



# CHILDREN WITH HEALTH NEEDS WHO CANNOT ATTEND SCHOOL POLICY

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## CONTENTS

1. Introduction	Page 2
2. Aims	Page 3
3. Legislation and guidance	Page 3
4. The responsibilities of the school	Page 3 - 4
5. Monitoring arrangements	Page 4 - 8
6. Links to other policies	Page 8 - 9

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

All children, regardless of their circumstances should receive a good education to enable them to shape their own futures. Alternative provision should offer good quality education, on a par to that provided through mainstream schooling, coupled with the support that individual pupils need to overcome barriers to attainment. This support should meet a pupil's individual needs, including social and emotional needs and enable them to thrive and prosper in the education system.

In line with statutory guidance from the DfE, local authorities must arrange for suitable full-time education (or part-time when appropriate for the child's needs) for children who are unable to attend a mainstream or special school because of their health. This duty applies to all children and young people who would normally attend mainstream schools, including Academies, Free Schools, independent schools and special schools, or where a child is not on the roll of a school. It applies equally whether a child cannot attend school at all or can only attend intermittently. This means that where a child cannot attend school because of health problems, and would not otherwise receive a suitable full-time education, the LA is responsible for arranging provision.

There will be a wide range of circumstances where a child has a health need but will receive suitable education that meets their needs without the intervention of the LA – for example, where the child can still attend school with some support; where the school has made arrangements to deliver suitable education outside of school for the child; or where arrangements have been made for the child to be educated in a hospital by an on-site hospital school. In such cases the LA would not become involved in such arrangements unless it had reason to think that the education being provided to the child was not suitable or, while otherwise suitable, was not full-time or for the number of hours the child could benefit from without adversely affecting their health. This might be the case where, for example, the child can attend school but only intermittently.

## **2. AIMS**

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

## **3. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE**

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
- DfE (2013) “Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs”
- DfE (2014) “Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions” It also based on guidance provided by our local authority.
- Telford & Wrekin Policy & Procedures for Pupils who are on a Modified Timetable

## **4. THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL**

There are a very limited number of reasons why a school might consider alternative provision pathways and / or the use of a modified timetable. Where this is related to health issues it will be supported by medical evidence. The pupils will:

- a) Have medical needs other than mental health needs, (including pregnancy where any absence would be similar to that of an employee on maternity leave)
- b) Have mental health needs and access the Bee U service (CAMHS) either as an in-patient or through services provided in the community.

The school has a responsibility to monitor and evaluate the achievement of all pupils on our roll. Pupils who are not in school full time will be provided with sufficient and appropriately differentiated work to do for those hours they are not in school, in line with their individual needs and capabilities. Arrangements are in place to ensure that the work is regularly marked; assessed and constructive feedback is given to the pupil.

Pupils at school with medical conditions are supported so that they have full access to education, including school visits and physical education. The governing body ensures that arrangements are in place in school to support pupils with medical needs. In addition, the governing body ensures that school leaders consult health and social care professionals, pupils and parents to ensure that the needs of children with medical conditions are properly understood and effectively met.

Some pupils with medical conditions may be considered to be disabled under the definition set out in the Equality Act 2010. Where this is the case the governing body must comply with its duties under that Act. Some pupils may also have special educational needs (SEN) and may have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which brings together health and social care needs, as well as their special educational provision. For pupils with SEND this guidance should be read in conjunction with the Special Needs and Disability Code of Practice.

When considering arrangements, other than full time school, for pupils with medical conditions it is important to:

- Indicate specific support for the pupils educational, social and emotional needs.
- Ensure that a pupil with a medical condition is supported in enabling full participation as possible in all aspects of school.
- Demonstrate that a reduced timetable is appropriately supported with advice/evidence from a clinician such as a consultant, BeeU representative or G.P.
- Note that pupils with medical conditions should have access to as full an education as possible given their individual circumstances.
- Notify the LA of all pupils who are not attending school for more than 15 days, this will include those who are in hospital.

#### **4.1 If The School Makes Arrangements**

Initially, the school will attempt to make arrangements to deliver suitable education for children with health needs who cannot attend school.

The **Headteacher** is responsible for:

- Working with the governing body 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 best interests of children.
- Ensuring the arrangements put in place to meet pupils' health needs are fully understood by all those involved and acted upon.
- 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.
- Ensuring the support put in place focusses on and meets the needs of individual pupils.
- Arranging appropriate training for staff with responsibility for supporting pupils with health needs.
- 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 body on the effectiveness of the arrangements in place to meet the health needs of pupils.
- 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.

