

Children with health needs who cannot attend school policy

The Sittingbourne School



Approved by: Lynn Lawrence

Last reviewed on: February 2025

Next review due by: March 2026

0. Contents

0. Contents	2
1. Aims	3
2. Named Individuals	3
3. Legislation and Guidance	3
4. Supporting Students with Medical Conditions	3
5. Recording Absences	3
6. Working Together	4
a) Parents/Carers	4
b) The Student	4
c) External Agencies	4
7. Funding	4
8. When to provide support	4
9. Role and Responsibilities	4
a) If the school makes arrangements	4
b) If the local authority makes arrangements	5
c) When reintegration is anticipated	6
10. Using Medical Evidence	6
11. Adapting education to student's needs	7
12. Reviewing Education Provision	7
13. Removing a student from roll	7
14. Reintegration into the school	8
15. Exams	8
16. Siblings	8
17. Concerns / Complaints	8
18. Monitoring arrangements	8
19. Links to other policies	9

1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure that:

- The school fulfills its statutory obligation to ensure that suitable education is arranged for students on roll who cannot attend school due to health needs.
- Students, staff and parents/carers understand what the school is responsible for when this education is being provided by the local authority.

2. Named Individuals

The named person with responsibility for implementing this policy:

Name: Mr N Smith

Role: Headteacher

This person is referred to as the **Policy Lead** throughout this policy.

3. Legislation and Guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018
- DfE (2015) 'Supporting students at school with medical conditions'
- 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 and the Swale Academies Trust. This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

4. Supporting Students with Medical Conditions

Where possible, The Sittingbourne School will encourage students with medical conditions to attend the school and participate in lessons. The school will support students with medical conditions as detailed in the following document: 'Supporting students with a medical condition policy'.

5. Recording Absences

The following statement supports any and all attendance or absence policies that the school or Swale Academies Trust has:

- Students who are not attending school regularly due to their health needs will be recorded and their full name and address will be provided to the local authority when requested.

6. Working Together

a) Parents/Carers

Parents and carers will be consulted before any new provision begins. The school recognises that they have an important role to play and can provide necessary information about the child and their needs, whether the child is at home or in hospital.

b) The Student

Where possible and appropriate, the student will be involved in deciding what the educational provision will be. It is important that their commitment and engagement is encouraged.

c) External Agencies

Effective collaboration between relevant services will be essential when designing and implementing any educational provision. Where relevant, the school will collaborate with the following services: Local Authorities, CAMHS, NHS, hospital school staff, designated NHS nurses, home tutors, etc...

7. Funding

Any requests from the Local Authority or outside agencies for funding will be referred to the Headteacher for consideration.

8. When to provide support

If a student is unable to attend school due to health needs the school will attempt to make arrangements to provide a suitable education for the student. Details of how this will be implemented can be found in the next section 'Roles and Responsibilities'.

If it becomes clear that a student will be away from school for 15 school days (consecutive or cumulative) or more because of their health needs, the school will follow the procedure described in the next section 'Roles and Responsibilities', referring the student's case to the Local Authority.

9. Role and Responsibilities

a) 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.

- The student's Head of Year or Associate Head of Year will liaise with parents/carers to put in place suitable arrangements to ensure the best continuity of learning possible.
- The Head of Year or Associate Head of Year will monitor arrangements between home and school, including liaison with Subject Leaders and teachers.

- The Head of Year or Associate Head of Year may delegate some tasks related to homeschooling to a Pastoral Support Manager.
- The year teams will ensure that appropriate work is sent home or sent to hospital schools where this is relevant.
- The year teams will refer for support for home learning through online platforms such as Academy 21 if appropriate.
- The year teams will monitor the student's engagement with the work and liaise with the student's parents/carers and teachers where necessary.
- Where a student is not attending due to ill health, it is important that they feel supported in their learning. It is also important that each student's situation is assessed on an individual basis and that the student's needs are met accordingly.
- The Head of Year or Associate Head of Year will also be responsible for ensuring a supported reintegration of the student back into school after an extended period of illness. Again, this will include close liaison with parents/carers, attendance lead, subject leaders, teachers and the Local Authority.
- When a student returns to school after an extended period of absence due to ill health, the year teams will closely monitor the student for one school term and support their settling back into their learning and school life.
- Should the student require further support, the year teams will make the necessary referrals, either to in-school support programmes or outside agencies. Again, this will be done in consultation with parents/carers.

b) If the local authority makes arrangements

If the school cannot make suitable arrangements, the LA will become responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would not receive suitable education without such provision.

