



Children with Health Needs who cannot Attend School Policy

Lead member of staff	Brian Ball
Approval Level	Full Governing Body
Signed by	Nicola Waters, Chair of Governors
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Next Review	Autumn 2024

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 understand what the school is responsible for when this education is being provided by the local authority.

Billingshurst Primary School 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 as 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, pupils should receive their education within our school and the aim of the provision will be to reintegrate pupils back into school as soon as they are well enough.

We understand that we have a continuing role in a pupil's education whilst they are not in school and will work with the LA, Academy trust, 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.

Definitions

Occasional absence from school for the odd occasion due to illness is **not** covered by this policy. Parents and carers should refer to the school's attendance policy as published on the school website for this information.

Parents are advised to contact the school on the first day their child is unable to attend due to health needs by calling and speaking to a member of school staff on the main telephone number.

Absences due to health needs will be authorised unless the school has genuine cause for concern about the authenticity of the illness. Concerns about children who do not have a genuine reason for their absence that is related to health needs, must speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead for further advice and action to be taken, including referrals into social care if the case meets threshold.

The school will provide support to pupils who are absent from school because of illness for a period of less than 15 school days 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 family and relevant members of staff.

Legislation and Guidance

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
- Data Protection Act 2018
- DfE (2013) 'Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs'
- DfE (2015) 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions'.

The Responsibilities of the School

If the school makes arrangements, the following will apply:

- Parents are advised to contact the school on the first day their child is unable to attend due to illness directly.
- Absences due to health needs 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 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 family and relevant members of staff.
- Initially, the school will attempt to make arrangements to deliver suitable education for children with health needs who cannot attend school.
- The Head Teacher and SENDCos will be responsible for making and monitoring these arrangements. A meeting will be held 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 school and parents / carers. The plan will then be carried out to deliver education to the child.
- Arrangements could include sending work home, the child attending a hospital school or following the outcome of a risk assessment a Teaching Assistant may attend the home to deliver lessons. Work will be prepared by class teachers.
- The pupil will be slowly integrated back into school, for example on a reduced timetable initially to avoid pupils getting over-tired and/or until

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their health needs have been met. Alternative arrangements to make the pupil's reintegration into school smooth may include different arrangements for break or lunch times.

- 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 pupils with health needs (SENDCo) 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 hospital admissions, the named person with responsibility for pupils with health needs will liaise with the LA regarding the programme that should be followed while the pupil is in hospital.
- If the Local Authority makes arrangements

If the school can't make suitable arrangements, West Sussex County Council will become responsible for arranging suitable education for these children.

The LA should:

- Provide such education as soon as it is clear that a pupil will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative. They should liaise with the appropriate medical professionals to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the pupil. They should also ensure the education pupils 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 pupils in arranging provision.
- Have a named officer responsible for the education of children with additional health needs and ensure parents know who this is.
- Have a written, publicly accessible policy statement on their arrangements to comply with their legal duty towards children with additional health needs.
- Review the provision offered regularly to ensure that it continues to be appropriate for the child and that it is providing suitable education.
- Give clear policies on the provision of education for children and young people under and over compulsory school age.

The LA should not:

- Have processes or policies in place which prevent a child from getting the right type of provision and a good education.
- Withhold or reduce the provision, or type of provision, for a child because of how much it will cost.
- Have policies based upon the percentage of time a child can attend school rather than whether the child is receiving a suitable education during that attendance.

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- Have lists of health conditions which dictate whether they will arrange education for children or inflexible policies which result in children going without suitable full-time education (or as much education as their health condition allows them to participate in).

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, 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 Head Teacher are responsible for:

- Ensuring arrangements for pupils who cannot attend school because of their medical needs are in place and are effectively implemented.
- Ensuring the termly review of the arrangements made for pupils 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 pupils are clear and understood by all. This will be detailed in an Individual Healthcare Plan for the pupil.
- Ensuring robust systems are in place for dealing with health emergencies and critical incidents, for both on- and off-site activities. This should form part of a pupil's risk assessment to be in school / taking part in school activities off site as part of their arrangements
- Ensuring staff with responsibility for supporting pupils with health needs are appropriately trained.
- Making sure the school has identified and appointed a named member of staff who is responsible for pupils with healthcare needs and liaises with parents, pupils, the LA, key workers and others involved in the pupil's care. This is very likely to be the SENCo in almost all cases. In exceptional cases this will be the Headteacher.
- Providing teachers who support pupils with health needs with suitable information relating to a pupil's health condition and the possible effect the condition and/or medication taken has on the pupil.
- Notifying the LA when a pupil is likely to be away from the school for a significant period of time due to their health needs.

The SENDCo is responsible for:

- Dealing with pupils who are unable to attend school because of medical needs.
- Actively monitoring pupil progress and reintegration into school.
- Supplying pupils' education providers with information about the child's capabilities, progress and outcomes.
- Liaising with the headteacher, education providers and parents to determine pupils' programmes of study whilst they are absent from school.
- If available a Family Partnership Worker will provide a link between pupils and their parents, and the LA. Where this is not available, a teaching assistant, following discussion and being fully appraised of the situation may be asked to act as the day-to-day contact point for the family.

Teachers and Support Staff are responsible for:

- Understanding confidentiality in respect of pupils' health needs.
- Designing lessons and activities in a way that allows those with health needs to participate fully and ensuring pupils are not excluded from activities that they wish to take part in without a clear evidence-based reason.
- Understanding their role in supporting pupils with health needs and ensuring they attend the required training.
- Ensuring they are aware of the needs of their pupils through the appropriate and lawful sharing of the individual pupil'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 the school.

Absences of pupils with health needs

- 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 together.
- The school will monitor pupil attendance and mark registers to ensure it is clear whether a pupil is, or should be, receiving education otherwise 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 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 headteacher even if the LA has become responsible for the pupil's education.

Support for Pupils

- 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.