



**OAKWOOD  
PARK**  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL

# Policy for children with health needs who cannot attend school

Approval status	Approved
Last reviewed on:	May 2023
Next review due on:	May 2024



## 1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure that:

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

OPGS aims to 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, in order to ensure that they can fulfil their academic potential and engage with extra-curricular activities where appropriate or possible. Due to the nature of their health needs, some children may be admitted to hospital or referred to a specialist, alternative form of education provision, such as that provided by The Rosewood School [The Rosewood School \(trs.kent.sch.uk\)](https://trs.kent.sch.uk) however the aim of the provision will be to reintegrate pupils back into school as soon as they are well enough.

OPGS understands that it has a continuing role in a pupil's education whilst they are not in school and will work with the Local Authority, healthcare partners, professionals and families to ensure that all children with medical needs receive the right level of support.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

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 'Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs' (2013)
- DfE 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions' (2017)
- DfE 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2022)
- Dfe 'Providing Remote Education' (2023)
- Dfe 'Working together to improve school attendance' (2023)
- Dfe 'Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools' (2023)
- Dfe 'Providing remote education.' (2023)

### 3.1 The School's Responsibilities

Where a pupil has a complex or long-term health issue, the school will discuss the pupil's needs with parents and consider how their needs may be best met in conjunction with the Local Authority, relevant medical professionals and, where appropriate, the pupil. No child with health needs will be removed from the school register without parental consent. The school will support pupils with health needs to attend full-time education wherever possible, or the school may make reasonable adjustments to pupils' programmes of study where medical evidence supports the need for those adjustments. These reasonable adjustments may be recorded in a pupil's individual healthcare plan (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. Where appropriate, the school will provide the pupil's education provider with relevant information, curriculum materials and resources.

Whilst a pupil is away from school, the school will ensure the pupil can successfully remain in touch with their school through school newsletters, emails and access to the Edulink portal.

The school will make 'reasonable adjustments' in line with its duties under the Equality Act 2010, to deliver, or secure a suitable education for children with health needs who cannot attend school. As stated in DfE guidance, 'Providing remote education' (2023) 'It may be challenging or impossible for the school to deliver remotely the kind of approach that it does in the classroom' and as stated in the guidance, in these instances the school will work with the local authority for 'other ways in which it and the local authority can meet its statutory duties, working closely with the parents or carers.'

Once the pupil is able, they will be integrated back into school with alternative arrangements to make this possible. These will be discussed with parents and the pupil in conjunction with any medical advice from other professionals. To help ensure a pupil with additional health needs is able to attend school following an extended period of absence, adaptations may need to be considered including:

- a personalised, temporary part-time timetable, drafted in consultation with parents and the named staff member;
- access to additional support in school;
- movement of lessons to more accessible rooms;
- places to rest at school;
- special exam arrangements to manage anxiety or fatigue.
- alternative provision for break or lunch times.

Students receiving an education from an educational health needs provider such as The Rosewood School will be dual rolled until the child is able to return to OPGS.

## 3.2 The Local Authority's Role and Responsibilities

Local Authorities are responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for pupils of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would not receive suitable education without such provision, as set out in DfE 'Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs' (2013). This has been further strengthened 'Working together to improve school attendance' (2023) which states that 'Pupils with long term illnesses or other health needs may need additional support to continue their education, such as alternative provision provided by the local authority. Local authorities are responsible for arranging suitable education for children of compulsory school age who, because of health reasons, would otherwise not receive suitable education.'

Where full-time education would not be in the best interests of a pupil because of reasons relating to their physical or mental health, Local Authorities should provide part-time education on a basis they consider to be in the child's best interests.

The LA 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.
- 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.
- Have a named officer responsible for the education of children with additional health needs, and parents should know who that person is.
- Have a written, publicly accessible policy statement on their arrangements to comply with their legal duty towards children with additional health needs. The policy should make links with related services in the area - for example, Special Educational Needs and Disability Services (SEND), Children and Young Persons Mental Health Service (CYPMHS), Education Welfare/Attendance Improvement Services, educational psychologists, and, where relevant, school nurses.
- Review the provision offered regularly to ensure that it continues to be appropriate for the child and that it is providing suitable education.
- Address the needs of individual pupils in arranging provision.

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 arrangements, the school will:

- Work constructively with the local authority, education 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 to ensure that the provision offered to the pupil is as effective as possible and that the child can be reintegrated back into school successfully.

### 3.3 The Governing Body and Headteacher

The Governing Board and Headteacher are 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 regular review of the arrangements made for 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 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.
- Appointing a named member of staff who is responsible for pupils with healthcare needs and liaises with parents, pupils, the Local Authority, key workers and others involved in the pupil's care.
- 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.
- Notifying the LA when a pupil is likely to be away from the school for a significant period of time due to their health needs.

### 3.4 The SENCO

The SENCO is responsible for:

- 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.
- Liaising with medical professionals as appropriate.
- Providing a link between pupils and their parents, and the Local Authority.
- Ensuring teachers and support staff are kept informed of the health needs relating to pupils they work with.

### 3.5 Teachers and Support Staff

Teachers and Support Staff are responsible for:

- Understanding confidentiality in respect of pupils' health needs.
- Understanding their role in supporting pupils with health needs and ensuring they attend any required training.
- Ensuring they are aware of the needs of their pupils through the appropriate sharing of the individual pupil's health needs.
- Ensuring they are aware of the signs, symptoms and triggers in relation to the medical needs of the pupil and know what to do in an emergency.
- Reading and understanding any medical care plans and reporting any concerns to the SENCO.
- Keeping parents informed of how their child's health needs are affecting them whilst in the school.

### 4. Absences

Pupils who are absent because of illness can be supported through liaison with the pupil's parents, it may be possible for part-time education at school or a gradual phased return to full-time attendance. As stated in DfE guidance on mental health issues and attendance (2023) a part-time timetable should be for an agreed fixed period of time which will prioritise face to face time in school. 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.

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 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 appointed named member of staff 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.

In line DfE guidance on mental health issues and attendance (2023) the school will make a plan to support attendance through reasonable adjustments taking into account individual circumstances of the pupil and will be mindful of its safeguarding responsibilities as set out in KCSIE (2022).

### 5. 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 issues, including anxiety issues.
- Anxiety Based School Avoidance.
- Progressive conditions.
- Terminal illnesses.
- Chronic illnesses.

## 7. Links to Other Policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Accessibility Plan
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions
- Attendance Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- SEND
- Equalities Policy