

The Ecclesbourne School
“Learning together for the future”



Students who cannot attend school due to medical reasons

February 2022

1. Intent

The Ecclesbourne School will work in conjunction with the Local Authority to ensure that all children who are unable to attend school due to medical needs receive where practical suitable education.

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, students should receive their education within their school and we will closely with all parties involved to re-integrate students once they are well enough to do so.

We understand that we have a continuing role in a students' 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.

2. Statutory Education referred to:

- 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 students at school with medical conditions'

3. This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Attendance Policy 2021
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy 20201
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy 2021
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy 2022

4. 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.

5. 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. In Derbyshire this is OOST and in Derby this is the Castle School.
- Medical PRUs: these are LA establishments that provide education for children unable to attend their registered school due to their medical needs.

6. Responsibilities

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. The school has a duty to support the LA in doing so.
- 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.
- Review the provision offered regularly to ensure that it continues to be appropriate for the child and that it is providing suitable education.

The DSL is responsible for:

- Dealing with students who are unable to attend school because of medical needs.
- Actively monitoring student progress and reintegration into school.
- Supplying students' education providers with information about the child's capabilities, progress and outcomes.
- Liaising with the headteacher, education providers 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 LA.
- Ensuring that any provision that is arranged for the child is registered and all necessary safeguarding checks have been carried out.

Parents 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.
- Attend meetings to discuss how support for their child should be planned.

7. Managing absences

Parents are advised to contact the school on the first day their child is unable to attend due to illness. Absences due to illness will be authorised unless the school has genuine cause for concern about the authenticity of the illness. If a child is absent from school without authorisation a text is then sent for around 10.00am and this is followed up individualised phone calls if the parent has not responded to the text.

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 students' parents 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.

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 LA, who will take responsibility for the student 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 student'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 student is in hospital.

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

The school 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 the school 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 school's medical officer, even if the LA 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 LA, relevant medical professionals, parents and, where appropriate, the student.

The LA 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.

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 LA to ensure the student can successfully remain in touch with their school through Show My Homework, E-mails and Home School Visits.

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
- Support with movement around school.
- Places to rest at school
- Special exam arrangements to manage anxiety or fatigue in accordance with JCQ regulations.

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 LA if appropriate.

The school will work with the LA 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 and the preferred pace of return.

The reintegration plan will include:

- The date for planned reintegration, once known.
- Details of regular meetings to discuss reintegration.
- Details of the named member of staff who has responsibility for the student.
- Clearly stated responsibilities and the rights of all those involved.
- Details of social contacts, including the involvement of peers and mentors during the transition period.
- A programme of small goals leading up to reintegration.
- Follow up procedures.
- 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 LA in seeking feedback from the student regarding the effectiveness of the process.

10. 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 the Records Management Guidance.

11. 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 one week 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 of students with additional health needs may provide specific advice but will not be the sole trainer of staff.

12. Examinations and assessments

- The exam officer 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.

13. Monitoring and review

- This policy will be reviewed by the governing board on an annual basis.
- Any changes to the policy will be clearly communicated to all members of staff involved in supporting students with additional health needs, and to parents and students themselves.