

Trainee Attendance Policy

The SCITT teacher training programme is a highly intensive one-year course. Any missed learning opportunities during the SCITT year may potentially affect a trainee's ability to successfully demonstrate their achievement against the Teachers' Standards. Consistent attendance and punctuality are central to teachers' professional conduct. Therefore, trainees completing Bright Futures SCITT teacher training programme are expected to achieve consistent attendance and punctuality throughout the course.

Trainees Roles and Responsibilities

- If fit to do so attend all centre-based training, school-based training days, placement days and PGCE days.
- Take positive actions to support their own health and wellbeing
- Facilitate a speedy return to fitness and to training and therefore should avoid activities which may be considered inconsistent with genuine sickness or injury for example extreme sports, or sport which could aggravate an injury or illness or delay recovery.
- Comply with SCITT and the placement School's sickness absence procedures.
- Attend medical referrals or appointments, return to work, informal meetings, And formal attendance meetings
Co- operate with efforts to identify and implement reasonable adjustments
- Comply with safe working practice and procedures.
- Inform the SCITT/School team as soon as possible of any condition or changes in any condition that affects their ability to do their job or alters the timescales for the return to work.

SCITT Roles and Responsibilities

- Support trainees with their health and wellbeing.
- Monitor absence data, records, trends and patterns and take appropriate action.
- Initiate referrals to Occupational Health.
- Identify, consider and implement reasonable adjustments where appropriate.
- Take a consistent but not a uniform approach to managing absences
- Regularly review and monitor the effectiveness of this policy including equity diversity and inclusion considerations

Notification of Absence

If you are absent from placement, school-based training, SCITT training or PGCE, please inform Hilary Langmead-Jones (SCITT Manager) on HLangmead-Jones@bright-futures.co.uk and copy in your phase lead by 8am on the day and each subsequent day of absence. A reason must be given for absence.

Placement Absence

Your mentor will inform you of school policy in regard to absence and you must follow this; this will usually be informing your school at 8am or earlier. Please email the school on each day that you are absent.

PGCE Absence

If you are absent from a PGCE day at the University of Derby, you must inform your PGCE tutor by 8:30am and on the day of absence.

Attendance Monitoring

Absence from placement, Centre/school-based training, or PGCE must be recorded by the trainee on the SCITT Attendance Tracker. This will be stored on the Trainee's One Drive found on Mosaic.

In addition, trainee absence will be recorded by Hilary Langmead-Jones in order to ensure that trainees are meeting compliance requirements.

School-based training attendance is monitored by the trainer and the SCITT will be informed of trainee absence.

PGCE attendance is monitored by the PGCE Provider and attendance registers will be shared with the SCITT. The SCITT Manager will be notified in response to persistent PGCE absence.

The following circumstances will trigger a meeting with the SCITT Age Phase Lead/Programme Lead/Director:

- 3 episodes of sickness absence (totalling more than five days)
- 5 consecutive days of absence within a term
- A pattern of recurring short-term absence e.g. on Fridays and/or Mondays, before or after Bank Holidays/school closure periods or if special leave of absence has been declined

Absence due to Illness

Following a period of absence all trainees will be contacted by phone to check the trainee is fit to return to practice. This is in line with our duty of care and our responsibility to safeguard our trainees.

Trainees can self-certify for the first seven days (including weekend days) of absence due to sickness.

A doctor's certificate (Fit for Work Certificate) must be obtained for absence which extends beyond 7 days. A copy of the Fit for Work Certificate must be forwarded to Hilary Langmead-Jones (SCITT Manager) on HLangmead-Jones@bright-futures.co.uk. Further absence must be supported by further certificates.

In response to any absence which continues beyond 10 working days without communication, the Director of SCITT may choose to deem the trainee's period of study interrupted. In this case, the trainee will be notified in writing. If the trainee is in receipt of finance from Student Finance England (SFE), a Change of Circumstances form (COC) will be submitted to the SFE by Bright Futures SCITT suspending studies on medical grounds.

Ongoing Illness

A continuous absence of 15 or more working days will automatically be classed as long-term absence.

A trainee whose absence is due to an ongoing illness such as depression, arthritis, unstable diabetes or asthma may be invited to discuss the likely impact of such illness on the trainee's studies. A referral to Occupational Health may be offered.

For trainees in receipt of a bursary

In the event that a trainee is absent through a long-term sickness (see definition above) then it is worth noting that only one further bursary payment can be made following the first day of absence. After this, the absence will be treated as a period of deferral and bursary payments will stop with immediate effect.

Example

A trainee's first day of sickness absence is 15 November 2024. The provider [SCITT] may make one further payment as the trainee is still considered active on 1 December 2024, but no further payments must be made beyond this until the trainee returns to the course.

If the trainee then returns on 15 February 2025, they will next be entitled to a bursary payment if they are still active on 1 March 2025. The next payment must not include the payments that the trainee missed by being absent on 1 January and 1 February.

Medical Appointments

A trainee seeking authorisation to attend a hospital appointment must provide evidence of the appointment in the form of a letter or email to **both** the school and the SCITT Manager.

