service is adequately staffed at all times and that adult: child ratios are maintained. Absences include annual leave and/or unpaid leave, illness or emergencies

Principle

This policy is underwritten by the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and the Workplace Relations Act 2015, Organisation of Working Time Act 1997, Maternity Protection Act 1994, Adoptive Leave Act 1995, Parental Leave Act 1998, Carer's Leave Act 2001.

Procedure

How the adult: child ratio is maintained

- All staff working in seed to tree child care area aware of the required adult: child ratios that operate in each room of the service. Adult: child ratios will be maintained at all times.
- Daily and weekly staff rosters will be documented and recorded and include the area and time each member of staff is required to work.
- The staff roster is implemented at all times. The staff roster is displayed in hallway notice board and it is updated if staff are absent. The staff roster outlines if staff where absent and who filled in for them on a given day.
- If a staff member is absent the following options are considered so that the adult: child ratio can be maintained at all times:
 - A floating staff member is moved in to the room where the staff member is absent
 - A staff member is moved from a room that has an additional staff member that is not required to meet the adult: child ratio to the room that is missing a staff member
 - A relief staff member (fully qualified and garda vetted by the service) is called in to the service



- Parents/Guardians are informed that children cannot attend the service because the adult: child ratio cannot be maintained.
- When moving staff to maintain the ratio, management are mindful of what is in children's best interests. Where possible, there is at least one staff member working in each room that is familiar to the children in that room. Consistency of care for children should form a part of all decisions relating to staffing.
- Records are kept for Relief staff who are available to cover planned staff absences and emergencies, which includes Qualifications, Garda vetting and two written validated references, and photographic ID.

How seed to tree childcare responds to staff absences – planned and unplanned

Planned Leave

- There is a minimum of 4 weeks' notice required for planned leave requests.
- Leave requests will be approved subject to maintaining staff ratios (e.g. leave requests cannot overlap with another staff member or no more than 2 staff members can be on annual leave at the same time).
- Leave is not authorised until it has been approved by a manager (Pooja Patidar)
- Leave requests must be submitted in writing.

Unplanned Leave

- If any staff member is unable to attend for work on a given day, they must to seed to tree childcare (Manager –Pooja Patidar) no later than 6 am on the first day of absence.
- All staff must notify the manager by phone call of their absence.
- If staff expect to be absent again the next day, they must inform the manager of seed to tree childcare by 6 pm.
- A medical certificate is required from the third day of absence. In the case of long term sick leave, medical certificates must be submitted on a monthly basis and must be dated accordingly.
- Staff are entitled to the Statutory Sick Pay Scheme while on sick leave, further details are included in the staff handbook.
- Any unauthorised absences will be addressed through the disciplinary procedure.

Return to Work

- Staff must notify seed to tree child care of their return to work date. If the staff member is returning from a long-term absence (over 4 weeks), they must give at least 1 week notice of their return date.
- On return to work after an absence, the Line Manager will meet with the employee to understand the nature of the absence, its implications and update the employee on their job priorities.



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- In certain cases, seed to tree child care may request a fitness to return to work certificate from the staff member.

Dealing with long-term sickness absence or frequent short-term absences

In circumstances where an employee has been absent for a long period of time or if an employee has had frequent short-term absences, the following process will be followed:

- It is important for seed to tree child care to understand the reasons for staff absence. We want to know whether there are things we can do to help you improve your attendance and your health.
- In certain circumstances we may need to get medical information about your illness before deciding on a course of action.
- Seed to tree child care may meet with a staff member to discuss their absence, the medical information or other related issues. We will give you reasonable notice of the meeting and location.
- If you are unable to attend the meeting, at the time specified, it is very important that you let us know as soon as possible. We will then seek to arrange another time where you are able to attend.
- If it is relevant, we will consider whether reasonable adjustments may need to be made to the sickness absence procedure, or to your role or working arrangements.
- In certain circumstances, we may ask an employee to attend a medical assessment by a doctor or occupational health adviser.
- All medical reports will be kept confidential.

Last Review Date of this policy: 11-Jul-2024

Signed: Pooja Patidar

Date: 11-Jul-2024

Name: Pooja Patidar

Person responsible for approving the Policy.