



TOGETHER WE GROW AND LEARN



Children With Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School Policy

Date approved: -

Autumn 2024

Date to be reviewed: -

Autumn 2025

INTRODUCTION

We aim to support all children who are unable to attend school due to medical needs, and who would not receive suitable education without such provision, to continue to have access to as much education as their medical condition allows, to enable them to reach their full potential.

Due to the nature of their health needs, some children may be admitted to hospital or placed in alternative forms of education provision. We recognise that, whenever possible, pupils should receive their education within their school and the aim of the provision will be to reintegrate pupils back into school as soon as they are well enough.

We understand that we have a continuing role in a pupil's education whilst they are not attending the school and will work with the Local Authority (LA), healthcare partners and families to ensure that all children with medical needs receive the right level of support to enable them to maintain links with their education.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including the following:

- Data Protection Act (2018)
- DfE (2013) 'Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs'
- DfE (2015) 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions'
- Education Act (1996)
- Equality Act (2010)

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Attendance Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- First Aid & Medical Conditions Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy

Children who are unable to attend school as a result of their medical needs may include those with:

- Physical health issues
- Physical injuries
- Mental health issues, including anxiety, emotional difficulties or school refusal
- Progressive conditions
- Chronic illnesses
- Terminal illnesses

Children who are unable to attend mainstream education for health reasons may attend the following:

- **Remote Learning:** using technology to access classroom lessons, supported by appropriate physical resources as necessary.
- **Hospital School:** a special school within a hospital setting where education is provided to give continuity whilst the child is receiving treatment.
- **Home Tuition:** through the LA's Health Related Education Team (HRET) that act as a communication channel between schools and pupils on occasions where pupils are too ill to attend school and are receiving specialist medical treatment.

SUPPORT FOR PUPILS

Where a pupil has a complex or long-term health issue, the school will discuss the pupil's needs and how these may be best met with the LA, relevant medical professionals, parents and, where appropriate, the pupil.

The LA expects the school to support pupils with health needs to attend full-time education wherever possible, or for the school to make reasonable adjustments to pupils' programmes of study where medical evidence supports the need for those adjustments. The school will make reasonable adjustments under pupils' individual Health Care Plans (HCPs), reviewed annually in accordance with the First Aid & Medical Conditions Policy.

Pupils admitted to hospital will receive education as determined appropriate by the medical professionals and hospital tuition team at the hospital concerned.

During a period of absence, the school will work with the provider of the pupil's education to establish and maintain regular communication and effective outcomes through relevant information, curriculum materials and resources.

Whilst a pupil is away from school, the school will ensure the pupil can successfully remain in touch with their school using the following methods:

- School newsletters
- Emails
- Invitations to school events
- Cards or letters from peers and staff

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- Ensuring arrangements for pupils who cannot attend school, as a result of their medical needs, are in place and are effectively implemented.
- Ensuring the termly review of the arrangements made for pupils who cannot attend school due to their medical needs.
- Ensuring the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the arrangements to support the needs of pupils are clear and understood by all.
- Ensuring robust systems are in place for dealing with health emergencies and critical incidents, for both on- and off-site activities.
- Ensuring staff with responsibility for supporting pupils with health needs are appropriately trained.
- Approving and reviewing this policy.

The Head of School is responsible for:

- Working with the Governing Board to ensure compliance with the relevant statutory duties when supporting pupils with health needs.
- Working collaboratively with parents and other professionals to develop arrangements to meet the needs of children.
- Ensuring the arrangements put in place to meet pupils' health needs are fully understood by all those involved and acted upon.
- Ensuring the support put in place focuses on and meets the needs of individual pupils.
- Providing teachers, who support pupils with health needs, with suitable information relating to a pupil's health condition and the possible effect the condition and/or medication taken has on the pupil.
- Providing reports to the Governing Board on the effectiveness of the arrangements in place to meet the health needs of pupils.