The **Director of Inclusion and SENCO** will work with the named member of staff to be responsible for:

- Dealing with pupils who are unable to attend school because of medical needs.
- Actively monitoring pupil progress and reintegration into school.
- Supplying pupils' education providers with information about the child's capabilities, progress and outcomes.
- Liaising with the Headteacher, education providers and parents to determine pupils' programmes of study whilst they are absent from school.
- Keeping pupils informed about school events and encouraging communication with their peers.
- Providing a link between pupils and their parents, and the LA.

**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.

**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.

#### **4.1a Absence Management**

- Parents are advised to contact the school on the first day their child is unable to attend due to illness.
- Absences due to illness will be authorised unless the school has genuine cause for concern about the authenticity of the illness.
- 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.

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

- o The pupil has been certified by a Medical Officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school, before ceasing to be of compulsory school age; and
- o 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.

- 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 the Medical Officer, even if the LA has become responsible for the pupil's education.

#### **4.1b 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 healthcare plans (IHCPs), in accordance with the Supporting Pupils with 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.
- Whilst a pupil is away from school, the school will work with the LA to ensure the pupil can successfully remain in touch with their school using the following methods:

- o School newsletters
- o Emails
- o Invitations to school events
- o Appropriate contact from peers and staff

- Where appropriate, the school will provide the pupil's education provider with relevant information, curriculum materials and resources.
- To help ensure a pupil with additional health needs can attend school following an extended period of absence, the following adaptations will be considered:

- o A personalised or part-time timetable, drafted in consultation with the named staff member
- o Access to additional support in school

- o Online access to the curriculum from home
- o Movement of lessons to more accessible rooms
- o Use of the lift (if appropriate)
- o Place to rest at school
- o Special exam arrangements to manage anxiety or fatigue

#### **4.1c Reintegration**

- When a pupil is considered well enough to return to school, the school will develop a tailored reintegration plan in collaboration with the LA.
- The school will work with the LA when reintegration into school is anticipated to plan for consistent provision during and after the period of education outside school.
- As far as possible, the child will be able to access the curriculum and materials that they would have used in school.
- If appropriate, health professionals (such as the school nurse) will be involved in the development of the pupil's reintegration plan and informed of the timeline of the plan by the appointed named member of staff, to ensure they can prepare to offer any appropriate support to the pupil.
- 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.
- For longer absences, the reintegration plan will be developed near to the pupil's likely date of return, to avoid putting unnecessary pressure on an ill pupil or their parents in the early stages of their absence.
- 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.
- The reintegration plan will include:
  - o The date for planned reintegration, once known.
  - o Details of regular meetings to discuss reintegration.
  - o Details of the named member of staff who has responsibility for the pupil.
  - o Clearly stated responsibilities and the rights of all those involved.
  - o Details of social contacts, including the involvement of peers and mentors during the transition period.
  - o A programme of small goals leading up to reintegration.
  - o Follow up procedures.
- The school will ensure a welcoming environment is developed and encourage pupils and staff to be positive and proactive during the reintegration period.
- Following reintegration, the school will support the LA in seeking feedback from the pupil regarding the effectiveness of the process.

#### **4.2 If The Local Authority Makes Arrangements**

If the school can't make suitable arrangements, Telford and Wrekin will become responsible for arranging suitable education for these children.

- 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 named person with responsibility for pupils with health needs will notify the LA, who will take responsibility for the pupil and their education.
- 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.
- For hospital admissions, the appointed named member of staff will liaise with the LA regarding the programme that should be followed while the pupil is in hospital.
- 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.
- The LA will ensure that the education children receive is of good quality, as defined in the statutory guidance Alternative Provision (2016), allows them to take appropriate qualifications, prevents them from slipping behind their peers in school and allows them to reintegrate successfully back into school as soon as possible.
- The LA will address the needs of individual children in arranging provision, without limiting the offer of education to children with a given condition and prevent their access to the right level of educational support which they are well enough to receive. Strict rules that limit the offer of education a child receives breach statutory requirements.

In cases 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 pupil
- Share information with the local authority and relevant health services as required
- Help make sure that the provision offered to the pupil is as effective as possible and that the child can be reintegrated back into school successfully
- When reintegration is anticipated, work with the local authority to:
  - o Plan for consistent provision during and after the period of education outside the school, allowing the pupil to access the same curriculum and materials that they would have used in school as far as possible
  - o Enable the pupil to stay in touch with school life (e.g. through newsletters, emails, invitations to school events or internet links to lessons from their school)
  - o Create individually tailored reintegration plans for each child returning to school
  - o Consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made

## **5. MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the SEND governor. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

## **6. LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES**

This policy links to the following policies:

- Accessibility Plan



- Attendance Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Telford & Wrekin Policy and Procedures For Pupils On A Modified Timetable