



Holbrook Academy

Children with health needs who cannot attend school policy

Date Approved	16 th July 2024
Signed	Helen Butler Chair of Governors
Minuted	WGB Meeting 16 th July 2024

This policy takes account of the Academy's public sector equality duty set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. It can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required. It applies wherever staff or volunteers are working with students even where this is away from the Academy, for example at an activity centre or on an educational visit.

Member of staff with responsibility for this policy.	Assistant Headteacher – Safeguarding & Pastoral
Governor with responsibility for this policy.	Full Governing Body
Policy review date	Summer 2025
What is the purpose of this policy?	To ensure that suitable education is arranged for pupils on roll who cannot attend school due to health needs
What are its headline targets? (using quantitative and qualitative measures)	
How is this policy to be judged as successful?	

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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 understand what the school is responsible for when this education is being provided by the local authority

2. Legislation

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 pupils at school with medical conditions'
- 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

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Attendance Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

3. Who is this policy for?

Parents and carers who have children with medical health needs that mean they are unable to attend school. For all staff involved in supporting those children who are unable to attend school and for liaison with the Local Authority who provide alternative education provision.

4. Local Authority Duties

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

- Provide such education as soon as it is clear that a student will be away from school for 15 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 student.

- 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.
- Address the needs of individual students 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 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).

Further information from Suffolk County Council website, Education Other Than At School Policy;

In January 2013 the Department for Education published statutory guidance entitled 'Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs – Statutory guidance for local authorities'. This replaces the previous guidance 'Access to Education for Children and Young People with Medical Needs' (2001). It provides comprehensive guidance to local authorities and related services. Roles and responsibilities, including those of the local authority and school, are outlined in detail. This policy should be read alongside this guidance and any future relevant guidance.

7.2 Suffolk County Council is responsible for ensuring that pupils with health needs are not at home or in hospital for more than 15 working days without access to education: this may be consecutive or cumulative with the same medical condition.

7.3 Suffolk County Council will arrange suitable full-time education (or as much education as the child's health condition allows) for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would otherwise not receive suitable education.

7.4 The aim of this provision is to:

- *Minimise disruption to learning*

- *Deliver an appropriate and personalised education and*
- *Successfully reintegrate pupils into mainstream provision at the earliest opportunity when they are well enough to return.*

7.5 *Suffolk County Council is responsible for ensuring that there is a named senior officer with responsibility for the provision of education for children and young people who are unable to attend school because of medical needs. In this Local Authority the officer is Maria Hough, Deputy Headteacher for the Specialist Education Services.*

7.6 *Details of how this provision is arranged is detailed under the following policy Supporting Children with Medical Needs*

5. 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 students on occasions where students 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.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body and SLT are responsible for:

- Ensuring arrangements for students who cannot attend school as a result of their medical needs are in place and are effectively implemented.
- Ensuring the termly review of the arrangements made for students who cannot attend school due to their medical needs.
- Ensuring the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the arrangements to support the needs of students 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 students with health needs are appropriately trained.

- Approving and reviewing this policy on an annual basis.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Working with the Local Governing Body to ensure 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 Local Authority, key workers 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 Quality & Monitoring Committee on the effectiveness of the arrangements in place to meet the health needs of students.
- Notifying the Local Authority when a student is likely to be away from the school for a significant period of time due to their health needs.

The named person in school is Alexandra King, Assistant Headteacher – Safeguarding & Pastoral, and they are responsible for:

- Dealing with students who are unable to attend school because of medical needs.
- Monitoring student progress and reintegration into school.
- Supplying students' education providers / school tutors with information about the child's capabilities, progress and outcomes.
- Liaising with the Headteacher, education providers / school tutors 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 the school / 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 and carers 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 and ensure any medication kept at reception for their child is in-date
- Attend meetings to discuss how support for their child should be planned.

7. Managing Absences

Parents/Carers are requested to contact the school on the first day their child is unable to attend due to illness. Longer term absences will need documentary evidence from a medical professional.

Absences due to illness will be authorised unless the school has genuine cause for concern about the authenticity of the illness, as long as sufficient detail is provided.

The school will provide support to students who are absent from school because of illness for a period of less than 15 school days by liaising with the student's parents/carers to arrange schoolwork as soon as the student is able to cope with it or part-time education at school. The school will give due consideration to which aspects of the curriculum are prioritised in consultation with the student, their family and relevant members of staff. Consideration will also be given to teacher workload and the appropriateness of work set not in a classroom context.

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 students with health needs will notify the Local Authority, and will make suitable arrangements. This usually involves working with a tutor who will facilitate education out of school.

For hospital admissions, the appointed named member of staff will liaise with the Local Authority and / or school tutors regarding the programme that should be followed while the student is in hospital.

The Local Authority will set up a personal education plan (PEP) for the student which will allow the school, the Local Authority and the provider of the student's education to work together.

The school (through the Attendance Officer) will monitor student attendance and mark registers to ensure it is clear whether a student is, or should be, receiving education otherwise than at school.

The school will only remove a student who is unable to attend school because of additional health needs from the school roll where:

- The student has been certified by a Medical Officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school, before ceasing to be of compulsory school age; and

- Neither the student nor their parent has indicated to the school the intention to continue to attend the school, after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.

A student unable to attend school because of their health needs will not be removed from the school register without parental consent and certification from the Medical Officer, even if the Local Authority has become responsible for the student's education.

8. 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 Local Authority, relevant medical professionals, school tutors, parents and, where appropriate, the student.

The Local Authority expects the school to support students with health needs to attend full-time education wherever possible, or for the school to make reasonable adjustments to students' programmes of study where medical evidence supports the need for those adjustments (evidence must be confirmed with a written medical diagnosis or advice from an NHS medical professional e.g. CAMHS, GP, Paediatric services, medical consultant).

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 work with the Local Authority to ensure the student can successfully remain in touch with their school using the following methods:

- School newsletters
- Emails
- Invitations to school events
- Cards or letters from peers and staff

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 when needed
- Special exam arrangements to manage anxiety or fatigue

9. Reintegration

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

The school will work with the Local Authority 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.

If appropriate, the school nurse will be involved in the development of the student's reintegration plan and informed of the timeline of the plan by the appointed named member of staff, to ensure they can prepare to offer any appropriate support to the student.

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.

The school will ensure a welcoming environment is developed and encourage students and staff to be positive and proactive during the reintegration period.

Following reintegration, the school will support the Local Authority in seeking feedback from the student regarding the effectiveness of the process.

10. 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, eg staff noticeboards, will be agreed with the student and their parent in advance of being used.

All teachers, teaching assistants, supply and support staff will be provided with access to relevant information, including high-risk health needs and emergency procedures and first aiders, via the agreed school procedures and/or risk assessment.

Parents/carers 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.
- Provide the student and their parents with a copy of the policy on information sharing.

- Ask parents/carers 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.

11. 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 school policy.

12. 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.

Healthcare professionals should be involved in identifying and agreeing with the school the type and level of training required.

Training will be sufficient to ensure staff are confident in their ability to support students with additional health needs.

Parents/carers of students with additional health needs may provide specific advice but will not be the sole trainer of staff.

13. Examinations and Assessments

The named member of staff 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 students with permanent or long-term disabilities and learning difficulties, or temporary disabilities and illnesses. Applications for such arrangements will be submitted by the school Exams Officer.