



WEST GRANTHAM

Church of England Primary Academy

CHILDREN WITH HEALTH NEEDS WHO CANNOT ATTEND SCHOOL POLICY

Policy	Children With Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School Policy
Approved by	Local Governing Board
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VERSION CONTROL			
VERSION	DATE	AUTHOR	CHANGES
2023	27.06.23	ED	New Policy
2024	13.06.24	NS	Full Policy Review Page 1: Change from IEB to LGB, change of date Page 4: Addition of name of staff and job title
2025	08.06.25	NS	Full Policy Review Pg2-3- legislation and guidelines updated Pg3- Policies that run alongside added Pg5- Training requirements added
2026	14.05.26	NS	Full Policy Review Pg3- updated date, Pg3-4- addition of definitions, Pg5- additional SENCO responsibilities, Pg 6- addition of staff and parent responsibilities, Pg6-7 addition of managing absence section, Pg7-8 addition of information sharing section, Pg8- addition of record keeping section

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Aims

This policy aims to ensure that a suitable education is arranged for pupils on roll who cannot attend school due to health needs.

It also aims to ensure that pupils, staff, and parents understand what the school is responsible for when this education is being provided by the local authority.

The West Grantham Church of England Primary Academy aims to ensure that all children who are unable to attend school due to medical needs, and who would not receive suitable education without such provision, continue to have access to a much education as their medical condition allows, to enable them to reach their full potential.

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 the aim of the provision will be to reintegrate

students back into school as soon as they are well enough.

Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of the Education Act 1996 and the academy will also follow the guidance provided by our local authority.

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
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- DfE (2025) 'Keeping children safe in education 2025'
- DfE 'Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs'
- DfE 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions'
- DfE 'Working together to improve school attendance'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Attendance and Absence Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Children Missing from Education Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Remote Education Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

Definitions

“Children with health needs” are children of compulsory school age who are unable to attend school as a result of their medical needs. These medical needs include:

- 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 or participate in any of the following:

- **Hospital school** – a school within a hospital setting where education is provided to give continuity whilst the child is receiving treatment.

- **Home tuition** – many Local Authorities (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 Pupil Referral Units (PRU)** – these are LA establishments that provide education for children unable to attend their registered school due to their medical needs.

For the purpose of this policy, “school-based support” in relation to supporting pupils with additional health needs may include:

- Day-to-day support offered at school where the pupil is able to attend as normal.
- Support given to pupils who are absent from school because of illness for a period of less than 15 school days, whether consecutive or cumulative.
- Any educational or extra-curricular provision as requested by the LA as part of its arrangements for pupils who cannot attend school full-time, e.g. where the pupil attends school part-time as an arranged part of their full-time education provision.
- As part of their reintegration into normal school attendance following a period of absence or part-time attendance due to health needs. “LA-arranged education”, for the purpose of this policy, is defined as education provision arranged by the LA where the pupil cannot attend school full time due to medical reasons for a period of 15 school days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative.

Roles and responsibilities

The responsibilities of the school:

Initially, the school will attempt to make arrangements to deliver suitable education for children with health needs who cannot attend school. The headteacher and SENCO will be responsible for making and monitoring these arrangements. A meeting will be made with parents/carers to discuss arrangements for working from home or hospital.

A plan will be drawn up detailing agreed actions from the discussion, the plan will be signed by the academy and parents/carers. The plan will then be carried out to deliver education to the child. The attendance team will conduct home visits throughout. Arrangements could include sending work home or attending a hospital school. Work will be prepared by class teacher.

Regular meetings will take place (once every six weeks) with a view to reintegrate pupils back into the school as quickly as possible.

The responsibility of the local authority:

There are occasional situations where due to the nature of the pupil's illness or sudden injury the school is not able to effectively implement school-based support, and this necessitates a direct referral to Pilgrim Hospital School. Usually this would be in response to a serious injury sustained by the student precluding attendance at school or a planned operation and discharge home and where medical advice is clear that return to school is not appropriate.

The referral must be supported by the following documentation: Robust medical evidence from a consultant or medical professional which illustrates that the pupil is unable to access their usual place of learning due to their current health needs. For anxiety led school refusal a copy of the Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) providing evidence of the support school has established in response to the pupil's health needs. A copy of the school attendance register showing 15 days consecutive absence from school. The form must be signed by parent, school, and wherever possible pupil.

