



Children with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School Policy

Reviewed by Amanda Parker
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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/carers understand what the school is responsible for when this education is being provided by the local authority

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of the [Education Act 1996](#).

It is also based on guidance provided by our local authority, Hackney, found here:

<https://education.hackney.gov.uk/content/medical-needs-tuition-service>

3. Short-term absence

It is not normal practice for work to be provided for children who are too unwell to attend school due to a short bout of illness. Children who are unwell are usually expected to rest at home and to return to school when they are well enough to complete work. The school will make allowances if they are recovering, for example reducing the amount of physical activity asked of them.

If a child is well enough to complete school work but unable to attend, for example if they are isolating due to NHS or government guidance, the school will provide and review work. This will usually be provided and reviewed by the child's class teacher. This will be sent as soon as practicable and may be sent via email, post, books/sheets for collection at school or the use of online platforms such as Google Classroom, as appropriate for the age and needs of the child.

3. Longer term absence

It is essential that parents inform the school at the earliest opportunity if it is anticipated that an absence due to health needs will be long-term. This means an absence exceeding 15 consecutive school days or at least 15 days over the course of an academic year.

When an absence of more than 15 working days can be predicted, arrangements for continuing the pupil's education will be made by the Head Teacher, working in collaboration with the Class Teacher and SENDCo (if appropriate). After speaking to the parents and confirming that the referral is supported by a Consultant level doctor or CAMHS clinician, they will contact the Hospital School and/or Home Tuition Service. They will then send on documentation that will inform staff about the pupil's needs, enabling them to plan appropriate provision. Information sent will generally include:

- curriculum targets
- a current Support Plan (SEND targets) and/or personal education plan, if the pupil has either of these
- extracts from the latest Annual Review (pupils with EHCPs only).

When a child is admitted to hospital for a long-term stay, the education will be provided by the Hospital School, a special school within the hospital to provide education to children admitted to the hospital.

When a child is at home due to their medical needs, the Home Tuition will start as soon as is practicable. Pupils from Reception to Year 6 will be educated at home through the Hackney Medical Needs Tuition Service (MNTS) or the equivalent service from their home borough. The service aims to provide the equivalent of full-time education, where the child's health needs allow, focusing on English, Maths and Science. This is provided through a balanced combination of one to one tuition, homework and remote learning. Further information about the MNTS can be found here:

<https://www.hackneylocaloffer.co.uk/kb5/hackney/localoffer/service.page?id=KcRNbiUFywE>

This policy applies to pupils with both physical and mental health conditions that prevent school attendance. Pupils experiencing significant mental health difficulties, such as anxiety disorders or eating disorders, may also be eligible for support from the Medical Needs Tuition Service (MNTS) or equivalent services, provided there is supporting medical evidence from a consultant or CAMHS clinician.

The Class Teacher, with the parent's cooperation, will maintain contact with pupils unable to attend. It may be appropriate for email to be used and children may be included in special events through the use of photos, videos or video conferencing. They may also stay in contact with their class via notes or cards as appropriate for the age of the child. In certain instances, a child's class teacher may be able to send material to the education provider that will help to keep the absent pupil up to date with topics being covered in class.

The Head Teacher, Class Teacher and/or SENDCo will continue to monitor the progress of pupils unable to attend. This will be done through discussion with teachers working with the child out of school, by examining work samples (where appropriate) or by setting online assessments to be completed at home.

Parents should keep the school updated on any changes to their child's condition, treatment, or expected return date. Regular communication will help ensure that the school can provide appropriate support and make necessary adjustments in a timely manner.

4. Reintegration into school

As with the notification of absence, it is very important that parents give the school as much notice as possible about the pupil's date of return to school.

The Head Teacher, in collaboration with the child's parents, class teacher and SENDCo, will draw up an individually tailored reintegration plan in advance of the pupil's return to school. This plan will set down any new procedures that need to be followed and will ensure that any additional equipment is in place. Particular attention will be given to matters such as handling and lifting and support staff will be given appropriate training. In some cases it will be necessary to have outside professionals on site when the child first returns.

On the day of return a Risk Assessment will be carried out by the Head Teacher, along with the child, parents and Class Teacher, to ensure that the child and others will be safe whilst at school. For pupils with SEND, the school will work closely with the SENDCo and relevant professionals to ensure that any necessary adjustments are in place. This may

include modifications to their EHCP (if applicable), additional in-class support, or adaptations to the curriculum to help ease their transition back to school.

For some children, reintegration will be a gradual process. A pupil may start with a short visit to school and gradually increase the time spent in class as they build up stamina. Where mobility and independence are reduced, or where additional medical procedures are involved, a preliminary visit will help to establish whether there are any safety issues that need to be resolved before a date is fixed for the pupil's return.

If it seems as though a pupil will have significant medical needs for the foreseeable future, it may be necessary to consider making a request for statutory assessment for EHCP under the SEND Code of Practice (Pupils with Medical Needs). There will be consultation with the parents on this matter.

5. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Head Teacher. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

6. Links to other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Accessibility plan
- Administration of Medicine and Supporting pupils with medical conditions
- SEND Policy