

Children with Health Needs who Cannot Attend School Policy

More Than Ed | Independent School

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1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure that:

- suitable education is arranged for students on roll who cannot attend school due to health needs; and
- students, staff and parents understand what the school is responsible for when this education is being provided by the local authority.

More Than Ed aims to ensure that all children who are unable to attend school due to medical needs, and who would not otherwise receive suitable education, 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. Wherever possible, students should receive their education within their school, and the aim of any alternative provision is to reintegrate students as soon as they are well enough. We have a continuing role in a student's education while they are not in school and will work with the local authority, healthcare partners and families to ensure that all children with medical needs receive the right level of support to maintain links with their education.

2. The Responsibilities of the School

Initially, the school will attempt to make arrangements to deliver suitable education for children with health needs who cannot attend school. The Headteacher and SENCO are responsible for making and monitoring these arrangements. A meeting is held with parents/carers to discuss arrangements for working from home or hospital, and a plan is drawn up detailing the agreed actions and signed by the school and parents/carers. Arrangements could include sending work home, attending a hospital school, or a teaching assistant attending the home to deliver lessons prepared by class teachers. The student is gradually reintegrated into school where possible, and may be placed on a reduced timetable until their health needs have been met. If the Headteacher and SENCO determine that the school can no longer meet the needs of the student, the school will give notice on the placement.

When the local authority makes arrangements

Where the local authority makes arrangements, the school will:

- work constructively with the local authority, providers, relevant agencies and parents to ensure the best outcomes for the student;
- share information with the local authority and relevant health services as required; and
- help ensure that the provision offered is as effective as possible and that the child can be reintegrated successfully.

When reintegration is anticipated, we work with the local authority to:

- plan for consistent provision during and after the period of education outside school, allowing the student to access the same curriculum and materials as far as possible;
- enable the student to stay in touch with school life as much as possible;
- create individually tailored reintegration plans for each child; and
- consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made.

The Headteacher is responsible for

- ensuring arrangements for students who cannot attend school due to medical needs are in place and effectively implemented;
- ensuring the termly review of those arrangements;
- ensuring the roles and responsibilities of those involved are clear and understood;
- ensuring robust systems are in place for health emergencies and critical incidents, on and off site;
- ensuring staff supporting students with health needs are appropriately trained;
- appointing a named member of staff responsible for students with healthcare needs, who liaises with parents, students, the local authority, key workers and others;
- providing teachers with suitable information about a student's health condition and the possible effects of the condition and/or any medication; and
- notifying the local authority when a student is likely to be away from school for a significant period due to health needs.

The SENCO is responsible for

- dealing with students who are unable to attend school because of medical needs;
- actively monitoring student progress and reintegration;
- supplying education providers with information about the child's capabilities, progress and outcomes; and
- liaising with the Headteacher, education providers and parents to determine students' programmes of study while they are absent.

Teachers and support staff are responsible for

- understanding confidentiality in respect of students' health needs;
- designing lessons and activities so that those with health needs can participate fully, and ensuring students are not excluded from activities they wish to take part in without a clear, evidence-based reason;
- understanding their role in supporting students with health needs and attending the required training;
- being aware of their students' needs through appropriate and lawful sharing of information;
- being aware of the signs, symptoms and triggers of common life-threatening medical conditions and knowing what to do in an emergency; and
- keeping parents informed of how their child's health needs are affecting them while in school.

3. Definitions

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;
- emotional difficulties or emotionally based school avoidance;
- progressive conditions;
- terminal illnesses; and
- chronic illnesses.

Children who are unable to attend school for health reasons may access:

- a hospital school – a special school within a hospital setting that provides continuity of education during treatment;
- home tuition – many local authorities have home tuition services that act as a communication channel between schools and students;
- provision while too ill to attend school and receiving specialist medical treatment; or
- a medical pupil referral unit (PRU) – a local authority establishment providing education for children unable to attend their registered school due to medical needs.

4. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the SENCO.

5. Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside the school's other policies, including:

- Accessibility Policy and Accessibility Plan
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Attendance Policy
- SEND Policy
- Equality Policy

6. Legislation and Guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of the Education Act 1996 and has had regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance, including:

- Education Act 1996 (including the local authority's section 19 duty to arrange suitable education)
- Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs (DfE, 2013)
- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (DfE, 2015)
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE, 2024)
- Children and Families Act 2014 (Part 3: special educational needs and disability)
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)