In cases where the local authority makes 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, the school will 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.

The Governing Board and Headteacher are responsible for:

- Ensuring arrangements for students who cannot attend school due to 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.
- Appointing a named member of staff: Yvonne Mammatt our Attendance and Family Liaison Officer 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.
- Providing teachers who support students with health needs with suitable information and training relating to a student's health condition and the possible effect the condition and/or medication taken has on the student.
- 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 SENCo is responsible for:

- Dealing with students who are unable to attend school because of medical needs.
- Actively monitoring pupil 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.
- Ensuring the Attendance and Family Liaison officer provides a link between students and their parents, and the Local Authority.
- Keeping pupils who are being educated by LA-arranged education providers informed about school events and encouraging communication with their peers.

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 school based education.

Parents will be expected to:

- Ensure, where school-based provision is in place, the regular and punctual attendance of their child at the school where possible.
- Work in partnership with the school, LA and any LA-arranged provision to ensure the best possible outcomes for their child.
- Notify the school, or the relevant education provider, 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 any school-based support, including reintegration, for their child should be planned.

Managing absence

Parents will be required 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.

The school will provide support to pupils who are absent from school because of illness for a period of less than 15 school days, whether consecutive or cumulative, by liaising with the pupil's parents to arrange schoolwork, as soon as the pupil 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 pupil, their parents, 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 member of staff with responsibility for pupils with additional health needs will notify the LA, who will take responsibility for the pupil 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 pupil's absence.

For planned hospital admissions, the appointed named member of staff will liaise with the LA and the hospital education provider as early as possible to discuss the likely admission date and expected length. Plans will be made, where possible, for the educational programme to be followed while the pupil is in hospital.

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

The school will monitor pupil attendance and mark registers to ensure it is clear whether a pupil is, or should be, receiving education other than at school.

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

- The pupil has been certified by the school's 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 pupil 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 pupil 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 pupil's education.

Staff will be alert to the fact that missing education can put pupils at risk of harm and may be an indicator of a safeguarding issue. Concerns will be handled in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Children Missing from Education Policy. Staff will also be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for pupils with additional health needs.

The school will provide to the LA, at agreed intervals, the full name and address of any pupils who are not attending school regularly, including if this is due to any additional health needs.

Where a pupil has a complex or long-term health issue, the school will discuss the pupil's needs and how these may be best met with the LA, relevant medical professionals, parents and, where appropriate, the pupil.

Pupils with continuing health needs will have an Individual Healthcare Plan (IHCP) which is subject to regular review and assessment. Where a pupil's needs amount to ongoing SEND, an EHC plan may be more appropriate to meet their long-term needs. Where a pupil has an EHC plan and an IHCP, both plans will be reviewed alongside each other.

During a period of absence, the school will work with the provider of the pupil's education to establish and maintain regular communication and effective outcomes.

The use of digital resources will be considered to support learning and complement face-to-face education, where appropriate. Digital resources will only be used in accordance with the pupil's needs. Staff will follow procedures set out in the Remote Education Policy.

Information sharing

It is essential that all information about pupils with additional health needs is kept up to date.

To protect confidentiality, all information-sharing techniques, e.g. staff noticeboards, will be agreed with the pupil and their parent in advance of being used, in accordance with the Pupil Confidentiality Policy.

All teachers, TAs, supply, and support staff will be provided with access to relevant information, including high-risk health needs, first aiders and emergency procedures, via a folder in the staffroom.

Parents 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 pupil and their parents with a copy of the policy on information sharing.
- Ask parents 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 pupils with additional health needs.

When a pupil 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.

Record keeping

In accordance with the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, written records will be kept of all medicines administered to pupils.

Proper record keeping will protect both staff and pupils and provide evidence that agreed procedures have been followed.

All records will be maintained in line with the Records Management Policy.

Training

Healthcare professionals will 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 pupils with additional health needs.

Staff will be trained in a timely manner to assist with a pupil's return to school.

Once a pupil's return date has been confirmed, staff will be provided with relevant training before the pupil's anticipated return.

Monitoring arrangements

The Headteacher and SENCo will annually review this policy. At every review, it will be approved by the governing board.