



Children with health needs who cannot attend school

Member of Staff Responsible	Chief Executive Officer
Relevant guidance/advice/legal reference	Education Act 1996 . - DfE (2015) 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions' It is also based on guidance provided by our local authority: https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-attendance-or-exclusion The Key
Approved by	Trust Board
Date of Policy	May 2022
Review Cycle	3 years
Date of Next Review	May 2025
Website	Yes

Foreword

The vast majority of this policy applies to all schools in The 3-18 Education Trust. Section 3, however, contains details of school-specific procedures and references.

Statement

The 3-18 Education Trust aims to support the local authority (LA) 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. 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, 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. We understand that we have a continuing role in a pupil's education whilst they are not attending the school and will work with the LA, 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.

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, school staff and parents/carers understand what the school is responsible for when this education is being provided by the local authority

2. Legislation and guidance

2.1 LA Duties

The LA must arrange suitable full-time education for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would not receive suitable education without such provision. Our school has a duty to support the LA in doing so.

The LA should:

- Provide such education as soon as it is clear that a pupil will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative.
- 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/carers know who this is.
- Have a written, publicly accessible policy statement on their arrangements compliant with their legal duty towards children with additional health needs.
- Review the provision offered regularly to ensure that it continues to be appropriate and suitable for the child.
- Give clear policies on the provision of education for children and young people under and over compulsory school age.

The LA 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).

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

3. The responsibilities of the school

Shropshire Council supports children with additional needs, see:

<https://shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/education/special-educational-needs-sen-support>

Further guidance can be obtained from:

[DfE guidance](#)

3.1 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.

- Where a pupil has a complex of long-term health issue, the school will discuss the pupils needed and how these may be best met with the LA.
- 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.
- Staff will send work home or to hospital schools where requested. Where possible staff will deliver online or face to face lessons at the young person's location.
- 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 which may include one or more of the following methods:- School newsletters, e mails, invitations to school events, cards or letters from peers and staff, relevant software that is being deployed through its management information system, teams contact (or equivalent)
- Where appropriate, the school will provide the pupil's education provider with relevant information, curriculum materials and resources.
- We will consult parents/carers/social workers/LA where needed to develop arrangements for the young person's individual needs.
- Where possible, we will plan a personalised approach to support the young person's reintegration to school. We will consider anxieties and other parameters to ensure the young person is supported well in their transition back into school. This may include staggered arrival and departure times, reduced timetable, external provisions, cross curricular learning.

3.2 If the local authority makes arrangements

If the school cannot make suitable arrangements, Shropshire LA will become responsible for arranging suitable education for these children.

- Our SLT and the pastoral team will meet to discuss if the school can implement and maintain suitable arrangements.
- Plans and risk assessments will be discussed with the parents/carers, social worker, LA and where possible the young person.
- We will consider referring a student to the LA if their absence is in excess of 15 days whether consecutive or cumulative.
- The LA will liaise with appropriate medical professionals to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the child.

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:
 - 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.
 - 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).
 - Create individually tailored reintegration plans for each child returning to school.
 - Consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made.

3.3 Examinations and Assessments

- The named member of staff (contact school for details) 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 LA if more appropriate, as early as possible.

4. 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