



Policy

Children with Health Needs who Cannot Attend School

This policy has been written with regard to the guidance 'Working together to safeguard children', 'Keeping children safe in education' and the 'Special Education Needs Code of Practice', which places Special Education Needs and Disabilities together and abbreviated to SEND. A copy can be seen in the Headteacher's Office.

The overall objective of the school's Equality Policy, in line with the Equality Act 2010, is to provide a framework for the school to pursue its equality duties to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment, promote equality of opportunity, and promote good relations and positive attitudes between people of diverse backgrounds in all its activities.

Title	Children with Health Needs who Cannot Attend School
Date of Issue	September 2022
Review Date	September 2023
Prepared by	Headteacher/SENDCo
To be reviewed by	Headteacher and Governors
Appendices	None
Supply / distribution	Available as a hardcopy in the school office.
Other relevant approved documents	Accessibility Plan Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy SEND Policy
Authorised by	Headteacher and Governors

1. Aims

Irregular attendance at school owing to additional health needs places children and young people at risk of underachievement and isolation, and may impact upon their ability to sit public examinations (including National Curriculum Tests).

Fynamore School, together with Wiltshire Council, is committed to ensuring that children with medical needs necessitating absence from school for short or long periods of time have access to continuous, high-quality education, commensurate with their ability to access education, and which addresses the needs of the child as a whole.

The commitment to these young people extends to ensuring they receive the encouragement and support they need to feel secure and confident, to enjoy their education, to make a positive contribution and to achieve their full potential.

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 and Guidance

Legislation:

This policy reflects the legal requirements of The Education Act (1996, Section 19) and the Equality Act (2010).

Statutory Guidance:

Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs (DfE 2013).

Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (DfE 2014 - updated 2015).

Local Authority Guidance:

Continuity of Educational Provision for Children and Young People with Additional Health Needs (Wiltshire Council, 2018).

3. 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 medical conditions;
- Terminal illnesses;
- Chronic illnesses.

Children who are unable to attend mainstream education for health reasons may possibly attend:

- **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 Pupil Referral Units (PRUs)** - these are LA establishments that provide education for children unable to attend their registered school due to their medical needs.

4. The Responsibilities of the School

At all times, the pupil remains the responsibility of Fynamore School while they are on roll. In line with Government guidance Wiltshire schools must:

- Have a policy and named person responsible for dealing with pupils unable to attend school because of their medical needs (at Fynamore this is the SENDCo);
- Keep the pupil on roll and include them in any planning;
- Provide work and materials if pupils are absent for up to 15 school days;
- Co-ordinate, implement and review Individual Health Care Plans / Personal Education Plans, be active in the monitoring of pupils who may attend school for partial days and monitor the progress and reintegration into school of those who have been absent because of their medical needs, liaising with other agencies as necessary;
- Draw up an Individual Health Care Plan / Personal Education Plan for any pupil with diagnosed medical conditions, to be reviewed at least annually in continuing partnership with the pupil, parents and professionals;
- Ensure that pupils who have SEND but do not have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) have their SEND mentioned in their Individual Health Plan / Personal Education Plan;
- Ensure that pupils who are unable to attend school because of medical needs are kept informed about school social events and are able to participate, where appropriate;
- Ensure that arrangements are made for pupils who are due to undertake public examinations (National Curriculum Tests), including assistance with scribing, alternative venue and submission of mitigation, where appropriate;
- Encourage and facilitate liaison with peers, for example through visits, use of Information Technology and social events;
- Create individually tailored reintegration plans for each child returning to school and consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made.

The school will, as far as is reasonably practicable, following the advice of the medical practitioner involved, take account of the wishes and views of parents/carers and young people in the planning of educational provision where attendance at school is not possible because of medical need.

Initially, the school will attempt to make arrangements to deliver suitable education for children with health needs who cannot attend school. However, this may not always be possible. In cases where the Local Authority makes alternative 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.

5. The Responsibilities of the Local Authority

5.1 General Responsibilities

In line with the Government guidance, Wiltshire Local Authority (LA) must:

- Have a designated senior officer with responsibility for access to education for children and young people with medical needs. In Wiltshire, this Officer is Lydia Thomas – Team Leader, Medical Needs Education and Reintegration Service: lydia.thomas@wiltshire.gov.uk;
- Ensure that pupils with a medical condition, diagnosed and supported at Consultant clinician level, that prevents attendance at their usual place of education, are not without access to education for more than 15 school days;
- Promote the implementation of an Individual Health Care Plan / Personal Education Plan for pupils who have illness / diagnosis which prompts prolonged or recurring periods of absence from school;
- Ensure that children of compulsory school age are in receipt of an appropriate amount of teaching hours dependent on their medical need;
- Respond to a school's request for assistance by considering the most appropriate educational provision and how it can be implemented by supporting the school in meeting their statutory responsibility for compulsory school aged children and young people.

The expectation of Wiltshire LA is that all absence from school for medical reasons which may necessitate alternative educational provision is supported by confirmation at Consultant clinician level of the young person's condition and inability to attend school. Long term absences from school attributed to stress, anxiety and school refusal should be referred to specialist mental health agencies for assessment, thereby enabling advice to be obtained regarding appropriate educational provision and reintegration to the young person's usual place of education.

5.2 LA Special Educational Needs Support Teams

Specialist Advisory Teachers can provide information, guidance and advice for children and young people with complex medical needs, physical, visual and hearing impairments. Advice can be provided to assist schools to adapt their practices to accommodate individual medical needs in school. Advice can be sought regarding reintegration back into school, liaising with health professionals, and advice on appropriate resources to enable access to the curriculum and school environment which can contribute to the production and review of PEPs.

5.3 LA Education Welfare Service

Education Welfare Officers (EWOs) can offer guidance and support to school staff on the procedures and requirements for continuity of education in respect of children with medical needs. EWOs will carry out routine inspections of registers in schools and will identify pupils who may have recurrent patterns of absence due to illness and who may require additional support. EWOs may advise schools to carry out an assessment of identified pupils using the Common Assessment Framework (CAF).

6. Pupils Receiving Treatment in Hospitals

Pupils who are receiving in-patient treatment in hospital may receive education from Hospital Schools or Ward Teaching Units at their place of treatment, if considered appropriate.

7. Links to other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Accessibility Plan
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- SEND Policy

8. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher and SENDCo. At every review it will be approved by the Full Governing Body.