CHILDREN WITH HEALTH NEEDS WHO CANNOT ATTEND SCHOOL POLICY

Atlantic Academy

Version control	
September 2026	Reviewed, local authority responsibilities section added
September 2025	Reviewed, no changes
September 2024	Reviewed, changes in line with DfE Guidance 'Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs' 2023 CHANGES IN PURPLE
September 2023	Reviewed, no changes
September 2022	Reviewed, no changes
October 2021	Reviewed, no amendments
September 2020	New Policy

Date of next review:	September 2027	Owner:	Trust Safeguarding Lead
Type of policy:	Outline template	Approval level:	EOB

Contents

1. Aims 2
2. Legislation and guidance 3
3. Roles and responsibilities 4
4. Support for pupils 6
5. Reintegration 8
6. Monitoring arrangements 8
7. Links to other policies 9

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 and parents understand what the school is responsible for when this education is being provided by the local authority

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.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of the

- Education Act 1996
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- Alternative provision (DfE)
- DfE (2023) 'Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs'

It is also based on guidance provided by our local authority.

3. Roles and responsibilities

Please click here for the local authority guidance

The governing board 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.
- Approving and reviewing this policy on an **annual** basis.

The principal will be responsible for:

- Working with the governing board 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 focuses 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 annual reports to the governing board on the effectiveness of any school-based arrangements in place to meet the needs 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 principal, 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.

The Local Authority is responsible if:

- our school is not able to make suitable arrangements, 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, Dorset Council will become responsible for arranging suitable education for these children.

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.

4. 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.

Pupils with continuing health needs will have an IHP which is subject to regular review and assessment. Where a pupil's needs amount to ongoing SEND, an EHC plan may be more appropriate to meet their long-term needs. Where a pupil has an EHC plan and an IHP, both plans will be reviewed alongside each other.

Medical evidence will be used where available to best understand a pupil's needs and identify the most suitable provision. Where specific medical evidence is not readily available, the school will consider liaising with other medical practitioners and other sources of evidence to ensure appropriate provision can be arranged as soon as possible.

The school will support pupils with additional health needs to attend full-time education wherever possible, and will make reasonable adjustments to pupils' programmes of study where medical evidence supports the need for those adjustments.

The school will make reasonable adjustments under pupils' IHPs, 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.

The use of digital resources will be considered to support learning and complement face-to-face education, where appropriate. Digital resources will only be used in accordance with the pupil's needs. Staff will follow procedures set out in the *Remote Education Policy*.

Whilst a pupil is away from school, the school will work with the LA to ensure the pupil can successfully remain in touch with the school using the following methods:

- **Digital learning platforms**
- **School newsletters**

- **Social media platforms**
- **Emails**
- **Invitations to school events**
- **Cards or letters from peers and staff**

Where appropriate, the school will provide the pupil's education provider with relevant information, curriculum materials and resources. The school will strive to achieve effective collaboration between relevant services to ensure continuity of provision and consistency of curriculum.

Provision for pupils will support their individual needs to overcome barriers to attainment and achievement, giving equal consideration to their pastoral needs to allow them to prosper in the education system. Consideration will be given to the pupil's personal, social and emotional needs to allow them to feel fully included in the school community, maintain contacts with classmates and have access to the same opportunities.

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**
- **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**

The school will ensure that pupils are involved in decision-making as much as possible, in accordance with the pupil's age and maturity, to help ensure that the right provision is offered and encourage their commitment and engagement.

Alongside the LA, the provision offered to a pupil will be regularly reviewed by the school to ensure it continues to be appropriate for the pupil's needs and that suitable education is being provided.

5. Reintegration

When a 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.

The school will consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made to provide suitable access to the school and the curriculum for the pupil.

The school is aware that some pupils will need gradual reintegration over a long period of time and will always consult with the 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 pupil.
- 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 pupils and staff to be positive and proactive during the reintegration period.

Following reintegration, the school will seek feedback from the pupil regarding the effectiveness of the process.

6. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the SENCo in collaboration with SLT and relevant stakeholders. At every review, it will be approved by the governing board.

7. Links to other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Accessibility plan
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions
- SEND Policy