

Children with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School Policy

St. George's Primary School

Policy reviewed and adopted
by the Board of Trustees

Spring Term 2025

Version

V1

Date of next review:

Spring Term 2026

Responsible Committee:

Local Governing Body

Monitoring:

Trust Board

Related Policies

Where is this policy
published?

School Websites

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1 Policy at a glance

This policy outlines the school's commitment to ensuring that pupils with additional health needs receive a suitable education, even when they are unable to attend school in person.

1.1 Aims:

- Ensure pupils with health needs continue their education when unable to attend school.
- Clarify responsibilities of the school, local authority (LA), and parents.

1.2 Legislation:

- Follows the Education Act 1996 and relevant Department for Education (DfE) guidance.

1.3 Local Authority & THRIVE Duties:

- LA is responsible for arranging full-time education for pupils with health needs who cannot attend school.
- School supports the LA in fulfilling this duty.

1.4 Definitions:

- Explains various health conditions that may affect school attendance.
- Describes alternative education options like hospital schools, home tuition, and Medical PRUs.

1.5 Roles and Responsibilities:

- **Trust:** Ensures arrangements for pupils with health needs are implemented.
- **Headteacher:** Notifies LA of long absences, works with LA and parents, appoints a staff member responsible for pupils with health needs.
- **SLT/SENCO:** Deal with pupils with health needs, monitor progress, liaise with education providers, keep pupils informed.
- **Teachers and support staff:** Design lessons for reintegration, understand their role in supporting pupils, keep parents informed.
- **Parents:** Ensure regular attendance, notify school of absences, provide information about child's needs, attend meetings.

1.6 Managing Absence:

- School supports absences less than 15 days with schoolwork (if appropriate).
- LA becomes responsible for education after 15 days of absence.
- School and LA collaborate to ensure education provision starts from the beginning of long absences.
- School monitors attendance and registers.
- Pupils are only removed from the school roll under specific circumstances with medical and parental consent.

1.7 Support for Pupils:

- School works with LA, medical professionals, and parents to discuss and meet pupil's needs.
- School makes reasonable adjustments under Individual Healthcare Plans (IHCPs).
- School works with education providers during absences to maintain communication and progress.
- School helps pupils stay connected with school during absences (newsletters, emails, invitations, etc.).

- School considers adaptations (timetable, support, online access, etc.) to help pupils attend after absences.

1.8 Reintegration:

- School develops a tailored reintegration plan for returning pupils.
- School works with LA to ensure consistent provision during and after education outside school.
- Pupils have access to curriculum and materials used in school.
- School nurse may be involved in developing the reintegration plan.
- School considers reasonable adjustments for access to school and curriculum.
- Reintegration plan development considers length of absence and avoids pressuring pupils or parents.
- School consults with pupils, parents, and staff about reintegration concerns and pace.
- Reintegration plan includes details about date, meetings, staff contact, responsibilities, social contacts, and creating a welcoming environment.
- School supports LA in seeking feedback from pupils about the reintegration process.

1.7 Training:

- Staff receive training relevant to supporting pupils with additional health needs before their return.
- Healthcare professionals may be involved in identifying training needs.

1.8 Examinations and Assessment:

- The school liaises with alternative provision providers regarding exams and coursework.
- Relevant assessment information is provided to alternative provision providers.
- Applications for special exam arrangements are submitted by the school or LA.

- 1.7 This policy demonstrates the school's commitment to providing inclusive education for all pupils, regardless of their health needs.

2 Introduction

Prior to final approval by the LGB, this policy has been the subject of review and suggested amendments have been taken into consideration and changes made where they can be agreed.

3 Aims

3.1 The school aims to ensure that:

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

3.2 We understand that:

- Due to the nature of their health needs, some pupils 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 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 pupils with medical needs receive the right level of support to enable them to maintain links with their education.

4 Legislation and Guidance

4.1 This policy reflects the requirements of the Education Act 1996. This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following: • DfE (2013) 'Ensuring a good education for pupils who cannot attend school because of health needs' o DfE (2015) 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions'

4.2 This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

5 Local Authority & THRIVE Duties

5.1 The LA and THRIVE must arrange suitable full-time education for pupils of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would not receive suitable education without such provision. The school has a duty to support the LA and the Trust in doing so.

5.2 The LA/Trust 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;
- The LA should have a named officer responsible for the education of pupils 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 pupils 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.

6 Definitions

6.1 Pupils 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.

6.2 Pupils who are unable to attend mainstream or special 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: Google Classroom can act as a communication channel between school and pupils on occasions where pupils are too ill to attend school and are receiving specialist medical treatment;
- Medical PRUs: these are LA approved and Ofsted registered establishments that provide education for pupils unable to attend their registered school due to their medical needs.

7 Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 The following is based on the responsibilities listed in the [Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/612222/Arranging_education_for_children_who_cannot_attend_school_because_of_health_needs.pdf)

7.2 The Trust is responsible for:

- Ensuring arrangements for pupils who cannot attend school as a result of their medical needs are in place and are effectively implemented;
- Ensuring the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the arrangements to support the needs of pupils are clear and understood by all.

