



Compassion Joy Perseverance Respect

Achieving Excellence Together

Supporting Pupils with Health Needs who Cannot Attend School Policy

'Live life in all its fullness' John 10:10

**Approved – October 2024
Next review – October 2026**

Context:

This policy is written in line with the requirements of:-

- Children and Families Act 2014 - section 100
- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions: statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academies in England, DfE Sept 2014
- 0-25 SEND Code of Practice, DfE 2015
- Mental Health and behaviour in schools: departmental advice for school staff, DfE Nov 2018
- Equalities Act 2010
- Schools Admissions Code, DfE Sep 2021

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies

- SEND Policy / SEND Information Report
- Safeguarding Policy
- Accessibility Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Attendance Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually.

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1. Introduction:

At Hunton CE Primary School, we believe that every child should have the best possible start in life, through a high quality education, allowing them to achieve their full potential. A child who has health needs should have the same opportunities as their peer group, including a broad and balanced curriculum. To ensure that our pupils with health needs are enabled to achieve this, we are committed to working in partnership with our local authority (Kent County Council) so that all children who are unable to attend our school due to health needs, and who would not receive suitable education without such provision, continue to have access to as much education as their medical condition allows, enabling 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 their school and the aim of our 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 attending the school and will work with the local authority, healthcare partners and families to ensure that all children with health needs receive the right level of support to enable them to maintain links with their education.

2. Aims

This policy aims to ensure that:

- Suitable education is made for pupils on roll who cannot attend school due to health needs
- Pupils, staff, parents and carers understand what the school is responsible for when education is being provided by the local authority.

3. Legislation and Guidance

The statutory guidance from the Department for Education (2013) states that Local Authorities;

- Must arrange suitable full-time education (or as much education as the child's health condition allows) for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would otherwise not receive suitable education
- Should provide such education as soon as it is clear that the child will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative. They should liaise with appropriate medical professionals to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the child.
- Must ensure that the education children receive is of good quality, as defined in the statutory guidance 'Alternative Provision' (2013), allows them to take appropriate qualifications, prevents them from slipping behind their peers in school and allows them to reintegrate successfully back into school as soon as possible.
- Must address the needs of individual children in arranging provision. 'Hard and fast' rules are inappropriate: they may limit the offer of education to children with a given condition and prevent their access to the right level of educational support, which they are well enough to receive. Strict rules that limit the offer of education a child receives may also breach statutory requirements.

Provision for siblings:

- When treatment of a child's condition means that his or her family have to move nearer to a hospital, and there is a sibling of compulsory school age, the local authority into whose area the family has moved should seek to ensure that the sibling is offered a place, where provision is available, for example, in a local mainstream school or other appropriate setting.

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 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: a tuition service that acts 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: local authority establishments that provide education for children unable to attend their registered school due to their medical needs.

5. Responsibilities***Responsibilities of the local authority (LA)***

LAs are responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would not receive suitable education without such provision. This applies whether or not the child is on the roll of a school and whatever type of school they attend, including pupils in Academies.

Where full-time education would not be in the best interests of a particular child, because of reasons relating to their physical or mental health, LAs should provide part-time education on a basis they consider to be in the child's best interests. The Local Authority are responsible for:

- Supporting pupils aged 5-16 who live in Kent and who are temporarily unable to attend school for health related reasons or severe anxiety for at least 15 days.
- Providing a named officer responsible for the education of children with additional health needs. In Kent this is accessed via the Health Needs Education Service: 01622 696645
- A team of qualified and experienced teachers and teaching assistants working closely with schools to support a suitable education programmes for pupils. Provision should be reviewed regularly and staff liaise with school, health professionals and other supporting agencies to plan and support the pupil's needs.

Responsibilities of the Governing Body

Governors are responsible for:

- Ensuring arrangements for pupils who cannot attend school as a result of their health 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 health needs.
- Ensuring the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the arrangements to support the needs of pupils 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 pupils with health needs are appropriately trained.

