Children With Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School Policy

Hampton Lakes Primary School

Policy last reviewed:	September 2026
Next review due:	September 2027
Member of staff responsible:	Mrs Katie Steel
Ratified by:	HL LGB

Contents

1. Aims 2
2. Legislation and guidance 3
3. Responsibilities of the school 3
4. Absences 6
5. Monitoring arrangements 7
6. Links to other policies 8

---

1. Aims

This policy has been written with regard to the Department for Education's statutory guidance, *Arranging Education for Children Who Cannot Attend School Because of Health Needs* (December 2023), and should be read alongside *Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions* (2015, updated 2017), the SEND Code of Practice and the Equality Act 2010.

The school is committed to ensuring that pupils with health needs receive a suitable and ambitious education that supports educational attainment, wellbeing and successful reintegration into school wherever possible.

Hampton Lakes Primary School recognises that children may experience both physical and mental health needs which prevent them from attending school for short or extended periods. The school is committed to ensuring that no pupil's education is unnecessarily disrupted because of their health needs and will work proactively with families, healthcare professionals, the Local Authority and other agencies to secure appropriate educational provision.

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 the school is responsible for when this education is being provided by the local authority.
- 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, pupils 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 in 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.

2. 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 2018
- DfE Arranging Education for Children Who Cannot Attend School Because of Health Needs (December 2023 update).
- DfE Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions
- Children and Families Act 2014**.**
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current version).
- DfE Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions (2015, updated 2017)

3. Responsibilities of the school

Where a pupil has a complex or long-term health issue, the school will discuss the pupil's needs with parents/carers and consider how their needs may be best met in conjunction with the Local Authority, relevant medical professionals and, where appropriate, the pupil.

The school recognises that health needs may be physical or mental in nature and that children experiencing mental health difficulties should receive the same level of support and consideration as those with physical medical conditions.

Where a pupil is unable to attend school because of health needs, the school will work proactively with parents/carers, health professionals and the Local Authority to minimise disruption to the child's education and wellbeing.

The school will support pupils with health needs to attend full-time education wherever possible, or the school may make reasonable adjustments to pupils' programmes of study where medical evidence supports the need for those adjustments. These reasonable adjustments may be recorded in a pupil's 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. Where appropriate, the school will provide the pupil's education provider with relevant information, curriculum materials and resources.

Whilst a pupil is away from school, the school will ensure the pupil can successfully remain in touch with their school through school ICT platforms including Tapestry, SeeSaw, Collins Big Cat and Numbots/TTRockstars, along with newsletters, emails, invitations to school events, cards or letters from peers and staff. Initially, the school will attempt to make arrangements to deliver a suitable education for children with health needs who cannot attend school. The Headteacher and SENDCo will be responsible for making and monitoring these arrangements.

A named member of staff will act as the key point of contact for families, professionals and the Local Authority throughout any period of health-related absence. Provision will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains appropriate, ambitious and responsive to the pupil's changing needs and medical circumstances.

The school will discuss arrangements for working from home or hospital with parents/carers. A plan will be drawn up detailing agreed actions from the discussion, the plan will be signed by school and parents/carers. The plan will then be carried out to deliver education to the child.

Arrangements could include sending work home, the pupil attending a hospital school whilst they are an in-patient, a member of staff attending the home to support work or access to online learning such as Tapestry/SeeSaw. Work will be prepared by class teachers.

The school will seek to provide education that enables pupils to maintain academic progress, remain engaged with learning and stay connected with their peers wherever possible. This may include blended learning approaches combining online resources, teacher contact and alternative provision.

Once the pupil is able, they will be integrated back into school with alternative arrangements to make it possible. These will be discussed with parents/carers and the pupil in conjunction with any medical advice from other professionals. A personalised reintegration plan will be developed where appropriate. The plan will include agreed targets, identified support strategies, review dates and the roles of staff, parents/carers and external professionals. To help ensure a pupil with additional health needs is able to attend school following an extended period of absence, adaptations may need to be considered including:

- a personalised or part-time timetable, drafted in consultation with parents/carers and the named staff member;
- access to additional support in school;
- reasonable adjustments to the physical learning environment as advised by medical professionals such as occupational therapists;
- 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;
- alternative provision for break or lunch times.
- pastoral and wellbeing support following a prolonged absence;
- regular review meetings involving the pupil, family and relevant professionals;

- adaptations to homework expectations and assessment arrangements where appropriate.