7.3 The Approving and reviewing this policy annually, the Headteacher is responsible for:

- Notifying the LA/Trust when a pupil is likely to be away from the school for a significant period of time due to their health needs;
- Working with the Trust 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 the pupil;
- Ensuring the arrangements put in place to meet pupils' health needs are fully understood by all those involved and acted upon;
- Ensuring the termly review of the arrangements made for pupils who cannot attend school due to their medical needs;
- Appointing a member of staff who is responsible for pupils with healthcare needs and liaises with parents, pupils, the Trust, key workers, the LA and others involved in the pupil's care.

7.4 The appointed members of staff are the SLT/SENCO. They are 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;
- Keeping pupils informed about school events and encouraging communication with their peers.

7.5 Teachers and support staff are responsible for:

- Designing lessons and activities in a way that allows those with health needs to participate as fully as possible during reintegration;
- Understanding their role in supporting pupils with health needs and ensuring they attend the required training. Keeping parents informed of how their child's health needs are affecting them whilst in the school.

7.6 Parents are expected to:

- Ensure the regular and punctual attendance of their child at the school where possible;
- 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 medical needs;
- Attend meetings to discuss how support for their child should be planned.

8 Managing Absence

- 8.1 Absences due to illness will be authorised unless the school has genuine cause for concern about the authenticity of the illness.
- 8.2 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 where appropriate.
- 8.3 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.
- 8.4 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 will notify the LA/Trust, who will take responsibility for the pupil and their education.
- 8.5 Where absences are anticipated or known in advance, the school will liaise with the LA/Trust to enable education provision to be provided from the start of the pupil's absence.
- 8.6 For hospital admissions, the appointed named member of staff will liaise with the LA/Trust regarding the programme that should be followed while the pupil is in hospital.
- 8.7 The LA/Trust will set up a personal education plan (PEP) for the pupil which will allow the school, the LA/Trust and the provider of the pupil's education to work together.

- 8.8 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.
- 8.9 The school will only remove a pupil who is unable to attend school because of additional health needs from the school roll where:
- 8.10 The pupil has been certified 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.
- 8.11 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 a medical practitioner even if the LA has become responsible for the pupil's education.

9 Support for Pupils

9.1 Support:

- 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;
- The LA/Trust expects the school to support pupils with health needs to attend full-time education wherever possible, or for the school to make reasonable adjustments to pupils' programmes of study where medical evidence supports the need for those adjustments;
- The school will make reasonable adjustments under pupils' individual healthcare plans (IHCPs), in accordance with the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy;
- Pupils admitted to hospital will receive education as determined appropriate by the medical professionals and hospital tuition team at the hospital concerned;
- 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.

9.2 Whilst a pupil is away from school, the school will work with the LA/Trust to ensure the pupil can successfully remain in touch with their school using the following methods;

- School newsletters;
- Emails;
- Invitations to school events;
- Cards or letters from peers and staff;
- Where appropriate, the school will provide the pupil's education provider with relevant information, curriculum materials and resources.

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

- A personalised or part-time timetable, drafted in consultation with the named staff member;
- Access to additional support in school;
- Online access to the curriculum from home;

- Movement of lessons to more accessible rooms;
- Places to rest at school;
- Special exam arrangements to manage anxiety or fatigue.

10 Reintegration

- 10.1 When a pupil is considered well enough to return to school, the school will develop a tailored reintegration plan.
- 10.2 The school will work with the LA/Trust when reintegration into school is anticipated to plan for consistent provision during and after the period of education outside school.
- 10.3 As far as possible, the child will be able to access the curriculum and materials that they would have used in school.
- 10.4 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 appointed named member of staff, to ensure they can prepare to offer any appropriate support to the pupil.
- 10.5 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.
- 10.6 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.
- 10.7 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.
- 10.8 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;
 - The school will ensure a welcoming environment is developed and encourage pupils and staff to be positive and proactive during the reintegration period.
- 10.9 Following reintegration, the school will support the LA/Trust in seeking feedback from the pupil regarding the effectiveness of the process.

11 Training

- 11.1 Once a pupil's return date has been confirmed, staff will be provided with relevant training before the pupil's anticipated return.
- 11.2 Training will be sufficient to ensure staff are confident in their ability to support pupils with additional health needs.
- 11.3 Healthcare professionals should be involved in identifying and agreeing with the school the type and level of training required.

12 Examinations and Assessment

- 12.1 The named member of staff will liaise with the alternative provision provider over planning and examination course requirements where appropriate.
- 12.2 Relevant assessment information will be provided to the alternative provision provider if required.
- 12.3 Awarding bodies may make special arrangements for pupils with permanent or long-term disabilities and learning difficulties, or temporary disabilities and illnesses. Applications for such arrangements will be submitted by the school, or LA if more appropriate, as early as possible

13 Reviewing the Policy

This policy will be reviewed regularly and amended when necessary.

14 Public Sector Equality Duty

- 14.1 The Equality Act 2010 replaced and unified all existing equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act. It aims to ensure that people have equality of opportunity in accessing and experiencing public services. Schools when carrying out their day to day work should have regard to the following:
 - eliminating discrimination;
 - advancing equality of opportunity and;
 - foster good relations across all characteristics
- 14.2 Schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Protection is now extended to pupils who are pregnant or undergoing gender reassignment. This means it is now unlawful to discriminate against a transgender pupil or a pupil who is pregnant or recently had a baby.
- 14.3 This policy was reviewed and updated with reference to this duty. The author/s of this document considered this policy in the light of these requirements to ensure that the School adheres to these statutory regulations.

15 Person Responsible

Updated Spring 2025

Headteacher

To be reviewed Spring 2026