



Children with health needs who cannot attend school policy

This policy must be read in conjunction with the Allergy and Anaphylaxis Policy.

This policy is applicable to the Wonder Learning Partnership (WLP)

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Introduction

Wonder Learning Partnership (Trust) acknowledges the responsibilities placed on Local Authorities to arrange suitable full-time¹ education children who – because of illness or other reasons – would not receive suitable education without such provision. This means that where a child cannot attend school because of health problems, and would not otherwise receive a suitable full-time education, the LA is responsible for arranging provision. Wonder Learning Partnership (Trust) aims to support the LA in meeting this duty to ensure that all children 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 them 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 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.

Responsibilities

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, either in one absence or over the course of a school year, and where suitable education is not otherwise being arranged. They should liaise with the appropriate medical professionals to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the student.
- 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.
- Ensure that teachers who provide education for children with health needs receive suitable training and support and are kept aware of curriculum developments. They

¹ The law does not define full-time education but children with health needs should have provision which is equivalent to the education they would receive in school. If they receive one-to-one tuition, for example, the hours of face-to-face provision could be fewer as the provision is more concentrated.

should also be given suitable information relating to a child's health condition, and the possible effect the condition and/or medication taken has on the child.

- 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 student 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.
- Should maintain good links with all schools in their area and put in place systems to promote co-operation between them when children cannot attend school because of ill health.
- Not discriminate against disabled children and are under a duty to eliminate discrimination, foster equality of opportunity for disabled children and foster good relations between disabled and non-disabled children. LAs should make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage faced by disabled children, and plan to increase disabled children's access to Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) premises and their curriculum.

The LA should not:

- Have processes or policies in place which prevent a child or young person 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).

The Local Governance Committee is responsible for:

- Ensuring arrangements for students/pupils who cannot attend school as a result of their medical needs are in place and are effectively implemented.
- Ensuring the termly review of the arrangements made for students/pupils who cannot attend school due to their medical needs.
- Ensuring the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the arrangements to support the needs of students/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 students/pupils with health needs are appropriately trained.
- Approving and reviewing this policy on an annual basis.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Working with the Local Governance Committee to ensure compliance with the relevant statutory duties when supporting students/pupils with health needs.
- Working collaboratively with parents and other professionals to develop arrangements to meet the best interests of students/pupils.
- Ensuring the arrangements put in place to meet students/pupils' health needs are fully understood
- by all those involved and acted upon.
- Appointing a named member of staff who is responsible for students/pupils with healthcare needs and liaises with parents, students/pupils, the LA, key workers, and others involved in the student/pupil's care.
- Ensuring the support put in place focuses on and meets the needs of individual students/pupils.
- Arranging appropriate training for staff with responsibility for supporting students/pupils with health needs (if applicable).
- Providing teachers who support students/pupils with health needs with suitable information relating to a student/pupil's health condition and the possible effect the condition and/or medication taken has on the student/pupil.
- Providing reports to the Local Governance Committee on the effectiveness of the arrangements in place to meet the health needs of students/pupils.
- Notifying the LA when a student is likely to be away from the school for a significant period of time due to their health needs.
- Where applicable and following advice and guidance from those providing education to the child out of school, submitting applications for special arrangements to awarding bodies as early as possible.

Each Trust school will have a named member of staff. They are responsible for:

- Dealing with students/pupils who are unable to attend school because of medical needs.
- Actively monitoring student progress and reintegration into the School.
- Supplying students/pupils' education providers with information about the child's capabilities,
- progress, and outcomes.
- Liaising with the Headteacher, education providers and parents to determine students/pupils'
- programmes of study whilst they are absent from school.
- Keeping students/pupils informed about School events and encouraging communication with their peers.
- Providing a link between students/pupils and their parents, and the LA.
- Teachers and support staff are responsible for:
 - Understanding confidentiality in respect of students/pupils' health needs.
 - Designing lessons and activities in a way that allows those with health needs to participate fully and ensuring students/pupils are not excluded from activities that they wish to take part in without a clear evidence-based reason.
- Understanding their role in supporting students/pupils with health needs and ensuring they attend the required training.

- Ensuring they are aware of the needs of their students/pupils through the appropriate and lawful sharing of the individual student/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.
- Parents 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 medical needs.
- Attend meetings to discuss how support for their child should be planned.

Managing Absences

Parents are advised to contact the school on the first day their child is unable to attend due to illness.

Absences due to illness will be authorised unless the school has genuine cause for concern about the authenticity of the illness.

