




Children who are Unable to Attend School Because Of Health Needs Policy

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Signed: Chair of Governors	
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Statement of intent

Chantry Community Primary School aims to support the LA and 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, 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 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 children with medical needs receive the right level of support to enable them to maintain links with their education.

1. Legal framework

1.1 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 (2013) 'Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs'
- DfE (2015) 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions'

1.2 This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Attendance Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Administration of medicines Policy

2. Definitions

2.1 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

2.2 Children who are unable to attend mainstream 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: The LA may be able to provide a home tuition service 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

3. Key roles and responsibilities

3.1 The LA, Chantry Community Primary School and partners are aware of their responsibility regarding children and young people who have health needs and will ensure that arrangements are in place to minimise, as far as possible, the disruption to normal schooling by continuing education as normally as the incapacity allows.

3.2 The child's role in managing their own medical needs

At Chantry Community Primary School, children are considered too young to administer their own medication. Children who can take their medicines themselves or manage procedures will always be supervised. This is then formally recorded.

Staff will not force a child to take their medicine or carry out a necessary procedure if the child refuses. Instead they should follow the procedure agreed in the individual healthcare plan and inform the child's parents.

3.3 The family is responsible for:

- Ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of their child at the school where possible
- Working in partnership with the school to ensure the best possible outcomes for their child
- Notifying the school of the reason for any of their child's absences without delay
- Providing 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
- Ensuring that the school is made aware of any changes to the treatment plan
- Attending meetings to discuss how support should be planned
- Providing any medication in line with the school's Administration of medicines policy

3.4 The governing body 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 a termly 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
- Approving and reviewing this policy in line with policy review cycle

3.5 The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Working with the governing body 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 children
- Ensuring the arrangements put in place to meet pupils' health needs are fully understood by all those involved and acted upon
- Appointing a designated 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 focusses 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
- Ensuring that the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy does not discriminate on any grounds including, but not limited to protected characteristics: ethnicity/national/ origin, religion or belief, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy & maternity, disability or sexual orientation

- Ensuring that all pupils with medical conditions are able to play a full and active role in all aspects of school life, participate in school visits / trips/ sporting activities, remain healthy and achieve their academic potential
- 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
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Policy

3.6 The designated member of staff is the SENCO who is 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
- Reviewing IHPs annually or as significant changes are required
- Providing a link between pupils and their parents, and the LA
- Co-ordinate training to ensure staff have the knowledge and skills required to support the child effectively

3.7 Teachers and support staff are responsible for:

- Understanding confidentiality in respect of pupils' health needs
- Designing lessons and activities in a way that allows those with 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 supporting pupils with 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 the individual 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

3.8 The Local Authority is responsible for:

- Promoting co-operation between relevant partners regarding supporting pupils with medical conditions
- Providing support, advice /guidance and training to schools and their staff to ensure Individual Healthcare Plans are effectively delivered
- Working with schools to ensure pupils attend full-time or make alternative arrangements for the education of pupils who need to be out of school for fifteen days or more due to a health need and who otherwise would not receive a suitable education
- Setting up a personal education plan (PEP) for the pupil which will allow the school, the LA and the provider of the pupil's education to work together.

The Role of Health professionals have a vital role in liaising with education staff to ensure that the planned provision is appropriate and that all the needs of the child, health, social, education and emotional are being addressed.

3.9 The school's expectations for Health professionals are that they have responsibility for:

- Ensuring that a holistic approach is taken regarding the welfare of the child by facilitating timely access to appropriate advice, training and to effective services which address their health, social, education and emotional needs throughout the period of their illness
- Establishing clear procedures for staff which enable children who are in their care to participate in education
- Making arrangements at a strategic level for co-operation and planning between the health service and the education service
- Having agreed protocols for sharing information about children who are ill between the health service and the education service
- Making arrangements for a health professional to participate in multi-agency meetings to plan
- Monitoring the child's education and return to school once educational provision has been agreed