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- Notifying the LA when a pupil is likely to be away from the school for a significant period of time due to their health needs.
- Appointing a named member of staff who is responsible for pupils with health care needs and liaises with parents, pupils, the LA, key workers, health professionals and others involved in the pupil's care.
- Arranging appropriate training for staff with responsibility for supporting pupils with health needs.
- Ensuring that the relevant staff appropriately support pupils who are unable to attend school because of medical needs.
- Actively monitoring pupil progress and reintegration into school.
- Make reasonable adjustments for the needs of the pupil on returning to the school.

Teachers and Support Staff are responsible for:

- Supplying pupils' education providers with information about the child's capabilities, progress and outcomes.
- Keeping pupils informed about school events and encouraging communication with their peers.
- Understanding confidentiality in respect of pupils' health needs.
- Designing lessons and activities in a way that allows those with health needs to participate fully and ensuring pupils are not excluded from activities that they wish to take part in without a clear evidence-based reason.
- Understanding their role in supporting pupils with health needs and ensuring they attend the required training.
- Ensuring they are aware of the needs of their pupils through the appropriate sharing of the individual pupil's health needs.
- Keeping parents informed of how their child's health needs are affecting them whilst in the school.
- Ensuring a welcoming environment is developed and encourage pupils and staff to be positive and proactive during any reintegration period.

Parents are expected to:

- Ensure the regular and punctual attendance of their child at the school where possible.
- Work in partnership with the school to ensure the best possible outcomes for their child.
- Notify the school of the reason for any of their child's absences, without delay.
- Provide the school with sufficient and up-to-date information about their child's medical needs.
- Attend meetings to discuss how support for their child should be planned.

REINTEGRATION

When a pupil is considered well enough to return to school, as far as possible, the school will consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made to provide suitable access to the school and the curriculum for the pupil.

If appropriate, medical professionals will be involved with the pupil's reintegration through the appointed named member of staff, to ensure they can prepare to offer any appropriate support to the pupil and to provide relevant staff training.

The school is aware that some pupils will need gradual reintegration over a long period of time and will always consult with the pupil, their parents and key staff about concerns, medical issues, timing and the preferred pace of return.

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To help ensure a pupil with additional health needs is able to attend school following an extended period of absence, the following adaptations will be considered:

- A personalised or part-time timetable
- Access to additional support in school
- Online access to the curriculum from home
- Movement of lessons to more accessible rooms
- Places to rest at school
- Implementation / Review of Health Care Plans

TRAINING

Staff will be trained in a timely manner to assist with a pupil's return to school. Once a pupil's return date has been confirmed, staff will be provided with relevant training before the pupil's anticipated return. Healthcare professionals should be involved in identifying and agreeing with the school the type and level of training required.

Training will be sufficient to ensure staff are confident in their ability to support pupils with additional health needs. Parents of pupils with additional health needs may provide specific advice but will not be the sole trainer of staff.

INFORMATION SHARING

It is essential that all information about pupils with health needs is kept up-to-date. To protect confidentiality, all information-sharing techniques will be agreed with the pupil and their parents in advance of being used. All teachers, supply and support staff will be provided with access to relevant information, including high-risk health needs, first aiders and emergency procedures, via the agreed HealthCare Plan. Parents will be made aware of their own rights and responsibilities regarding confidentiality and information sharing.

To help achieve this, the school will:

- Ensure this policy and other relevant policies are easily available and accessible.
- Consider how friends and peers may be able to assist pupils with health needs.
- When a pupil is discharged from hospital, or is returning from other education provision, the school will ensure the appropriate information is received to allow for a smooth return to the school.
- A named member of staff will liaise with the hospital or other tuition service as appropriate.

MANAGING ABSENCES

A pupil unable to attend school because of their health needs will not be removed from the school register without parental consent and certification from a medical professional, even if the LA has become responsible for the pupil's education.

The school will only remove a pupil who is unable to attend school because of additional health needs from the school roll where:

- The pupil has been certified by a medical professional as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school, before ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- Neither the pupil nor their parent has indicated to the school the intention to continue to attend the school, after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.