Please note: routine medical appointments should not be made during the working day.

Holidays

The intensive nature of the course means that holidays must not be taken during term time. Trainees booking holidays during school holiday time must check the term dates of their placement school website as alternative term date websites are often inaccurate. Please note placements are subject to change, so term dates cannot be guaranteed.

Authorised Absence

Authorisation may be sought for absence due to specific circumstances such as graduation ceremonies, interviews and unavoidable medical appointments. Trainees must contact the Age Phase Lead/Programme Leader/SCITT Manager/Director of SCITT for authorisation of such absence.

Absence may be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

Graduation Ceremonies: an absence of one day will be granted to allow a trainee to attend their own graduation ceremony. This includes travel to the location.

Interviews: All reasonable requests will be granted, but please note this does not extend to school visits.

School Visit prior to application/interview: Trainees must arrange visits outside of school time in order to minimise disruption to the placement school and impact on training.

School Visit to employer school: All visits to a trainee's employer school must take place during Enrichment Week. Reasonable requests outside of this will be granted at the discretion of the Age Phase Lead/ SCITT Manager and or the Director of SCITT.

If authorisation is granted, trainees must inform their placement school of the authorised absence in advance of the date. Trainees must submit plans and resources to their placement school so that classes are not disadvantaged by the authorised absence.

Maternity Leave

Trainees seeking to take maternity leave from the SCITT programme will be invited to meet the Director of SCITT/SCITT Manager/Age Phase Lead to discuss a planned interruption of the course. It is anticipated that maternity leave taken during the SCITT year will mean a

return to the course in the following academic year. Any trainee requesting maternity leave must complete the course within 6 school terms.

A trainee who becomes pregnant after being offered a place or during the first half term of the course may apply to defer their placement to the following academic year subject to any changes in entry requirements.

Trainees must inform Bright Futures SCITT of the pregnancy within the first 14 weeks in order that a placement risk assessment can be carried out. This information will be confidential and only shared with the placement mentor with the trainee's agreement.

A trainee in receipt of student finance must use a COC (change of circumstance) to inform Student Finance England (SFE) of the suspension of studies. A further COC must be completed on return to the course.

Paternity Leave

Bright Futures SCITT may be able to offer a short period of absence for paternity leave, up to two weeks but this is subject to consideration due to the short and intensive nature of the course.

Compassionate Leave

Leave will be considered on a case by case basis. Requests for leave that exceed 3 working days must be referred to the Director of SCITT.

Unexplained Absence

Trainees will be asked for the contact details of a Named Representative who may be contacted in the event of unexplained trainee absence.

The Named Representative may be contacted when a trainee is absent without explanation if the trainee themselves cannot be contacted, this in line with our responsibilities to safeguard our trainees.

When a trainee is absent without authorisation and a Fit for Work certificate has not been provided, the following procedure will be followed:

- Both the trainee and the Named Representative will be contacted.
- The trainee will be asked to attend a meeting with the Director of SCITT.
- If the trainee does not attend the meeting or arrange a suitable alternative, Bright Futures SCITT will inform the trainee in writing that their studies have been suspended. Student Finance England will be informed accordingly.

Bright Futures SCITT is committed to ensuring the success of all trainees and would encourage communication at every stage to ensure positive outcomes for all trainees.

Special Leave of Absence

All requests for a special leave of absence must be submitted to the SCITT Manager. The request will be reviewed by the Director of SCITT and all requested are subject to approval.

Each request will be considered on its merits using consistent non-discriminatory criterion.

These will be:

- the amount of time already taken during the year; the notice given; the impact on the placement school, access to centre-based training, and access to the PGCE
- All requests will be considered on merit, decisions will be made fairly and consistently whilst recognising individuals have different circumstances.
- All decisions will be open and transparent to the individual.
- All requests for leave of absence/special leave should be made giving as much notice as possible but we request a minimum of 5 SCITT days. The exception to this is emergency time off for dependants, bereavement leave, loss of pregnancy leave and carer's leave.
- In the event of transport difficulties or severe weather conditions, trainees must make every effort to access placement/training and follow the agreed notification procedures. Alternative working/training arrangements must be agreed by the Director of SCITT.

Examples of Special leave requests that the SCITT will consider (Please note this list is not exhaustive)

- Carer's leave
- Death and funeral of a near relative (normally partner, parent, brother, sister, grandparent, child, grandchild)
- Dependency leave in connection with an emergency
- Emergency leave to deal with a domestic situation such as a serious flood or fire at home
- House move (but we strongly advise this takes place outside of term time)
- Loss of pregnancy leave
- Emergency medical appointment (Subject to production of evidence. This excludes elective medical surgery.)
- Prospective partners - antenatal visit and/or antenatal scan
- Religious observance, holidays or festivals, where there is no public holiday, (the number of days will be determined by the published dates and adequate notice provided. If there are more than 3 days for a particular religion during the year, Director of SCITT's discretion will apply)



- Weddings of near relatives (normally parent, brother, sister, son or daughter), *in most cases, only one day will be granted and this includes travel to and from the event/wedding*