Responsibilities of the Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Working with the Governors to ensure compliance with the relevant statutory duties when supporting pupils with health needs.
- Working collaboratively with parents and other professionals to develop arrangements to meet the best interests of children.
- Ensuring the arrangements put in place to meet pupils' health needs are fully understood by all those involved and acted upon.
- Appointing a named member of staff who is responsible for pupils with healthcare needs (Mrs K Dunkley) and liaising with parents, pupils, the local authority, key workers and others involved in the pupil's care.
- Ensuring the support put in place focuses on, and meets the needs of, individual pupils.
- Arranging appropriate training for staff with responsibility for supporting pupils with health need
- 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.
- Providing reports to the Governors on the effectiveness of the arrangements in place to meet the health needs of pupils.
- Notifying the local authority when a pupil is likely to be away from the school for a significant period of time due to their health needs.

Responsibilities of the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)

The SENCo, alongside the Headteacher, is responsible for:

- Dealing with pupils who are unable to attend school because of health 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.
- Keeping pupils informed about school events and encouraging communication with their peers.
- Providing a link between pupils and their parents, and the local authority.

Responsibilities of the Class Teachers and Support Staff

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.

Responsibilities of Parents and Carers

Parents and carers 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 health needs.
- Attend meetings to discuss how support for their child should be planned.

6. Managing Absences

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 and carers to arrange schoolwork as soon as the pupil is able to cope with it or part-time education at school. Staff will give due consideration to which aspects of the curriculum are prioritised in consultation with the pupil, their family and relevant members of staff.

For periods of absence 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 (Mrs A Wichall, SENCo or Mrs A. Makey, Headteacher) will notify the local authority, who will take responsibility for the pupil and their education.

Where absences are anticipated or known in advance, the school will liaise with the local authority to enable education provision to be provided from the start of the pupil's absence.

For hospital admissions, the Headteacher or SENCo will liaise with the local authority regarding the programme that should be followed while the pupil is in hospital. 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.

7. Removal of pupils from school roll

Hunton CE Primary 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 a 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/ carer, 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 Medical Officer, even if the local authority has become responsible for the pupil's education.

Support for Pupils

To help ensure a pupil with additional health needs is able to attend school following an extended period of absence, the following adaptations may be considered:

- In response to anxiety-related non-attendance, request support external agencies, such as School Nursing, CAMHs or an Educational Psychologist.
- A personalised or part-time timetable drafted in consultation with the Headteacher, SENCo and Class Teacher
- Access to additional support in school, as appropriate
- Online access to the curriculum from home
- Movement of lessons to more accessible rooms where possible
- Places to rest at school, including playtime provision
- Special exam arrangements to manage anxiety or fatigue

8. Reintegration

When a pupil is considered well enough to return to school, the school will develop a tailored reintegration plan in collaboration with the local authority. As far as possible, reintegration planning will include;

- Working with the local authority, when reintegration into school is anticipated, to plan for consistent provision during and after the period of education outside school.
- Ensuring that, as far as possible, the child will be able to access the curriculum and materials that they would have used in school.
- Where appropriate, the school nurse will be involved in the development of the pupil'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 pupil.
- The school will consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made to provide suitable access to the school and the curriculum for the pupil.
- For longer absences, the reintegration plan will be developed near to the pupil's likely date of return to avoid putting unnecessary pressure on an ill pupil, or their parents, in the early stages of their absence.
- The school is aware that some pupils will need gradual reintegration over a long period of time and will always consult with the pupil, their parents and key staff about concerns, medical issues, timing and the preferred pace of return.

Reintegration plans 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 pupil

- 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 in order to develop a welcoming environment and encourage pupils and staff to be positive and proactive during the reintegration period

9. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by Mrs. A. Wichall, SENCo, and Mrs. A. Makey, Headteacher, as recommended by the Department for Education.

At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing board.