



Hotwells

PRIMARY SCHOOL

Children with Health Needs who Cannot Attend School Policy

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Contents

1. Statement of Intent	Page 3
2. Legal Framework	Page 3
3. LA Duties	Page 4
4. Definitions	Page 5
5. Roles and Responsibilities of the school	Page 6
6. Reintegration	Page 7
7. Reviewing Arrangements	Page 7
8. Links to other policies	Page 7

Statement of Intent

Hotwells Primary School aims to support the Local Authority and 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 their 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 attending the school and will work with the LA, 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.

Legal Framework

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'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Attendance Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

Local Authority Duties

The LA must arrange suitable full-time education for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would not receive suitable education without such provision. Hotwells Primary School has a duty to support the LA in doing so.

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.
- 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 member of staff (Inclusion lead) 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 is able to attend school rather than whether the child is receiving a suitable education during that attendance.
- Have lists of health conditions which dictate whether or not 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).

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: 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.

Roles and Responsibilities of the School

5.1 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 school will appoint 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. The Headteacher will be responsible for making and monitoring these arrangements.
- The school will work collaboratively with parents and other professionals to develop arrangements to meet the best interests of children.
- Ensure the arrangements put in place to meet pupils' health needs are fully understood by all those involved and acted upon.
- Ensure the support put in place focuses on and meets the needs of individual pupils.
- Arrange appropriate training for staff with responsibility for supporting pupils with health needs.
- Provide 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.
- Notify the LA when a pupil is likely to be away from the school for a significant period of time due to their health needs.
- Deal with pupils who are unable to attend school because of medical needs. Actively monitor pupil progress and reintegration into school.
- Supply pupils' education providers with information about the child's capabilities, progress and outcomes.
- Liaise with the Headteacher, education providers and parents to determine pupils' programmes of study whilst they are absent from school.
- Keep pupils informed about school events and encourage communication with their peers. Provide a link between pupils and their parents, and the LA.

5.2 If the Local Authority makes arrangements

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

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.

Reintegration

When a pupil is considered well enough to return to school, the school will develop a tailored reintegration plan in collaboration with the LA.

- The school will work with the LA when reintegration into school is anticipated to plan for consistent provision during and after the period of education outside school.
- As far as possible, the child will be able to access the curriculum and materials that they would have used in school.
- If 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 Inclusion Lead 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.

The reintegration plan 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.
- Follow up procedures.
- 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.
- Healthcare professionals should 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.
- Parents of pupils with additional health needs may provide specific advice but will not be the sole trainer of staff.
- The school will ensure a welcoming environment is developed and encourage pupils and staff to be positive and proactive during the reintegration period.
- Following reintegration, the school will support the LA in seeking feedback from the pupil regarding the effectiveness of the process.

Reviewing Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher, Inclusion Lead and at each review it will be approved by the full governing board. This is following a recommendation from The DfE in its list of statutory policies.