

GOSFORTH GROUP

CHILDREN WITH HEALTH NEEDS WHO CANNOT ATTEND SCHOOL

The Gosforth Group aims to ensure that all pupils who are unable to attend school due to medical needs continue to have access to as much education, including physical education, and as many school trips as their medical condition allows.

Due to the nature of their health needs, however, some pupils may be admitted to hospital or placed in alternative forms of education provision and unable to attend school as normal. We recognise that, whenever possible, pupils should receive their education within their school and the aim of the provision will be to help 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 pupils with medical needs receive the right level of support to enable them to maintain links with the school.

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
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- 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'
- DfE (2022) 'Working together to improve school attendance'

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

Definitions

"Children with health needs" are children of compulsory school age who are unable to attend school as a result of their medical needs. These medical needs include:

- 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 or participate in any of the following:

- **Hospital school** – a 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.
- **Medical PRUs** – these are LA establishments that provide education for children unable to attend their registered school due to their medical needs.

For the purpose of this policy, **“school-based support”** in relation to supporting pupils with additional health needs may include:

- Day-to-day support offered at school where the pupil is able to attend as normal.
- Support given to pupils who are absent from school because of illness for a period of less than 15 school days, whether consecutive or cumulative.
- Any educational or extra-curricular provision as requested by the LA as part of its arrangements for pupils who cannot attend school full-time, e.g. where the pupil attends school part-time as an arranged part of their full-time education provision.
- As part of their reintegration into normal school attendance following a period of absence or part-time attendance due to health needs.

“LA-arranged education”, for the purpose of this policy, is defined as education provision arranged by the LA where the pupil cannot attend school full time due to medical reasons for a period of 15 school days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative

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.

If the local authority makes arrangements

If the school can't make suitable arrangements Newcastle 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

Support for pupils

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 expects the school to support pupils with additional 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.

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.

Roles and responsibilities

The Trustees and Academy Advisors will be responsible for:

Ensuring there is a schedule of regular updates on the arrangements made for pupils who cannot attend the school due to their medical needs.

Ensuring the roles and responsibilities of those involved in any school-based 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 where a pupil with health needs is able to, or partially able to, attend school and/or extra-curricular activities.

Ensuring staff with responsibility for supporting pupils with additional health needs are appropriately trained.

Approving and reviewing this policy on an annual basis.

The Principal will be responsible for:

Working with the Trustees and Academy Advisors to ensure compliance with the relevant statutory duties when supporting pupils with additional health needs.

Working collaboratively with the LA, parents and other professionals, as necessary, to develop any school-based arrangements to meet the needs of pupils.

Ensuring any school-based 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 additional health needs and liaises with parents, pupils, the LA, key workers and others involved in the pupil's care.

Ensuring any school-based support put in place focusses on and meets the needs of individual pupils.

Arranging appropriate training for staff with responsibility for supporting pupils with additional health needs who are attending school, or attend school part-time.

Providing teachers who support pupils with additional 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 the governing board on the effectiveness of any school-based arrangements in place to meet the needs of pupils of pupils who cannot attend school due to health needs.

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.

The named member of staff will be responsible for:

The management of any pupils registered at the school who are unable to fully attend school because of their health needs.

Actively monitoring pupil progress and reintegration into school.

Supplying any LA-arranged education providers with information about pupils' capabilities, progress and outcomes.

Liaising with the headteacher, LA-arranged education providers, and parents to help determine pupils' programmes of study whilst they are absent from school, where necessary.

Keeping pupils who are being educated by LA-arranged education providers informed about school events and encouraging communication with their peers.

Providing a link between pupils and their parents, the school, and LA where necessary.

Staff will be responsible for:

Understanding confidentiality in respect of pupils' health needs.

Designing school-based activities, including lessons, in a way that allows pupils with additional health needs to participate fully and ensuring pupils are not excluded from activities that they wish to take part in without a clear evidence-based reason.

Understanding their role in any school-based support for pupils with additional health needs and ensuring they attend the required training.

Ensuring they are aware of the needs of their pupils through the appropriate and lawful sharing of individual pupils' health needs.

Keeping parents informed of how their child's health needs are affecting them whilst in school-based education.

Parents will be expected to:

Ensure, where school-based provision is in place, the regular and punctual attendance of their child at the school where possible.

Work in partnership with the school, LA and any LA-arranged provision to ensure the best possible outcomes for their child.

Notify the school, or the relevant education provider, 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 any school-based support, including reintegration, for their child should be planned.

Where appropriate, the school will provide the pupil's education provider with relevant information, curriculum materials and resources.

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
- Movement of lessons to more accessible rooms
- Places to rest at school
- Special exam arrangements

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 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.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually and approved by Trustees.

APPROVED by the Board of Trustees on 19 October 2023