



Children with health needs who cannot attend school

This policy was adopted/updated: February 2024

This policy will be reviewed: February 2026

Signed by Head Teacher:

Signed by Chair of Governors:

Date

This policy should be read and understood in conjunction with the following policies and documents:

School policies:

- Remote Education Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- School Accessibility Plan
- SEND Offer
- Single Equality Policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions in school

National and Local Authority Guidance:

- [DfE Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs \(January 2013\)](#)
- [DfE Alternative Provision: A guide for local authorities, head teachers and governing bodies of schools, pupil referral units and other providers of alternative provision \(January 2013\)](#)
- [Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs December 2023](#)
- [Local Authority Policy](#)

Introduction:

- This policy outlines both the responsibilities of the school and of the Local Authority (LA) in respect of children who cannot attend school due to health needs.
- It is based on the statutory guidance issued by the [Department of Education \(DfE\)](#) “[Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs: Statutory guidance for local authorities](#)”
- Studley Green Primary School aims to support the Wiltshire Local Education Authority and ensure that all children who are unable to attend school due to health needs, and who would not receive a suitable education without such provision, continue to have access to as much education as their medical condition allows, enabling them to reach their full potential.

- We recognise that we as a school are responsible for the meeting the educational needs of children who cannot attend school due to a particular health need for the first 15 days of their absence from school. However, there are some circumstances in which the LA will be involved from the outset, such as prolonged hospitalisation (see below).
- We understand that we have a continuing role in a pupil's education whilst they are not at school and will work with the local authority, healthcare partners and families to ensure that all children with health needs receive the right level of support to enable them to maintain links within their education.
- Due to the nature of their health needs, some children may be admitted to hospital or placed in alternative forms of education provision.
- The school recognises that, after a prolonged period of absence, a child will need support in reintegrating back into school life and will support them in this process.

Aims:

- The aim of this policy is to outline the responsibilities of the LA and the school in the suitable provision of education to those children who cannot attend school because of health needs at a level that both enables each child to reach their full potential without compromising their health or medical condition.
- We aim to work in collaboration with parents, pupils, other external services and the LA and we understand that it is only with cooperation and collaboration that we can achieve the best outcomes for individual pupils.

Responsibilities of the Local Authority (LA):

The responsibilities' of the LA are laid out in much greater detail in the statutory guidance already referred to however the key points are noted below:

- LAs are legally 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. This applies whether or not the child is on the roll of a school and whatever the type of school they attend.
- In line with the Government guidance Wiltshire Local Authority (LA) must have a designated senior officer with responsibility for access to education for children and young people with medical needs. In Wiltshire, this Officer is Lydia Thomas – Team Leader, Medical Needs Education and Reintegration Service, lydia.thomas@wiltshire.gov.uk
- [The LA has a written and publicly accessible policy statement](#) on their arrangement to comply with their legal duty towards children with additional health needs. This policy should make links with related services in the area (e.g. Special Educational Needs and Disability Services (SEND), Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS),

Education Welfare/Attendance Improvement Services, educational psychologists and where relevant, the school nurse.

- The law does not define full-time education, but children with health needs should have provision which is equivalent to the education they receive at school without compromising either their physical or mental health. Furthermore, this provision should be reviewed on a regular basis for each individual child to ensure that it continues to be appropriate.
- The LA should provide such education as soon as it becomes clear that a child will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative and should liaise with appropriate medical professionals to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision.
- When the treatment of a child's condition means that s/he have to move nearer to a hospital and there is one or more siblings of compulsory school age, the LA into whose area the family have moved should seek to ensure that any siblings are offered a place where provision is available.
- There are some circumstances where a child has health needs but will receive suitable education that meets their needs without the intervention of the LA, for example:
 - where the child can still attend school with some support
 - where the school has made arrangements to deliver suitable education outside school
 - where arrangements have been made for a child to be educated in hospital by an on-site hospital school
- In such circumstances, the LA will only become involved if they had reason to think that the education being provided was not suitable or, whilst suitable, was not full-time or for the number of hours a child would benefit from without adversely affecting their health. This might be the case for example, where a child can attend school but only intermittently.
- Whilst there is no absolute legal deadline by which the LA must have started to provide education for children with additional health needs, they should however, arrange provision as soon as it is clear that an absence will last more than 15 days and it should do so at the latest by the sixth day of the absence, aiming to do so by the first day of absence. Where an absence is planned, for example for a stay or recurrent stays in hospital, LAs should make arrangements in advance to allow provision to begin from day one.

Responsibilities of the school:

- In line with DfE statutory guidance, the school will attempt to make arrangements to deliver suitable education for children with health needs who cannot attend school for the first 15 consecutive days of absence.
- In so doing the school, in consultation as appropriate with parents, pupils, class teachers and SENCo regarding the arrangements to be made, and if it is appropriate to do so, the class teacher will provide packs of work, which can be completed at home. These may include activities to be completed online using resources purchased by the school. Where IT access is an issue work packs will be put together and handed to the family.
- The head teacher and the SENCo will be responsible for monitoring these arrangements in consultation with the class teacher.
- The class teacher will discuss with parents/carers the most effective way to communicate with both them and the pupil and how they will provide feedback on work completed. Any concerns that arise should be referred to the Headteacher.
- In cases where the absence extends beyond 15 days (or it becomes apparent that the absence will extend beyond 15 days), the school will make a referral to the LA in consultation with the class teacher.
- When a pupil is due to return to school
 - When a pupil is due to return to school it may be necessary to draw up a Health Care Plan, this will be undertaken by the SENCo in consultation with parents/carers, the pupil and the class teacher. In a case where the absence is extending beyond 15 days a senior member of staff will make a referral (as above) in consultation with the class teacher.

Responsibilities of parents:

- Parents are advised to contact the school of their first day their child is unable to attend due to illness.