

Policy for Children and Young People with Medical Needs in School

Introduction

'Access to Education for children and young people with medical needs' DfES 2001 sets out the guidance to be followed by local authorities in meeting their statutory obligations.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all children with medical conditions, in terms of both physical and mental health, are properly supported in school so that they can play a full and active role in school life, access and enjoy the same opportunities at school as any other child, remain healthy and achieve their full potential. In order to fulfil this duty, the governors will ensure that the focus is on the needs of individual children and how their medical condition impacts on their school life.

Roles and Responsibilities

The ultimate responsibility for the management of this policy in school is with the Headteacher and Governing Body.

The SENCO, Anya Chadwick, is the named person will manage the policy on a day-to-day basis and ensure all procedures and protocols are maintained.

What is the definition of children with medical needs?

All children are likely to be absent from school occasionally. This policy is directed at children who have serious illnesses that are likely to prevent attendance at school for long periods of time and may well involve repeated periods of absence. It is also likely that such children will also spend time in a hospital.

Aims

The Governing Body will ensure that their arrangements give parents and pupils confidence in school's ability to provide effective support for medical conditions in school. Governors will ensure that staff are properly trained to provide the support that pupils need; training needs will be identified during the development or review of individual healthcare plans and staff included in the process. No child will be denied admission or prevented from taking up a place because arrangements for their condition have not been made.

Parents of children with medical conditions are often concerned that their child's health will deteriorate when they attend school. This is because pupils with long-term and complex medical conditions may require on-going support, medicines or care while at school to help them manage their condition and keep them well. Others may require monitoring and interventions in emergency circumstances.

It is also the case that children's health needs change over time, in ways that cannot always be predicted, sometimes resulting in extended absences. It is therefore important that parents feel confident that school will provide effective support for their child's medical condition and that pupils feel safe. Parents will be involved in the development and review of their child's individual healthcare plan.

Some children with medical conditions may be considered to be disabled under the definition set out in the Equality Act 2010. Where this is the case, the governing body will comply with its duties under the Act. Some may also have special educational needs (SEN) and may have a statement, or Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan which brings together health and social care needs, as well as their SEN provision. Governors will ensure that compliance with the SEND code of practice ensures school meets the statutory elements of this guidance in respect of those children.

Identification

School will work with parents and medical professionals to ensure that specific protocols are in place as soon as the child starts school. This may take the form of information sharing, developing specific care plans, organising training, employing new staff or reorganising classroom facilities.

Training regarding specific conditions will be delivered as required. This is usually within a term of the pupil beginning school.

Attendance Monitoring

Identification of needs will be aided by close scrutiny of attendance and contact with parents. School works in conjunction with an Attendance Officer, employed by Beauchamp College. Office staff will monitor attendance at school and raise concerns should a child be absent for periods in excess of five days. The Attendance Officer will visit school on a termly basis to discuss individual attendance, and if deemed necessary will visit the home.

Individual Health Care Plans (IHCP)

The main purpose of an IHCP is to identify the level of support that is needed at school for an individual child. The IHCP clarifies for staff, parents/carers and the child the help that school can provide and receive. These plans will be reviewed annually and a copy given to parents/carers and class teachers/LSA support.

An IHCP will include –

- Details of the child's condition
- What constitutes an emergency
- What action to take in an emergency
- What not to do in the event of an emergency
- Who to contact in an emergency
- The role of staff
- Special requirements e.g. dietary needs, pre-activity precautions
- Side effects of medicines

All trained staff will ensure they are aware of the protocols and procedures for specific pupils in school through attending training provided and reading care plans devised for individual pupils.

Long term absence

It is expected that education for pupils who are unable to attend school because of medical needs can be provided for in a variety of ways. This can include the use of

an integrated hospital/home tuition service. In Leicestershire, such a service is provided by the Children's Hospital School (CHS) based at Leicester Royal Infirmary.

The DfE guidance applies equally to all children unable to attend school because of medical needs, both those who are physically ill or injured and those with medical problems. Woodland Grange will endeavour to ensure that there is adequate provision for pupils suffering from mental illness such as anxiety, depression and/or school phobia including separation anxiety and school refusal associated with depression.

School is responsible for ensuring that -

- Pupils who have an illness/diagnosis which indicates prolonged or recurring periods of absence from school, whether at home or in hospital, have access to education, so far as possible, from day one.
- Pupils receive an education of similar quality to that available in school, including a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Pupils educated at home receive a *minimum entitlement* of 5 hours teaching per week. This is a minimum and should be increased where that is necessary to enable a pupil to keep up with their studies. This is particularly important when a pupil is approaching public examinations.

Whether the child or young person is able to access this entitlement will depend on medical advice, and perhaps more importantly, when they feel able to cope with it. The right balance must be struck between encouraging pupils to study and recognising when they are not well enough to benefit from teaching. This will be kept under regular review.

School will monitor and support attendance by -

- Monitoring pupil attendance and marking registers so that they show if a pupil is, or ought to be, receiving education otherwise than at school.
- Working closely with the school Attendance Officer, employed through Beauchamp College, as per the agreement negotiated through the Oadby Learning Partnership.
- Having clear management structures and staff responsibilities.
- Implementing strategies for ensuring support in cases of long-term absence, including the provision of assessment and curriculum plans within 5 working days and work programmes on a termly basis.
- Appointing a named contact within school to aid communication with other parties, to attend reviews, and to facilitate communication generally between the pupil and school.
- Providing work and materials for pupils who are absent from school because of medical needs.
- Follow procedures for ensuring that pupils who are unable to attend school because of medical needs have access to public examinations, possibly as external candidates.
- Ensure that pupils are reintegrated smoothly into school.
- Understand issues related to pupils with statements of special educational needs.

CRITERIA FOR REFERRAL

Woodland Grange will support any pupil with medical needs who cannot attend school wherever possible; if necessary through the Children's Hospital School. Most cases of medical need will be dealt with by school. School will liaise with the family of a pupil who is not attending for medical reasons and ensure that the child is able to maintain progress by setting appropriate work and giving appropriate feedback and support. School will make reasonable adjustments to a pupil's timetable and offer part-time education for a limited period to help the pupil maintain access to education.

Where a pupil's absence for medical reasons has been or is likely to be greater than three weeks, school will inform the LA's Attendance Strategy Manager. If a child is deemed medically unfit to attend school the Attendance Improvement Officer will make a referral to the Children's Hospital School.

The aim of the Children's Hospital School is to support the educational progress of pupils, who are temporarily unable to attend mainstream school. Services are provided in three ways - to in-patients on wards, through a hospital day school, and through home-tuition. Pupils will at all times remain the responsibility of school.

Named Officer

The named officer with responsibility for the provision of education for children and young people who are unable to attend school because of medical needs in Leicestershire, is:

Charles Palmer, Head of Specialist Education Services
Leicestershire Children and Young People's Service,
County Hall, Glenfield, Leics, LE3 8RF.

Telephone 0116 305 6326

Email: Charlie.palmer@leics.gov.uk

The named officer will appoint a representative to sit on the governing body of the hospital school.