



Children with health needs who cannot attend school policy

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1. 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/carers understand what our school is responsible for when the local authority is providing education.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the following legislation:

- › [The Education Act 1996](#)
- › [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)

It is also based on the following statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE):

- › [Alternative provision](#)
- › [Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs](#)

It also based on guidance provided by our local authority and general good practice derived from [DfE guidance](#).

3. Definitions

3.1 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; and
- › Terminal illnesses.

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

- › Hospital school: a special school within a hospital setting where education is provided to give continuity whilst the child is receiving treatment.
- › Home tuition: many LAs have home tuition services 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; and
- › Medical Pupil Referral Units (PRUs): these are LA establishments that provide education for children unable to attend their registered school due to their medical needs.

3.3 Children who can attend mainstream education with medical conditions may include those with:

- › Physical or mental health issues.
- › Long-term and complex medical conditions that may require ongoing support, medicines, or care while at school to help them manage their condition and keep them well.

- Conditions which may require monitoring and interventions in emergency circumstances; and Some children with medical conditions may be considered to be disabled under the definition set out in the Equality Act 2010.

4. Responsibilities of the school

The school aims to ensure that 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.

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

The school understands that it has a continuing role in a pupil's education whilst they are not attending the school and will collaborate with the relevant professionals, 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.

The school aims to ensure that all students who can attend School with medical conditions receive appropriate support allowing them to play a full and active role in school life, remain healthy, have full access to education (including school trips and physical education) and achieve their academic potential.

There are also social and emotional implications associated with medical conditions. Students with medical conditions can develop emotional disorders, such as self-consciousness, anxiety, and depression, and be subject to bullying. This policy aims to minimise the risks of students experiencing these difficulties.

Long-term absences because of medical conditions can affect educational attainment, impact integration with peers, and affect wellbeing and emotional health. This policy contains procedures to minimise the impact of long-term absence and effectively manage short-term absence.

The relevant local authority to the student's home address is responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for children who – because of illness or other reasons – would not receive suitable education without such provision. This means that where a child cannot attend school because of health problems, and would not otherwise receive a suitable full-time education, the relevant local authority is responsible for arranging provision and must have regard to the guidance DfE (2013) "Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs".

4.1 If our school makes the arrangements

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

The Headteacher will be responsible for making and monitoring these arrangements, for example sending work home, in consultation with the child and their parents.

The Headteacher will be also responsible for making and monitoring arrangements to reintegrate pupils back into school, in consultation with the child and their parents.

4.2 If the local authority makes the arrangements

If our school cannot make suitable arrangements, or if it is clear that a child will be away from school for 15 days (consecutive or over the course of the year) or more because of their health needs, Stoke-on-Trent Council will become responsible for arranging suitable education for these children.

When the local authority arranges alternative education, the education should begin as soon as possible, and at the latest by the 6th day of the child's absence from school.

Where full-time education is not in the child's best interest for reasons relating to their physical or mental health, the local authority must arrange part-time education on whatever basis it considers to be in the child's best interests.

The Headteacher will refer the child to the Education Welfare Officer

In cases where the local authority makes the arrangements, our school will:

- › Provide to the local authority, at agreed intervals, the full name and address of any pupils of compulsory school age who are not attending school regularly due to their health needs
- › Work constructively with the local authority, providers, relevant agencies, and parents/carers to ensure the best outcomes for the child
- › Collaborate with the local authority to ensure continuity of provision and consistency of curriculum, including making information available about the curriculum
- › Along with the local authority, regularly review the provision offered to ensure it continues to be appropriate for the child and that it is providing suitable education
- › Share information with the local authority and relevant health services as required
- › When a child has complex or long-term health issues, work with the local authority, parents/carers, and the relevant health services to decide how best to meet the child's needs (e.g. through individual support, arranging alternative provision or by them remaining at school, being supported at home and back into school after each absence)
- › Where possible, allow the child to take examinations at the same time as their peers, and work with the local authority to support this
- › Help make sure that the child can be reintegrated back into school successfully
- › When reintegration is anticipated, work with the local authority to:
 - Plan for consistent provision during and after the period of education outside the school, allowing the child to access the same curriculum and materials that they would have used in school as far as possible, including through digital resources
 - Enable the child to stay in touch with school life (e.g. through newsletters, emails, digital learning platforms, social media platforms, invitations to school events or internet links to lessons from their school), and, where appropriate, through educational visits
 - Create individually tailored reintegration plans for each child returning to school, which includes extra support to fill any gaps arising from the absence
 - Consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made

5. Monitoring arrangements

This document will be reviewed every year but may be reviewed and updated more frequently if necessary. It will be reviewed by the Governing Body and approved by the Chair of Governors at every review.6. Links to other policies

6. This policy links to the following policies:

- › Accessibility plan
- › Supporting pupils with medical conditions