



# Hedgewood School

## Children with health needs who cannot attend school policy

Date policy last reviewed: 2024

Signed by:

\_\_\_\_\_ Headteacher                      Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Chair of governors                      Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## **1. Introduction**

Children and young people may miss school due to health reasons. This may be illness (physical or mental health), injury or a planned admission to hospital. The health problem may be time-limited or a child may have a long-term condition. Most absences from school will be for minor, short-term health problems, and absences from school will be short and infrequent. The child's school will arrange any educational support relating to such absences.

However, some children may miss school for longer periods due to health reasons. This document sets out Hillingdon Council's policy for making alternative education arrangements for those children, including when and how alternative education provision will be arranged.

The local authority (LA), schools, parents/primary carer, providers and other agencies will need to work together to plan and provide suitable alternative provision in these circumstances.

## **2. 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

## **3. Legal framework**

This policy reflects the requirements of the [Education Act 1996](#). It is also based on guidance provided by our local authority.

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Home & Remote Learning Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Medical Conditions Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## **4. 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 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 pupils on occasions where pupils 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.

## **5. Roles and responsibilities of respective parties**

**The School's role is to:**

- Work with Health Professionals to maintain attendance at school
- Maintain an Education Health & Care Plan, with Health Professionals that identify any reasonable adjustments that can be made to maintain attendance at school
- Request medical evidence from the parent/ carer when it is clear a child or young person's health condition is preventing them from attending school regularly
- When it is clear a child or young person's health condition is preventing them from attending school, school will refer and provide supporting evidence to the LA to consider making Alternative Provision
- Host and chair regular review meetings (normally every 6 weeks); produce action plans and distribute notes of these meetings
- Provide materials for an appropriate programme of work and work plans
- Maintain a plan, such as a Health Plan, which records progress made towards a return to school.
- Provide the pupil's academic attainment levels including any relevant examination requirements such as permissions for extra time and scribes, for example
- Provide a suitable working area within the School, where necessary
- Be active in the monitoring of progress and the reintegration into school, using key staff to facilitate the reintegration back into school.
- Ensure that pupils who are unable to attend school, are kept informed about school social events, are able to participate, for example, in homework clubs, study support and other activities as their medical condition allows.
- Encourage and facilitate liaison with peers, for example, through visits and on-line activity.

**The parents'/carers' role is to:**

- Commit to a plan of reintegration
- Secure medical evidence from Health Professionals
- Be willing to work together with all concerned
- Provide early communication if a problem arises or help is needed
- Attend necessary meetings
- Reinforce with their child, the value of a return to school.

**The Local Authority's role is to:**

- Keep a record of all children and young people with long term medical needs that have been notified to the LA
- Ensure that cases are channelled through the appropriate professional support pathways e.g., SEND, Early Help
- Ensure that an appropriate professional is assigned to each case
- Consider referrals from school for children or young people who are medically unfit to attend school
- Make education provision for a child or young person who is deemed medically unfit to attend school
- Support reintegration back into school placement
- Keep provision under review.

**5.1 If the school makes the arrangements**

At Hedgewood, the responsibility for making and monitoring arrangements for children with health needs who cannot attend school falls on a collaborative effort between Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and the Family Services team. Together, they work to ensure there is sufficient monitoring and support in place to maintain the well-being and educational progress of our pupils. Additionally, the class teachers play a pivotal role in implementing and overseeing these arrangements on a day-to-day basis, ensuring that the learning needs of the pupil are met effectively.

Various arrangements are put in place to facilitate education provision for pupils who are unable to attend school. Physical home learning packs containing resources are prepared and distributed, allowing students to engage in learning activities from home. These packs can be collected from the school and returned or exchanged upon completion. Additionally, online platforms such as PurpleMash, Reading Eggs, Maths seeds and Seesaw are used to set homework and monitor learning progress remotely. Furthermore, face-to-face learning opportunities are facilitated through virtual platforms like Zoom and Teams, allowing for interactive sessions to take place where feasible.

Consultation with parents/carers and pupils is integral to the success of these arrangements. High levels of communication are maintained to ensure that parents/carers are actively involved in the decision-making process regarding their child's education. Regular consultations are held to address any concerns and ensure that a collaborative approach is taken to meet the educational needs of each pupil.

When reintegrating pupils back into school, the process is tailored to the individual needs of each child in consultation with their parents. Depending on the circumstances, integration may be phased or staggered to allow for a gradual transition back into the school

environment. This approach ensures that the reintegration process is smooth and supportive, facilitating the successful return of pupils to regular schooling

## **5.2 If the local authority makes the arrangements**

If the school can't make suitable arrangements, Hillingdon Local Authority will become responsible for arranging suitable education for these pupils. In Hillingdon, arrangements for alternative education are made by the Pupil Support Team.

In cases where the local authority makes the 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

## **6. Monitoring and review**

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

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

