

Merrydale Infants School



Children with Health Needs that Cannot Attend School Policy

Chair's signature...Mrs Elizabeth Surtees

Head's signature.....Mark Tipple-Johnson

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1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure that:

- Suitable education is arranged for pupils on roll who cannot attend school due to health needs
- Pupils, staff and parents understand what the school is responsible for when this education is being provided by the local authority

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of the [Education Act 1996](#).

It also based on guidance provided by our local authority. This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. The responsibilities of the school

Schools would usually provide support to children who are absent from school because of illness for a shorter period, for example when experiencing chicken pox or influenza. In some cases, where a child is hospitalised, the hospital may provide education for the child within the hospital and the LA would not need to arrange any additional education, provided it is satisfied that the child is receiving suitable education. More generally, LAs should be ready to take responsibility for any child whose illness will prevent them from attending school for 15 or more school days, either in one absence or over the course of a school year, and where suitable education is not otherwise being arranged.

3.2 The local authority makes arrangements

If the school can't make suitable arrangements, Leicester City Local Authority will become responsible for arranging suitable education for these children.

Local authorities must:

Arrange suitable¹ 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. Local authorities should:

Provide such education as soon as it is clear that 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.

The should ensure that the education children receive is of good quality, as defined in the statutory guidance Alternative Provision (2013), allows them to take appropriate qualifications, prevents them from slipping behind their peers in school and allows them to reintegrate successfully back into school as soon as possible. They should also, address the needs of individual children in arranging provision. 'Hard and fast' rules are inappropriate: they may 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.

Role and responsibilities of the local authority

LAs are 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. The law does not define full-time education but children with health needs should have provision which is equivalent to the education they would receive in school. If they receive one-to-one tuition, for example, the hours of face-to-face provision could be fewer as the provision is more concentrated. 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, LAs should 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 LA should:

- Have a named officer responsible for the education of children with additional health needs, and parents should know who that person is.
- Have a written, publicly accessible policy statement on their arrangements to comply with their legal duty towards children with additional health needs. The policy should make links with related services in the area - for example, Special Educational Needs and Disability Services (SEND), Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Education Welfare/Attendance Improvement Services, educational psychologists, and, where relevant, school nurses.
- Review the provision offered regularly to ensure that it continues to be appropriate for the child and that it is providing suitable education.
- Have clear policies on the provision of education for children and young people under and over compulsory school age.

Identification and intervention

Where they have identified that alternative provision is required, LAs should ensure that it is arranged as quickly as possible and that it appropriately meets the needs of the child. In order to better understand the needs of the child, and therefore choose the most appropriate provision, LAs should work closely with medical professionals and the child's family, and consider the medical evidence. LAs should make every effort to minimise the disruption to a child's education. For example, where specific medical evidence, such as that provided by a medical consultant, is not quickly available, LAs should consider liaising with other medical professionals, such as the child's GP, and consider looking at other evidence to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the child. Once parents have provided evidence from a consultant, LAs should not unnecessarily demand continuing evidence from the consultant without good reason, even where a child has long-term health problems. Evidence of the continuing additional health issues from the child's GP should usually be sufficient. In cases where a LA believes that a consultant's on-going opinion is absolutely necessary, they should give parents sufficient time to contact the consultant to obtain the evidence. The law does not specify the point during a child's illness when it becomes the LA's responsibility to secure for the child suitable full-time education.

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 pupil
- Share information with the local authority 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 be reintegrated back into school successfully
- When reintegration is anticipated, work with the local authority 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

4. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by Mr Tipple-Johnson, Headteacher. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

5. Links to other policies

- Merrydale Infants School Administration of medicines and healthcare needs Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy
- Supporting children with a medical condition policy