



CHILDREN WITH HEALTH NEEDS THAT CANNOT ATTEND SCHOOL POLICY

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Document Control

Document version numbering will follow the following format. Whole numbers for approved versions, eg 1.0, 2.0, 3.0 etc. Decimals will be used to represent the current working draft version, eg 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 etc. For example, when writing a procedural document for the first time the initial draft will be version 0.1.

The table below provides details of the changes made to this document, to inform those reviewing and approving the document.

Document Edition	Section	Details of Change
1.0	Introduction	Six Es updated to three.
2.0	All	Annual review approved by Trust Board October 2023
2.1	All	Reviewed and updated in line with statutory guidance on children with health needs who cannot attend school and school attendance.
3.0	All	Approved by Trust Board 29/01/2025.

Introduction

The Leading Edge Academies Partnership (the 'Trust') is a team of school leaders that aim to be Leading Edge and pioneering in their approach to education and well-being. We are a growing family of like-minded schools that offer a values based education to the communities we serve and welcome staff, workers, students, parents/carers and volunteers from all different ethnic groups and backgrounds.

The term 'Trust Community' includes all staff, trustees, governors, students, parents/carers, volunteers and visitors.

We are a values based Trust, which means all actions are guided by our three 'Es' as follows:

- **Excellence** – 'Outstanding quality'
- **Evolution** – 'Continuous change'
- **Equity** – 'Fairness and social justice'

This policy is based on the value of **'Equity'**

Related policies

This policy operates in conjunction with the following policies:

- Accessibility Plan
- Attendance
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notices
- Academy Online Safety Policy
- ICT Acceptable Use for Students/pupils
- Document Retention
- Equality & Diversity
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Remote Learning Policy

Aims

This policy sets out our approach to children with health needs who cannot attend school across the Trust and aims to ensure that:

- Suitable education is arranged for pupils on roll who cannot attend school due to health needs, 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 LA.
- Pupils should receive as much of their education within their school as possible and the aim of the provision will be to reintegrate pupils back into school as soon as they are well enough.
- Schools 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.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the following legislation:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Section 100 of the Children and Families Act 2014

It is also based on the following statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE):

- Alternative provision
- Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs
- [Working together to improve school attendance](#)

Section 19 of the Education Act 1996 states that local authorities are responsible for arranging suitable and (normally) full-time education for children of compulsory school age who, because of exclusion, illness or other reasons, would not receive suitable education without such provision. This means that where a child cannot attend school because of a physical or mental health need, and cannot access suitable full-time education, the local authority is responsible for arranging suitable alternative provision.

All local authorities should have a written, publicly accessible policy statement on their arrangements for complying with the Section 19 duty.

For our schools in Cornwall, Cornwall Council's policy statement is available at <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/schools-and-education/special-educational-needs/sen-information-and-resources/meeting-the-needs-of-pupils-with-medical-needs/>

The Isles of Scilly Council's policy statement is available from the Isles of Scilly Council, 0300 1234 105, enquiries@scilly.gov.uk

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

Responsibilities of the school

When a child is already attending school (referred to as the 'home school'), where possible the child's health needs should be managed by the [home school](#) so that they can continue to be educated there with support, and without the need for the intervention of the local authority.

Schools are required by law to support any pupil with a health/medical condition and ensure they are properly supported, with an appropriate individual healthcare plan where necessary, so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education. The Trust's arrangements for this are set out in our 'Supporting Students with Medical Needs Policy'. This policy states who the named person is in each of our schools with responsibility for managing the needs of pupils with medical conditions.

Initially, our schools will attempt to make the arrangements to deliver the same high standard of education for children with health needs who cannot attend school regularly. This will include making reasonable adjustments to accommodate pupils who would otherwise find it difficult to attend school due to illness or a medical condition in accordance with our duties under the Equality Act 2010 where a pupil has a disability.