The school can make a referral to Rosewood School. This service should accept and act on the following criteria:

- Medical needs are such that the young person has missed 15 days of schooling (consecutive or cumulative).
- The young person's health has significantly reduced their ability to access their home school full time and this is reflected in their attendance record.
- A senior medical professional (such as a consultant, mental health practitioner etc) is providing support, diagnosis and/or advice. This applies to students whose cases are managed by hospitals within Kent as well as in more specialist hospitals in London and across the country; Please Note: GP referral is not sufficient.
- A change in medical advice or medication has meant that a young person requires increased medical review, intervention, support or flexibility to allow them to attend education full time.
- Health need can mean either physical health need, or mental health condition meaning it is disrupting the young person's ability to attend school full time
- A young person has been discharged from tier 4 Mental Health Service services and requires on-going support before full time reintegration to school.

- When further dialogue post-referral is required between KHNES and schools there may be the need for further discussion with medical professionals to ensure correct decisions are reached in the best interest of all young people.

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 student.
- Share information with the local authority and relevant health services as required.
- Liaise with the alternative provider over planning examinations and examination course requirements where appropriate. Awarding bodies may make special arrangements for students 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 soon as possible.
- Help make sure that the provision offered to the student is as effective as possible and that the child can be reintegrated back into school successfully.

c) When reintegration is anticipated

The school will work with the local authority to:

- Plan for consistent provision during and after the period of education outside the school, allowing the student to access the same curriculum and materials that they would have used in school as far as possible.
- Enable the student 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.

10. Using Medical Evidence

All medical evidence that the school has access to will be used to better understand the needs of the student and identify the most suitable provision. If medical evidence is not available, any suitable supporting evidence can be used including advice and guidance from other medical practitioners.

The school, once medical evidence is presented, will not continue to request evidence without good reason, even where a student has long-term health problems.

Parents/carers should always provide updated advice and evidence from any and all medical practitioners to support the school in providing the best possible educational provision.

11. Adapting education to student's needs

Every effort by the school will be made to provide a student who cannot attend with the same high standard of education that other students receive as far as the student's health needs allow.

Any alternative education provisions put in place by the school must be suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude. It must also take into account any special educational needs that they have.

Students will be given the opportunity to take appropriate qualifications where their health needs allow.

Any educational provision put in place by the school should aim to prevent the student from slipping behind with their peers. This will support any future reintegration back into the school. The provision should also support the student's individual needs to overcome barriers to attainment and achievement, giving equal consideration to the pastoral needs of the student to allow them to thrive and prosper in the education system.

The educational provision put in place by the school must be flexible to accommodate the health needs of the individual student. It must also recognise that the health needs of the student may change. As a result, the arrangements must be flexible and adapt to any changes in the student's health needs.

12. Reviewing Education Provision

The year team will regularly review the education provision offered to ensure that it continues to be appropriate for the student and that it is providing suitable education. A review should be carried out every full term - 3 per year. The review should seek input from:

- The student
- The parents/carers

When the health needs of the student changes to the extent that they are not able to access the current education provision, a review must be undertaken that seeks input from relevant agencies such as medical practitioners.

13. Removing a student from roll

A student who is unable to attend the school due to health needs will not be removed from the school's register unless the pupil has been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school, before ceasing to be of compulsory school age and neither the pupil nor their parent has indicated to the school the intention to continue to attend the school, after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.

14. Reintegration into the school

The school will make every effort to ensure that the educational provision will support the reintegration of the student. As part of the provision put in place, a reintegration plan will be made in consultation with the parents/carers and the student.

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 student in the early stages of their absence.

The reintegration plan may include a phased return, staggered start and finish times, part time timetables, attendance to specific subjects or any other support method that is suitable for the school to offer and implement.

15. Exams

Where possible and suitable, the student will have the opportunity to sit any exams that their peers have access to. Arrangements as to which exams are accessed and how/where they are completed will be made in consultation with the school's Exams Officer.

16. Siblings

When treatment of a child's condition means that his or her family have to move nearer to a hospital and a sibling is on the school's roll, the school will temporarily support the sibling by providing a suitable educational provision whilst a more suitable educational facility is found.

This applies to students on the school's roll even if the child whose medical need has created the need for the family to relocate is not on the school's roll.

17. Concerns / Complaints

If parents/carers are concerned about the educational provision put in place or have any complaints that they would like to raise with the school, they should contact the year team as a first point of contact. If this does not result in a satisfactory outcome, they should use the school's complaints procedure.

18. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the headteacher and SENDCO. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

19. Links to other policies

This policy works alongside the following school policies:

- Accessibility plan
- Mental Health Policy
- Supporting students with a medical condition policy