



Children with health needs who cannot attend school

October 2025

Document control and record of amendments

Version	Reason for amendment	Sections amended	Amended by/date	Reviewed by/date	Approved by /date
1.0	New document	All	P Riddle October 2021	Staff November 2021	Governors December 2021
1.1	Annual review	None	P Riddle December 2022	Staff December 2022	Governors January 2023
1.2	Scheduled review	1,9,4	P Riddle September 2025	Staff October 2025	Governing body 21/10/25

Review in October 2028

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1. Introduction

1.1 This policy aims to ensure that:

- Suitable education is arranged for pupils on roll who cannot attend school due to health needs;
- Pupils, staff and parents understand what the school is responsible for when this education is being provided by the local authority.
- All children who are unable to attend school due to medical needs, and who would not receive suitable education without such provision, continue to have access to as much education as their medical condition allows, to enable them to reach their full potential.

1.2 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.

1.3 The School understands that it has a continuing role in a pupil's education whilst they are not in school and will work with the 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.

1.4 Note that the needs of pupils and medical/healthcare circumstances may be subjective and change over time; what has worked effectively for one similar pupil in the past may not meet the needs of another pupil and therefore the arrangements set out here must be tailored and treated as dynamic and subject to regular review; the stage of education within the school (eg: pupils in early years vs senior juniors) and learning environment necessary may also influence the arrangements necessary at the time of need.

2. Legislation and guidance

2.1 This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018
- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/657995f0254aaa000d050bff/Arranging_education_for_children_who_cannot_attend_school_because_of_health_needs.pdf
- <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5ce6a72e40f0b620a103bd53/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions.pdf>

3. The role of the school

- 3.1 Initially, the school will attempt to make arrangements to deliver suitable education for children with health needs who cannot attend school.
- 3.2 The Head Teacher and SENDCO will be responsible for making and monitoring these arrangements. A meeting will be made with parents/carers to discuss arrangements for working from home or hospital. A plan will be drawn up detailing agreed actions from the discussion, the plan will be signed by school and parents / carers. The plan will then be carried out to deliver education to the child.
- 3.3 Arrangements could include sending work home, attending a hospital school or facilitating remote learning from the classroom.
- 3.4 Where necessary, the pupil will be slowly integrated back into school with either alternative arrangements to make it possible such as alternative provision for break or lunch times or the pupil may come back into school on a reduced timetable until their health needs have been met
- 3.5 In some cases, the Local Authority may be asked to support the school to make arrangements for the education of pupils who cannot attend school. The Head teacher will determine whether LA support is required after considering if the school can support the needs of the pupil.

4. Other roles and responsibilities

4.1 The Head teacher 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.
- Appointing a named member of staff who is responsible for pupils with healthcare needs and liaises with parents, pupils, the LA, key workers and others involved in the pupil's care.
- 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.
- 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

4.2 The SENDCo is responsible for:

- Managing the support of pupils who are unable to attend school because of medical needs.
- Actively monitoring pupil progress and reintegration into school.
- Supplying other education providers with information about the child's capabilities, progress and outcomes (e.g. hospital school).
- Liaising with the head teacher, education providers and parents to determine pupils' programmes of study whilst they are absent from school.

4.3 Teachers and Support Staff are responsible for:

- 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 and lawful sharing of the individual pupil's health needs.
- Ensuring they are aware of the signs, symptoms and triggers of common life-threatening medical conditions and know what to do in an emergency.
- Keeping parents informed of how their child's health needs are affecting them whilst in the school.

- Ensuring Safeguarding arrangements are maintained (monitoring and reporting) during periods of absence from school

5. Managing absences

- 5.1 Parents are to contact the school on the first day their child is unable to attend due to illness, as detailed in the attendance policy.
- 5.2 Absences due to illness will be authorised unless the school has genuine cause for concern about the authenticity of the illness.
- 5.3 If the nature of the absence requires it, the school will provide support to pupils who are absent from school because of illness for a period of less than 15 school days by liaising with the pupil's parents to arrange schoolwork as soon as the pupil is able to cope with it or part-time education at school. The school will give due consideration to which aspects of the curriculum are prioritised in consultation with the pupil, their family and relevant members of staff.
- 5.4 For periods of absence that are expected to last for 15 or more school days, either in one absence or over the course of a school year, the attendance officer will notify the LA, who advise on the next steps.
- 5.5 Where absences are anticipated or known in advance, the school will liaise with the LA to enable education provision to be provided from the start of the pupil's absence.
- 5.6 For hospital admissions, the LA will liaise with school to gather information about the pupil, including SEND status and current interventions.
- 5.7 The LA will set up a personal education plan (PEP) for the pupil which will allow the school, the LA and the provider of the pupil's education to work together.
- 5.8 The school will monitor pupil attendance and mark registers to ensure it is clear whether a pupil is, or should be, receiving education otherwise than at school.
- 5.9 The school will only remove a pupil who is unable to attend school because of additional health needs from the school roll when advised by the Local authority.

6. Support for pupils

- 6.1 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.
- 6.2 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
- 6.3 The school will make reasonable adjustments under pupils' individual healthcare plans in accordance with the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- 6.4 Pupils admitted to hospital will receive education as determined appropriate by the medical professionals and hospital tuition team at the hospital concerned, if this is appropriate for the extent of the admission period.
- 6.5 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.
- 6.6 Whilst a pupil is away from school, the school will work to 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.
- 6.7 Where appropriate, the school will provide the pupil's education provider with relevant information, curriculum materials and resources.
- 6.8 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, drafted in consultation with the SENDCO
 - Access to additional support in school
 - Remote learning
 - Movement of lessons to more accessible rooms
 - Places to rest at school
 - Special arrangements for statutory assessments to manage anxiety or fatigue.

7. Monitoring and Review

- 7.1 This policy will be reviewed every 3 years by the SLT. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.
- 7.2 Any changes in the policy will be clearly communicated to all members of staff involved in supporting pupils with additional health needs, and to parents and pupils themselves.

8. Definitions

8.1 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 problems, including anxiety issues.
- Emotional difficulties or school refusal.
- Progressive conditions.
- Terminal illnesses.

8.2 Children who are unable to attend mainstream education for health reasons may be supported by:

- Hospital school: a special school within a hospital setting where education is provided to give continuity whilst the child is receiving treatment
- Home tuition: The LA may provide tuition services that act as a communication channel between schools and pupils on occasions
- Remote learning: Technology is used to allow the pupil to take part in lessons, whilst working at home.

9. Links to other policies and guidance

- Attendance policy
- SEND policy
- Confidentiality policy
- Accessibility policy
- Safeguarding policy
- Medical needs and first aid policy
- Remote learning policy
- Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs: Statutory guidance for local authorities (2023)