



## **Children With Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School Policy**

**Date: December 2023**

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Blackdown Education Partnership aims to support 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. We recognise that, whenever possible, students should receive their education within their school and the aim of the provision will be to reintegrate students back into school as soon as they are well enough.

We understand that we have a continuing role in a student's education whilst they are not attending the 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 enable them to maintain links with their education.

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 - DfE (2013) 'Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs'
- DfE (2015) 'Supporting students at school with medical conditions'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following policies:

- Attendance Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy

All relevant parties will liaise with the appropriate medical professionals to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the student and ensure the education students receive is of good quality, allows them to take appropriate qualifications, prevents them from falling behind their peers in school, and allows them to reintegrate successfully back into school as soon as possible. Medical conditions / medical needs for the purposes of this policy are either a physical or mental health

medical condition as diagnosed by a healthcare professional which results in the child or young person requiring special adjustments for the school day, either ongoing or intermittently. This includes: a chronic or short-term condition, a long-term health need or disability, an illness, injury or recovery from treatment or surgery. Being 'unwell' and common childhood diseases are not covered.

### **WHO THIS AFFECTS:**

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.
- Chronic illnesses.

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 students on occasions where students are too ill to attend school and are receiving specialist medical treatment.
- Medical PRUs: these are establishments that provide education for children unable to attend their registered school due to their medical needs.

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory duties when supporting students 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 students' health needs are fully understood by all those involved and acted upon.
- Appointing a named member of staff who is responsible for students with healthcare needs and liaises with parents, students, the LA, keyworkers and others involved in the student's care.
- Ensuring the support put in place focusses on and meets the needs of individual students.
- Arranging appropriate training for staff with responsibility for supporting students with health needs.
- Providing teachers who support students with health needs with suitable information relating to a student's health condition and the possible effect the condition and/or medication taken has on the student.
- Providing reports to the Local Governing Committee on the effectiveness of the arrangements in place to meet the health needs of students.
- Notifying the LA when a student is likely to be away from the school for a significant period of time due to their health needs.

Our named member of staff for supporting students with Health Needs who cannot attend school is **Mrs Emily Higginbottom**. She is responsible for:

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

Teachers and support staff are responsible for:

- Understanding confidentiality in respect of students' health needs.
- Designing lessons and activities in a way that allows those with health needs to participate fully and ensuring students are not excluded from activities that they wish to take part in without a clear evidence-based reason.
- Understanding their role in supporting students with health needs and ensuring they attend the required training.
- Ensuring they are aware of the needs of their students through the appropriate and lawful sharing of the individual student'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.

## **SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS**

- Where a student has a complex or long-term health issue, the school will discuss the student's needs and how these may be best met with the relevant medical professionals, parents and, where appropriate, the student.
- The school will endeavor to support students with health needs to attend full-time education wherever possible and will make reasonable adjustments to students' programmes of study where medical evidence supports the need for those adjustments.
- The school will make reasonable adjustments under students' individual healthcare plans (IHCPs), in accordance with the Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy.
- Students 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 student's education to establish and maintain regular communication and effective outcomes.
- Whilst a student is away from school, the school will endeavor to ensure that the student can successfully remain in touch with their school using all appropriate methods

- Whilst a student is away from school, the school will endeavor to ensure that the student is provided with opportunities to have social interaction with their peer group
- Where appropriate, the school will provide the student's education provider with relevant information, curriculum materials and resources.
- To help ensure a student 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 named staff member
  - 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
  - Special exam arrangements to manage anxiety or fatigue

## **REINTEGRATION**

- When a student is considered well enough to return to school, the school will develop a tailored reintegration plan.
- The school will work with relevant parties 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.
- The school will consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made to provide suitable access to the school and the curriculum for the student.
- For longer absences, the reintegration plan will be developed near to the student's likely date of return to avoid putting unnecessary pressure on an ill student or their parents in the early stages of their absence.
- The school is aware that some students will need gradual reintegration over a long period of time and will always consult with the student, their parents and key staff about concerns, medical issues, timing and the preferred pace of return.
- The reintegration plan will include:
  - The date for planned reintegration, once known.
  - Details of regular meetings to discuss reintegration.
  - Details of the named member of staff who has responsibility for the student.
  - Clearly stated responsibilities and the rights of all those involved.
  - Details of social contacts, including the involvement of peers and mentors during the transition period.
  - A programme of small goals leading up to reintegration.
  - Follow up procedures.

## **INFORMATION SHARING**

- It is essential that all information about students with health needs is kept up to date.
- To protect confidentiality, all information-sharing techniques, e.g. staff noticeboards, will be agreed with the student and their parent in advance of being used.
- All teachers, TAs, 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 School procedures.

- 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.
- Ask parents to sign a consent form which clearly details the organisations and individuals that their child's health information will be shared with and which methods of sharing will be used.
- Consider how friendship groups and peers may be able to assist students with health needs.
- When a student 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. The named member of staff will liaise with the hospital or other tuition service as appropriate.

### **RECORD KEEPING**

- In accordance with the Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy, written records will be kept of all medicines administered to students
- Proper record keeping protects both staff and students and provides evidence that agreed procedures have been followed.
- All records will be maintained in line with the Records Management Policy.

### **TRAINING**

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