The school will provide support to students/pupils who are absent from school because of illness for a period of less than 15 school days by liaising with the student/pupil's parents to arrange schoolwork as soon as the student/pupil is able to cope with it or part-time education at school. The school will give due consideration to which aspects of the curriculum are prioritised in consultation with the student, their family and relevant members of staff.

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 students/pupils with health needs will notify the LA, who will take responsibility for the student/pupil and their education.

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

Effective collaboration between all relevant services (LAs, CAMHS, NHS, the student/pupil's school and, where relevant, school nurses) is essential to delivering effective education for students/pupils with additional health needs. This applies whether the student/pupil is in hospital or at home.

When a student/pupil is in hospital, liaison between hospital teaching staff, the LA's alternative provision/home tuition service and the student/pupil's School can ensure continuity of provision and consistency of curriculum. It can ensure that the school can

make information available about the curriculum and work the student/pupil may miss, helping the student/pupil to keep up, rather than having to catch up.

The LA will set up a personal education plan (PEP) for the student/pupil which will allow the School, the LA, and the provider of the student/pupil's education to work together.

The school will monitor student/pupil attendance and mark registers to ensure it is clear whether a student is, or should be, receiving education other than at school.

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

- The student/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 student/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.
- A student/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 LA has become responsible for the student/pupil's education.

Support for students/pupils

Where a student/pupil has a complex or long-term health issue, the school will discuss the student/pupil's needs and how these may be best met with the LA, relevant medical professionals, parents and, where appropriate, the student/pupil.

The LA expects all schools and academies to support students/pupils with health needs to attend full-time education wherever possible, or for the school to make reasonable adjustments to students/pupils' programmes of study where medical evidence supports the need for those adjustments.

The school will make reasonable adjustments under students/pupils' Individual Health Care Plans (IHCPs), in accordance with the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy.

Students/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 student/pupil's education to establish and maintain regular communication and effective outcomes.

Whilst a student/pupil is away from school, the school will work with the LA to ensure the student/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 student's education provider with relevant
- information, curriculum materials and resources.

To help ensure a student 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.

Reintegration

When a student/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 student/pupil 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 student/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 student/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 student/pupil.

For longer absences, the reintegration plan will be developed near to the student/pupil's likely date of return, to avoid putting unnecessary pressure on an ill student/pupil or their parents in the early stages of their absence.

The school is aware that some students/pupils will need gradual reintegration over a long period of time and will always consult with the student/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 student.
- 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.

The school will ensure a welcoming environment is developed and encourage students/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 student/pupil regarding the effectiveness of the process.

Information sharing

It is essential that all information about students/pupils with health needs is kept up to date.

To protect confidentiality, all information-sharing techniques, e.g., staff noticeboards or medical files, will be agreed with the student/pupil and their parent(s) in advance of being used.

All teachers, TAs, supply, and support staff will be provided with access to relevant information, including high-risk health needs, first aiders and emergency procedures, via the agreed school procedures.

Parents will be made aware of their own rights and responsibilities regarding confidentiality and information sharing.

To help achieve this, the school will:

- Ensure this policy and other relevant policies are easily available and accessible.
- Provide the student and their parents with a copy of the policy on information sharing.
- Ask parents to sign a consent form which clearly details the organisations and individuals that their
- child's health information will be shared with, and which methods of sharing will be used.
- Consider how friendship groups and peers may be able to assist students/pupils with health needs.

When a student/pupil is discharged from hospital or is returning from other education provision, the school will ensure the appropriate information is received to allow for a smooth return to the school. The named member of staff will liaise with the hospital or other tuition service as appropriate.

Record keeping

In accordance with the Supporting students/pupils with Medical Conditions Policy and Administration of Medicines Policy, written records will be kept of all medicines administered to students/pupils.

Proper record keeping protects both staff and students/pupils and provides evidence that agreed procedures have been followed.

All records will be maintained in line with the Records Management Policy.

Training

Staff will be trained in a timely manner to assist with a student/pupil's return to school.

Once a student/pupil's return date has been confirmed, staff will be provided with relevant training before the student/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 students/pupils with additional health needs.

Parents of students/pupils with additional health needs may provide specific advice but will not be the sole trainer of staff.

Examinations and assessments

The named member of staff will liaise with the alternative provision provider over planning and examination course requirements where appropriate.

Relevant assessment information will be provided to the alternative provision provider if required.

Awarding bodies may make special arrangements for students/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.