3.1 If the local authority makes arrangements

If the school cannot make suitable arrangements, Peterborough City Council will become responsible for arranging suitable education for these pupils.

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

- Work constructively with the local authority, providers, relevant agencies and parents/carers 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.
  - The school will continue to regard the pupil as a member of the school community and will take reasonable steps to maintain social and educational links.

3.2 The Governing Body and Headteacher

The Governing Board and Headteacher are responsible for:

- Ensuring arrangements for pupils who cannot attend school as a result of their medical needs are in place and are effectively implemented.
- Ensuring the regular review of the arrangements made for pupils who cannot attend school due to their medical needs. Regular to be defined by the individual needs of the child.
- Ensuring the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the arrangements to support the needs of pupils are clear and understood by all.
- Ensuring robust systems are in place for dealing with health emergencies and critical incidents, for both on- and off-site activities.
- Ensuring staff with responsibility for supporting pupils with health needs are appropriately trained.

- Ensuring suitable arrangements are considered as early as possible where a pupil's absence is likely to be prolonged, rather than waiting until a specific absence threshold has been reached.
- Monitoring the quality and effectiveness of educational provision made for pupils unable to attend school because of health needs.
- Appointing a named member of staff who is responsible for pupils with healthcare needs and liaises with parents/carers, pupils, the LA, key workers and others involved in the pupil's care.
- 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.
- 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.

3.3 The SENDCo is responsible for:

- 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/carers to determine pupils' programmes of study whilst they are absent from school.
- Liaising with medical professionals as appropriate.
- Providing a link between pupils and their parents/carers, and the LA.
- Ensuring teachers and support staff are kept informed of the health needs relating to pupils they work with.
- Coordinating regular reviews of provision and ensuring that educational plans reflect the pupil's current medical advice and educational needs.
- Supporting the planning and implementation of reintegration arrangements following periods of absence

3.4 Teachers and Support Staff are responsible for:

- Understanding confidentiality in respect of pupils' health needs.
- Designing lessons and activities in a way that allows pupils with health needs to participate fully, ensuring they 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 any required training.

- Ensuring they are aware of the needs of their pupils through the appropriate sharing of the individual pupil's health needs.
- Ensuring they are aware of the signs, symptoms and triggers in relation to the medical needs of the pupil and know what to do in an emergency.
- Reading and understanding any medical care plans and reporting any concerns to the SENDCo.
- Keeping parents/carers informed of how their child's health needs are affecting them whilst in the school.

4. Absences

Pupils who are absent because of illness can be supported through liaison with the pupil's parents/carers. This may be through schoolwork being provided for completion at home as soon as the pupil is able to cope with it, including the use of Google Classroom. Alternatively, it may be possible for part-time education at school or a gradual phased return to full-time attendance.

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.

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 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 consider both consecutive and cumulative absences when determining whether additional support or referral to the Local Authority may be required.

4.1 Review of Provision

Provision arranged for pupils with health needs will be reviewed regularly and at intervals appropriate to the child's circumstances. Reviews will involve parents/carers, the pupil (where appropriate), school staff, the Local Authority and relevant health professionals.

Review meetings will consider educational progress, attendance, wellbeing, medical advice, safeguarding considerations and readiness for reintegration into school.

5. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the SENDCo. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board. Any changes in the policy will be clearly communicated to all members of staff involved in supporting pupils with additional health needs, and to parents and pupils themselves.

Definitions

Children who are unable to attend school as a result of their medical needs may include those with:

- Physical health issues.
- Physical injuries.
- Emotional difficulties affecting attendance.
- Mental health conditions, including anxiety disorders, depression and other diagnosed or professionally identified mental health needs.
- Children experiencing barriers to attendance arising directly from a medical or mental health condition.
- Progressive conditions.
- Terminal illnesses.
- Chronic illnesses.

6. Links to other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Accessibility plan
- Supporting children with medical conditions
- Attendance Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy