Children with health needs who cannot attend school

Date Approved	Committee responsible for review of policy	Next Review Date	Policy on Website	Statutory Policy
February 2026	Finance & Resources	February 2027	Yes	No

Headteacher: Emma Humphrey

© The Key Support Services Ltd | For terms of use, visit thekeysupport.com/terms

Contents

1. Aims....2
2. Legislation and guidance....2
3. Responsibilities of the school....2
4. Monitoring arrangements....7
5. Links to other policies....7

---

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 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 Hampshire County Council as our local authority. https://fish.hants.gov.uk/kb5/hampshire/directory/advice.page?id=553t_j-YqYY. This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Responsibilities of the school

The moral and legal mandate for schools is to ensure that they are supporting children with medical needs to the best of their ability and that each school has policies and processes in place to ensure this happens. There was a major shift in the legal responsibilities of schools when Section 100 of the Children and Families Act 2014 placed a legal duty on schools, academies and PRUs to make arrangements for supporting pupils with medical conditions at their school.

Sometimes children or young people become too unwell and are unable to attend school for a significant period of time. At these times the LA can in partnership with the school make suitable arrangements for that CYP's continuing education that takes into account their age, aptitude, ability and SEN needs and their health condition.

There is an expectation that schools will make reasonable adjustments to meet the need of the child if they are able to attend school with adjustments. There is an expectation that schools will be creative and flexible in meeting needs. It is, however, left to the school's discretion as to how they meet the needs. Schools will need to demonstrate how they are meeting educational need. This includes meeting the needs of pupils who can attend school part-time and intermittently, particularly when there are known medical needs, and these can be planned for.

© The Key Support Services Ltd | For terms of use, visit thekeysupport.com/terms

Most unwell CYP continue to have their need for education appropriately met by their own school. This support can be sensitively arranged between the school, the parents or primary carers, a primary health care provider (most often the GP) and the CYP themselves.

Before considering a referral to the local authority for advice and guidance a school must satisfy itself that a CYP's absence is due to ill-health and that there are no other factors influencing non-attendance.

Schools should consider liaison with other agencies that may be in contact with the CYP and/or their family.

When ill health persists beyond 15 consecutive or non-consecutive school days the school should make a referral to ISS for advice, guidance and educational provision.

Local authorities are responsible for ensuring that there is a named senior officer with responsibility for education provision for children with health needs and parents should know who that person is. The named officer for HCC is Jonathan Wilcocks, Inclusion Support Service Manager, link for contact details - https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/educationinclusionservice/aboutus#:~:text=Jonathan%20Willcocks%2C%20Inclusion%20Support%20Service,can%20refer%20pupils%20to%20ISS.

HCC's SEN Casework team will work with schools to review any changing needs of a child with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), who is unable to attend school because of their medical needs. The EHCP will link the long-term educational needs associated with the child's medical condition to the most appropriate teaching and learning provision.

ISS provide advice on pupils receiving alternative education provision. This team works closely with colleagues within the local authority, schools and partner agencies to reduce the length of time that children are on reduced timetables, which may be due to their medical needs. This is monitored, and schools are held to account through internal systems.

3.1 If the school makes arrangements

Initially, the school will attempt to make arrangements to deliver suitable education for children with health needs who cannot attend school.

- The SENCO is responsible for making and monitoring these arrangements
- Arrangements could include. sending work home, providing CGP workbooks or worksheets
- Frequent consultation with parents and pupils will take place to confirm arrangements
- Pupils will be reintegrated into school with the support of a reduced timetable if appropriate.

3.2 If the local authority makes arrangements

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

© The Key Support Services Ltd | For terms of use, visit thekeysupport.com/terms

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

Funding and other school responsibilities

Schools retain the Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) funding for pupils during the period of Inclusion Support Service provision and will be charged according to the agreed formula based on the daily AWPU rate for educational provision.

The home school will also be responsible for:

- Driving the agreed action plan for the pupil and informing all relevant parties of any changes
- Providing or loaning specialist resource materials, where possible (such materials to be itemised and returned to the school at the end of the period of ISS provision)
- Making examination arrangements (e.g. SATs, etc.)
- Examination entry fees
- Any offsite activity (if appropriate)
- Schools should be consistently seeking an early return to school-based learning

Identification of children who need provision

All referrals to Hampshire County Council will be received via a single point of access (SPA) by the Inclusion support Service (ISS). This ensures (a) that all referrals are treated in an equitable manner (b) that effective monitoring can take place.

All medical referrals will be made on the HCC medical referral form

© The Key Support Services Ltd | For terms of use, visit thekeysupport.com/terms

The triage system will take account of:

- Medical evidence, which should be verified in writing by a consultant community pediatrician or specialist consultant psychiatrist from Child and Mental Health Adolescent Services (CAMHS); where this is not possible alternative enquiries should be made to G.P.'s and/or others. This should indicate:
  - o that at the time of writing the CYP is not well enough to attend school
  - o The impact the illness is having on education
  - o The current plans and provision in place to support the CYP's education
  - o The age and stage of the pupil EG KS2
  - o How the school has made every reasonable adjustment to include the CYP in education and whether there are any reasonable adjustments the school could make to enable the CYP to attend school
  - o Any other available evidence
- Schools should authorise absences due to illness unless they have genuine concern about the veracity of an illness. Where this is the case the Headteacher should contact the single point of Access (SPA) for bespoke advice.
- Where parents are unable to provide evidence, further enquiries should be made to the General Practitioner (GP) or other health professionals or agencies especially around mental health issues.

Whilst unable to attend their home school it is important that CYP continue to engage in education. The provision offered will take account of age, aptitude and ability alongside other individual characteristics such as social and emotional needs, special educational needs and any disability. It is recognised and accepted that the capacity of the individual CYP to engage in learning may change over time. It is important, therefore, to ensure that the provision is regularly reviewed and that it continues to be both flexible and sensitive to individual need. All provision will maintain a focus on returning the CYP to school-based learning as soon as is reasonably possible.

Following triage for KS2 the ISS triage officer will undertake this role.

The child's progress will be reviewed regularly, in consultation with the parent/carer, the home school and other relevant services. Reviews may be made more frequently according to need. It should be recognised that a child's educational needs and ability to access education may change depending on their health and that the programme may need to be flexible to accommodate this.

Intervention: Persistent or long-term illness affecting ability to engage in education

For KS2 in partnership with the CYP's home school will:

- Undertake a thorough evaluation of all the circumstances affecting the child's ability to engage in learning

© The Key Support Services Ltd | For terms of use, visit thekeysupport.com/terms

- Work closely with the family and all agencies/professionals working with the child and their family
- Initiate a multi-agency Education Planning Meeting (EPM)
- Develop an ongoing education support for medical absence programme including an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of the programme
- Ensure a timely return to school-based education

Recovery, Reintegration and Partnership Working

Many children recover and make a positive transition back into school. Depending on the age and stage of the child this may, however, not be the most appropriate course of action. Parents and carers have a key role to play in their child's education and are to be involved in planning and on-going review. In the case of a looked after child, HCC and primary carers will fulfil this role. Children should also be involved in decisions to ensure they are engaged as much as possible in this process.

Relevant services including Special Educational Needs (SEN), Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Inclusion Support Service/Attendance/Hampshire Inspection and Advisory Service (HIAS), educational psychologists and school nurses all have responsibilities to work together to support children who are medically unfit to attend school.

Schools and Education Centres will make arrangements to reintegrate CYP at the earliest opportunity and as soon as they are well enough. Each child should have an individually tailored reintegration plan. Under Equalities legislation, schools must consider whether they need to make any reasonable adjustments to provide suitable access for the child as part of their reintegration.

Plans for longer term outcomes and the next steps will be agreed at the start of the commissioned support, intervention or provision, according to the statutory guidance for Alternative Provision (2013);

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/alternative-provision

In all cases the CYP must have an Individual Health Care Plan that can be reviewed and amended as appropriate.

Both the home school and Education Centre will support CYP to sit public examinations. Awarding bodies will make special arrangements for children with permanent or longstanding disabilities when they are taking public examinations.

Complaints and Review

Complaints about provision for children who are medically unfit to attend school should be made to the child's home school in the first instance. Complaints can be made using the corporate complaints procedures. The council will only intervene if it has reason to believe that the education provision is unsuitable or insufficient.
https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/complaints

© The Key Support Services Ltd | For terms of use, visit thekeysupport.com/terms

4. Monitoring arrangements

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

5. Links to other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Accessibility plan
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions
- SEN policy
- Equality policy

© The Key Support Services Ltd | For terms of use, visit thekeysupport.com/terms