

Supporting Pupils with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School Policy



Statement of Intent

Our mission is to promote a love of learning in order to maximise the life chances of every child in our Trust. Through nurturing, high expectations and skilled teaching, we will have a lasting and positive impact on our local and wider community.

Our Vision

The TEACH Trust supports our children to become empowered citizens that make a meaningful contribution to society. Our curriculum reflects our locality and all it offers and aims to educate all children in matters which affect humanity in the wider world: these include all matters that relate to the climate and the world around us, such as climate change; the importance of respecting and celebrating the importance of equality and diversity; and being responsible global citizens.

We have the highest aspirations for our children: the broad and balanced curriculum promotes learning, provides cultural capital and supports spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The Rights Respecting Gold awards and Anti Bullying awards reflect some of many ways in which education for character are integral to the work of our schools and highlights our focus on the children's personal development.

We aim to inspire our children to be socially conscious individuals who make a difference to the world. All our children secure the key learning and skills they will need to become lifelong learners and gain employment. Our ultimate aim is to improve all our children's life chances and prepare them to thrive in their future lives.

Under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Act which came into force in April 2011, the Trust has due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure that:

- Suitable education is arranged for pupils on roll who are unable to attend school due to health/medical needs and who would not receive suitable education without such provision;
- Pupils, staff and parents understand what the school is responsible for when this education is being provided by the Local Authority (LA).

We recognise that, whenever possible, pupils should receive their education within 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.

This policy does not cover instances where children are temporarily unable to attend school as suitable interim provision will be put in place, primarily in consultation with parents/carers.

This policy is intended to cover more extreme instances of ill health.

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 (Section 19)
- Equality Act 2010
- 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'
- Children and Families Act, 2014, section 100
- Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities, January 2013
- Out of School Out of Mind, 2011
- Ofsted Subsidiary Guidance, 2012
- Alternative Provision Statutory Guidance, January 2013
- SEND Code of Practice, January 2015

We will also follow guidance provided by the Local Authority

3. The Responsibilities of the School

3.1 If the school makes arrangements

Initially, the school will attempt to make all possible arrangements to deliver suitable education for children with health needs who cannot attend school.

In the event that the school was required to maintain provision for a child unable to attend:

- The Headteacher will retain responsibility for the provision;
- The provision will be designed to meet the specific needs of the pupil. Appropriate adaptations will be considered;
- The provision will be created in consultation with the child (where possible/appropriate), the family and any other external agencies or support organisations;
- The Headteacher will consider whether a new Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) needs to be drawn up for the child or whether an existing IHCP requires modification;
- Attendance will be monitored via the normal mechanisms, having due regard for the full range of circumstances;
- The roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the arrangements would be clearly set out and fully understood by all involved with appropriate training provided;
- Appropriate arrangements would be in place for dealing with any health emergencies or critical incidents;
- The school would seek to reintegrate the pupil at the earliest opportunity. The nature of this reintegration would be specific to the needs of the pupil and would be subject to regular review;

- Parents / carers would be expected to work with the school to ensure the child's regular and punctual attendance as far as is possible and work with the school to ensure the best possible outcome for their child.

3.2 If the LA makes arrangements

If the school cannot make suitable arrangements, the relevant LA for the child would become responsible for arranging suitable education.

3.2.1 Referring to the Local Authority (BCP)

If ill health results in a pupil being unable to attend school for 15 consecutive or non-consecutive school days the school should make a referral to the Local Authority for advice, guidance, and educational provision. This should be verified in writing, using a medical referral form, by a consultant community paediatrician or specialist consultant psychiatrist from Child and Mental Health Adolescent Services (CAMHS); where this is not possible alternative enquiries should be made to a G.P.

Completed medical referral forms should be emailed to schoolinclusion@bcpcouncil.gov.uk Before considering a referral to the Local Authority for advice and guidance, a school must satisfy itself that a pupil's absence is due to ill-health and that there are no other factors influencing non-attendance.