Such arrangements could include:

- Access to additional support in school
- Online access to the curriculum from home
- Movement of lessons to more accessible rooms
- Opportunities and places to rest at school
- Special exam arrangements to manage anxiety or fatigue

Where full-time education would not be in the best interests of a pupil due to his/her health / medical needs, part-time education can be provided to meet their individual needs and to help the pupil access as much education as possible. This decision will be made with reference to advice from relevant medical professionals and the agreement of parents.

Our schools will report to the Local Authority as required any arrangement for pupils who are not accessing a full timetable in school.

Responsibilities of the Local Authority

If it becomes clear that the school cannot support the child's health needs and provide suitable education, or if it is clear that a child will be away from school for 15 days (consecutive or over the course of the year) or more because of their health needs, the Local Authority will become responsible for arranging suitable education.

Our schools will notify the relevant Local Authority in such circumstances in accordance with the arrangements set out in the Authority's policy statement on complying with the Section 19 duty.

When a local authority arranges alternative education, the education should begin as soon as possible, and at the latest by the 6th day of the child's absence from school. Where full-time education is not in the child's best interest for reasons relating to their physical or mental health, the local authority must arrange

part-time education on whatever basis it considers to be in the child's best interests.

The Local Authority 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 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 Local Authority 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).

In cases where the local authority makes the arrangements, our schools will:

- Provide the local authority, at agreed intervals, with the full name and address of any pupils of compulsory school age who are not attending school regularly due to their health needs
- Work constructively with the local authority, providers, relevant agencies and parents/carers to ensure the best outcomes for the child
- Collaborate with the local authority to ensure continuity of provision and consistency of curriculum, including making information available about the curriculum
- Along with the local authority, regularly review the provision offered to ensure it continues to be appropriate for the child and that it is providing suitable education
- Share information with the local authority and relevant health services as required
- When a child has complex or long-term health issues, work with the local authority, parents/carers and the relevant health services to decide how best to meet the child's needs (e.g. through individual support, arranging alternative provision or by them remaining at school, being supported at home and back into school after each absence)

- Where possible, allow the child to take examinations at the same time as their peers, and work with the local authority to support this
- Help make sure 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 child to access the same curriculum and materials that they would have used in school as far as possible, including through digital resources
 - Enable the child to stay in touch with school life (e.g. through newsletters, emails, digital learning platforms, social media platforms, invitations to school events or internet links to lessons from their school), and, where appropriate, through educational visits
 - Create individually tailored reintegration plans for each child returning to school, which includes extra support to fill any gaps arising from the absence
 - Consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made
 - Ensure staff are appropriately trained, in consultation with healthcare professional to enable them to be confident in their ability to support pupils with additional health needs.

A pupil unable to attend the academy because of their health needs will not be removed from the school register without parental consent and medical certification, even if the LA has become responsible for the pupil's education.

The school will only remove a pupil who is unable to attend because of additional health needs from the school roll where:

- 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.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Trust's **Board of Trustees** is responsible for:

- Ensuring arrangements for pupils who cannot attend school as a result of their medical needs are in place and 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.
- Ensuring staff with responsibility for supporting pupils with health needs are appropriately trained.
- Approving and reviewing this policy on an annual basis.

The **Principal/Headteacher** is responsible for:

- Ensuring the full implementation of this policy in individual schools and 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 and liaises with parents, pupils the LA, 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 needs.
- 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 Trustees and the Local Academy Committee as required on the effectiveness of the arrangements in place to meet the health needs of pupils.
- Notifying the LA when a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days due to their health needs.

The **named member of staff in each school** is responsible for:

- Managing the needs of pupils who are unable to attend school because of medical needs.
- Liaising with parents, pupils, the LA, key workers and others involved in the pupil's care.
- Actively monitoring pupil progress and reintegration into school.
- Supplying pupils' education providers with information about the child's capabilities, progress and outcomes.
- Liaising with Principal, education providers and parents to determine pupils' programmes of study whilst they are absent from school.
- Keeping pupils informed about academy events and encouraging communication with their peers.
- Providing a link between pupils and their parents, and the LA.