



# Children with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School

## Policy Version Control

<b>Policy Type</b>	Statutory, Trust Policy
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<b>Approved By</b>	Trust Board
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<b>Date of Next Review</b>	Policy will be reviewed in line with SHINE Academies internal review schedule in adherence to DfE guidance on statutory policy review
<b>Description of Changes</b>	Version 1

## **1. Introduction**

This policy reflects the requirements of the Education Act 1996. It is also based on guidance provided by our local authority. This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

At SHINE Academies, we aim to ensure that all children, regardless of circumstance or setting receive a good education to enable them to shape their own futures. Where children are unable to attend school because of their health, the school will follow Department of Education Guidance and work with

Wolverhampton Local Authority who have the responsibility to arrange suitable full-time education (or parttime when appropriate for the child's needs) for children who are unable to attend a mainstream or special school because of their health.

## **2. Responsibility of School**

School will undertake their best endeavours to ensure that all children, regardless of their personal circumstance or education setting receive a good education. As far as possible school will ensure, in cooperation with all relevant partners, that alternative provision, and the support framework which surrounds it, should enable a pupil to maintain academic progression and attainment, and allow them to thrive and prosper in the education system.

Local authorities, schools, providers, relevant agencies and parents should work together constructively in order to ensure the best outcomes for a pupil.

Children unable to attend school because of health needs should be able to access suitable and flexible education appropriate to their needs. The nature of the provision must be responsive to the demands of what may be a changing health status. Schools can also play a big part in making sure that the provision offered to the child is as effective as possible and that the child can be reintegrated back into school successfully.

## **3. The Local Authority**

The Local Authority is responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for children who – because of illness or other reasons – would not receive suitable education without such provision. There will, however, be a wide range of circumstances where a child has a health need but will receive suitable education that meets their needs without the intervention of the Local Authority, for example, where the child can still attend school with some support. Where the school has made arrangements to deliver suitable education outside of school for the child; or where arrangements have been made for the child to be educated in a hospital by an on-site hospital school, we would not expect the Local Authority to become involved in such arrangements unless it had reason to think that the education being provided to the child was not suitable or, while otherwise suitable, was not full-time or for the number of hours the child could benefit from without adversely affecting

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their health. This might be the case where, for example, the child can attend school but only intermittently.

#### **4. Expectations of the Local Authority**

Where the Local Authority is involved in arranging provision, the expectation from the school is that the LA will

- Arrange suitable full-time education (or as much education as the child's health condition allows) for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would otherwise not receive suitable education.
- Provide such education as soon as 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 and allows them to take appropriate external tests, prevents them from slipping behind their peers in school and allows them to reintegrate successfully back into school as soon as possible.
- Address the needs of individual children in arranging provision. A rigid system of rules may be inappropriate: they could limit the offer of education to children with a given condition and prevent their access to the right level of educational support which they are well enough to receive. Strict rules that limit the offer of education a child receives may also breach statutory requirements.
- Where full-time education would not be in the best interests of a particular child because of reasons relating to their physical or mental health, provide part-time education on a basis they consider to be in the child's best interests. Full and part-time education should still aim to achieve good academic attainment particularly in English, Maths and Science. The nature of the provision must be responsive to the demands of what may be a changing health status.
- Where appropriate, use electronic media – such as 'virtual classrooms', learning platforms and so on – to provide access to a broader curriculum, but this should generally be used to complement face-to-face education, rather than as sole provision (though in some cases, the child's health needs may make it advisable to use only virtual education for a time).
- Ensure that teachers who provide education for children with health needs receive suitable training and support and are kept aware of curriculum developments. They should also be given suitable information relating to a child's health condition, and the possible effect the condition and/or medication taken has on the child.
- Set up a personal education plan, which should ensure that the school, the Local Authority, hospital school or other provider can work together.
- Ensure effective collaboration between all relevant services (LAs, CAMHS, NHS, schools and, where relevant, school nurses) in delivering effective education for children with additional health needs.

#### **5. Reintegration**

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When reintegration into school is anticipated, LAs should work with the school (and hospital school, PRU/home tuition services if appropriate) to plan for consistent provision during and after the period of education outside school. LAs should work with schools to set up an individually tailored reintegration plan for each child. This may have to include extra support to help fill any gaps arising from the child's absence. It may be appropriate to involve the school nurse at this stage as they may be able to offer valuable advice. The school nurse will also want to be aware that the child is returning to school, so that they can be prepared to offer any appropriate support.

Schools must consider whether they need to make any reasonable adjustments to provide suitable access for the child. Where the absence is likely to be lengthy, the reintegration plan may only take shape nearer to the likely date of return, to avoid putting unsuitable pressure on an ill child in the early stages of their absence. While most children will want to return to their previous school routine at once, some will need gradual reintegration over a longer period.

## **6. Sibling Provision**

When treatment of a child's condition means that his or her family must move nearer to a hospital, and there is a sibling of compulsory school age, the local authority into whose area the family has moved should seek to ensure that the sibling is offered a place, where provision is available, for example, in a local mainstream school or other appropriate setting.

SHINE Academies will make all reasonable efforts to meet its responsibilities by working with the Local Authority, parents and other appropriate parties to ensure each child is able to access a good education to enable each child to shape their own futures.

## **7. Monitoring Arrangements**

SHINE Academies is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact on pupils' education, behaviour and welfare.

This policy will be reviewed by the Trust Board annually.

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