In such cases, the school will:

- Work constructively with the LA, providers, relevant agencies and parents to ensure the best outcomes for the pupil;
- Share information with the LA 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 in time be reintegrated back into school successfully;
- When reintegration is anticipated, work with the LA to:
 - Plan for consistent provision during and after the period of education outside the school, allowing the pupil to access the same curriculum and materials that they would have used in school as far as possible;
 - Enable the pupil to stay in touch with school life (e.g. through newsletters, emails, invitations to school events or internet links to lessons from their school);
 - Create individually tailored reintegration plans for each child returning to school;
 - Consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made.

3.2.2 Reviewing referrals

- All referrals will be reviewed by BCP School Inclusion Service. After consulting with the school, pupil, their family, healthcare providers and other agencies involved, advice, guidance and where appropriate, educational provision will be offered to the referrer.
- Alternative educational provision will only be provided if there is sufficient evidence that the pupil poor health is impacting the education of the pupil and every reasonable adjustment has been made by the school to meet educational need and enable attendance.

3.2.3 Alternative Provision

- Following discussion with BCP Attendance Support Worker, School Inclusion Service, a school referral is completed for BCP Alternative Education Panel.
- If alternative educational provision is appropriate, BCP School Inclusion Service will, in partnership with the school, make suitable arrangements for the pupils continuing education that takes into account their age, aptitude, ability and SEN needs and their health condition.
- Offsite alternative provision will usually be provided through the Local Authority's commissioned providers, including Christchurch Learning Centre, The Quay School or Throop Learning Centre and independent providers.
- Every local authority has a legal responsibility to arrange education for any child they are responsible for whose illness prevents them from attending school. This education must be full time unless the local authority judges that part-time education would be in a child's best interests because of his or her health needs. The local authority is not generally involved in decisions about admission to hospital – as admission is often as an emergency, the home-base school and local authority may only be notified after admission has occurred.
- All young people of school age, admitted to Poole Hospital, are offered the opportunity to use the Poole Hospital School Service run by the Quay School, even if their stay is for just a few hours.
- Attendance and sickness returns are completed by schools to notify the local authority.

4. Reintegration

When the child is able to return to school, a tailored reintegration plan will be agreed in discussion with parents / carers and other relevant stakeholders. This will include due consideration being given to the need to make any reasonable adaptations.

The school will ensure a welcoming environment is developed and will encourage pupils and staff to be positive and proactive during the reintegration period.

The effectiveness of the reintegration will be subject to regular review.

5. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually for approval by the Compliance and Pupil Safeguarding Panel.

6. Links to Other Policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Accessibility Plan
- Attendance Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Medical and First Aid Policy

Policy approved by the Compliance and Pupil Safeguarding Panel in **September 2023**
 Reviewed **September 2024,2025**
 Date of next review September 2026

Equality Impact Assessment

Question	Response	
Which relevant groups and stakeholders have been consulted with in relation to this policy?		Please tick
	Pupils	
	Trustees	
	Staff	
	Parents/Carers	
	Local Authority	√
	Trade Unions	
	Other Advisors (give details)	√ (DfE)
What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy?	Termly	
	Annually	√
	When applied	√
	If legislation changes	√
	If a formal complaint	√

Does the policy affect one group less or more favourably than another on the basis of:	Y/N
Disability	N
Gender reassignment	N
Marriage or civil partnership	N
Pregnancy and maternity	N
Race	N
Religion or belief	N
Sexual orientation	N
Sex (gender)	N
Age	N
SEN	N
Vulnerable	N
Traveller, migrant, refugees and people seeking asylum	N
EAL	N

	Y/N	Comments/Actions
Is there any evidence that some groups are affected differently?	N	
If you have identified potential discrimination, are any exceptions valid, legal and/or justifiable?	N	
Is the impact of the policy likely to be negative?	N	
If yes, can the impact be mitigated by taking different action?	N/A	

