

## The 3-18 Education Trust

# Children with Health Needs who cannot attend School Policy

*Every individual is in a great school.*

Approved: Spring Term 2024

[www.3-18education.co.uk](http://www.3-18education.co.uk)



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## **Introduction**

The 3-18 Education Trust aims to support the home Local Authorities of pupils and 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. The Trust recognises that, whenever possible, young people 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. The Trust understands that it has a continuing role in a pupil's education whilst they are not attending the school and will work with their home 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.

## **Policy Aims**

This policy aims to ensure that:

- Suitable education is arranged for pupils on roll who cannot attend school due to health needs.
- Pupils, school staff and parents/carer understand what the school is responsible for when this education is being provided by the home Local Authority.

## **Definitions**

Children who are unable to attend school because 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: a service that acts as a communication channel between schools and pupils on occasions where pupils are too ill to attend school and are receiving specialist medical treatment.
- Medical Pupil Referral Units: these are Local Authority establishments that provide education for children unable to attend their registered school due to their medical needs.

## **The Role and Responsibilities of the Home Local Authority**

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 home Local Authority for example, where the child can still attend school with some support; where the school has decided

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. The home Local Authority 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.

Home Local Authorities are responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for pupils 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, which have been confirmed by an appropriate professional, and would not otherwise receive a suitable full-time education, the home Local Authority is responsible for arranging provision.

The law does not define full time education but children with health needs should have provision which is equivalent to the education they would receive at school. Where full time education would not be in the best interests of a child because of reasons relating to their physical or mental health, local authorities should provide part time education on a basis they consider to be in the child best interests.

**The home Local Authority should:**

- Provide such education as soon as it is clear that a pupil will be away from school for 15 school days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative. They should liaise with the appropriate medical professionals to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the pupil.
- Ensure the education pupils 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.
- Address the needs of individual pupils in arranging provision.
- Have a named officer responsible for the education of children with additional health needs and ensure parents know who this is.
- Have a written, publicly accessible policy statement on their arrangements to comply with their legal duty towards children with additional health needs.
- Review the provision offered regularly to ensure that it continues to be appropriate for the child and that it is providing suitable education.
- Give clear policies on the provision of education for children and young people under and over compulsory school age.

**The home Local Authority should not:**

- Have processes or policies in place which prevent a child from getting the right type of provision and a good education.
- Withhold or reduce the provision, or type of provision, for a child because of how much it will cost.
- Have policies based upon the percentage of time a child is able to attend school rather than whether the child is receiving a suitable education during that attendance.
- Have lists of health conditions which dictate whether or not they will arrange education for children or inflexible policies which result in children going without suitable full-time education (or as much education as their health condition allows them to participate in).

## **The Role and Responsibilities of the School**

The law does not specify the point during a child's illness when it becomes the home Local Authorities responsibility to secure for the child suitable full time education. Schools would usually provide support to children who are absent from school because of illness for a shorter period for example when experiencing chicken pox or influenza.

More generally, local authorities should be ready to take responsibility for any child whose illness will prevent them from attending school for 15 or more school days, either in one absence or over the course of the school year, and where suitable education is not otherwise being arranged.

Where a pupil has a complex or long-term health issue, the pattern of illness can be unpredictable. The school will discuss the pupil's needs and how these may be best met with the home Local Authority, relevant medical professionals, parents and, where appropriate, the pupil. Flexibility and responsiveness may be needed.

The home Local Authority 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.

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. As far as possible, the child will be able to access the curriculum and materials that they would have used in school. Where appropriate, the school will provide the pupil's education provider with relevant information, curriculum materials and resources. It may be decided that a remote offer of education either via video or live lessons can be provide by the school. In those cases the school will make use of the remote learning platforms that have been successfully used previously including monitoring pupil engagement and systems for marking and returning work. The duration of this arrangement will be agreed on a case-by-case basis and in partnership with families, the home Local Authority and relevant health and social care partners.

Whilst a pupil is away from school, the school will work with the home Local Authority to ensure the pupil can successfully remain in touch with their school and may use the following methods:

- School newsletters
- Emails
- Invitations to school events

## **Reintegration**

When a pupil is considered well enough to return to school, the school will develop a tailored reintegration plan in collaboration with the home Local Authority.

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 school will consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made to provide suitable access to the school and the curriculum for the pupil.

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 home Local Authority in seeking feedback from the pupil regarding the effectiveness of the process.

## **Examinations and Assessments**

The school will liaise with the alternative provision provider over planning and examination course requirements where appropriate.

Relevant assessment information will be provided to the alternative provision provider if required.

Awarding bodies may make special arrangements for pupils with permanent or long-term disabilities and learning difficulties, or temporary disabilities and illnesses. Applications for such arrangements will be submitted by the school, or home Local Authority if more appropriate, as early as possible.

## **Links to Other Policies**

This policy links to the following policies:

- Accessibility plan
- Supporting pupils with Medical Conditions
- Attendance Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

## **Policy Monitoring and Review**

### **Monitoring**

The Deputy Chief Executive Officer will monitor the outcomes and impact of this policy on an annual basis.

### **Review**

Member of Staff Responsible	Deputy Chief Executive Officer Send and Safeguarding Trust Consultant
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Relevant Guidance/Advice/Legal Reference	<p>Education Act 1996.  DfE (2015) 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions'  Equality Act 2010  Data Protection Act 2018  DfE (2013) 'Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs'  It is also based on guidance provided by the Trust's Local Authority:  <a href="https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-attendance-or-exclusion">https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-attendance-or-exclusion</a></p>
Policy Adopted By	Trust Board
Date of Policy	Spring Term 2024
Review Period	Annually
Date of Next Review	Spring Term 2025