In some cases, the nature of a child's illness may be unclear. Mental health problems in particular can involve frequent or long absence from school. A mental health condition may for example manifest itself in truancy, school refusal or disruptive behaviour. Medical needs of this kind include conduct or hyperactivity disorders, emotional disorders such as depression, anxiety and in some cases psychosis. In such cases, mental health professionals should:

- Make every effort to provide the medical evidence necessary for the child to secure eligibility for educational support as quickly as possible

4. Individual healthcare plans (IHPs)

4.1 In producing IHPs, professionals involved must consider the following:

- the medical condition, its triggers, signs, symptoms and treatments
 - the pupil's resulting needs including medical, education, social and emotional needs
 - the level of support needed, including in emergencies, who will provide the support, their training needs, confirmation of their proficiency from a healthcare professional, and cover arrangements
 - arrangements for written permission from parents and the headteacher for medication to be administered by a member of staff, separate arrangements required for school trips or other school activities outside of the normal school timetable, e.g. risk assessments
- IHPs will be drawn up in partnership between the school, parents, and healthcare professionals
 - IHPs will capture the key information and actions that are required to support the child effectively
 - IHPs will be reviewed at least annually or earlier if evidence is presented that the child's needs have changed

5. Emergency procedures

- Individual healthcare plans will clearly define what constitutes an emergency and explain what to do
- If a child is taken to hospital, staff will stay with the child until the parent arrives or accompany a child taken to hospital by ambulance

6. Staff training and support

- Healthcare professionals will be expected to lead on identifying and agreeing with the school the type and level of training required, and how this can be obtained
- Healthcare professionals, including the school nurse, should provide confirmation of the proficiency of staff in a medical procedure or in providing medication
- Training will be sufficient to ensure staff are confident and have confidence in their ability to support pupils with medical conditions. They will need an understanding of the specific medical conditions they are asked to deal with
- Staff will not give prescription medicines or undertake healthcare procedures without appropriate training (updated to reflect any individual healthcare plans)
- Staff who provide support to pupils with medical conditions will be included in relevant meetings
- Parents may provide specific advice but should not be the sole trainer of staff

7. Day trips, residential visits and sporting activities

7.1 Chantry Community Primary School will make arrangements for the inclusion of pupils with medical conditions in day trips and sporting activities with any adjustments as required, unless evidence from a clinician states that this is not possible. A risk assessment will be written in consultation with parents and advice from the relevant professional to ensure that pupils can participate safely.

8. Support for children

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

8.2 The school will make reasonable adjustments wherever possible.

8.3 Children admitted to hospital will receive education as determined appropriate by the medical professionals and hospital tuition team at the hospital concerned.

8.4 During a period of absence, the school will work with the provider of the child's education to establish and maintain regular communication and effective outcomes.

8.5 Whilst a child is away from school, the school will work with the LA 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

9. Ensuring successful reintegration into mainstream school

9.1 Returning to school after a period of illness can be an emotional hurdle for a child. Friendships can be damaged by a long absence. Chantry Community Primary School will provide a welcoming environment and encourage children and staff to be as positive and proactive as possible during the transition period.

9.2 Strategies for successful reintegration will be a key element of the child's PEP. The reintegration strategy should include:

- Date for planned reintegration once known
- Details of regular meetings to discuss reintegration
- Clearly stated responsibilities
- Details of social contacts including the involvement of peers and staff during the transition period
- A programme of small goals leading up to reintegration

10. Managing absences

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

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

10.3 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 as soon as the 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 pupil, their family and relevant members of staff.

10.4 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 school will notify the LA, who will take responsibility for the pupil and their education.

10.5 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 pupil's absence.

10.6 For hospital admissions, the school will liaise with the LA regarding the programme that should be followed while the pupil is in hospital.

10.7 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.

10.8 The school will only remove a pupil who is unable to attend school because of additional health needs from the school roll where the health professionals working with the child confirm that it is unlikely that she/he will be in a fit state of health to attend school, before ceasing to be of compulsory school age