

Children with additional needs attendance policy

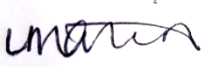
Aspire Federation



Reviewed and updated: December 2024

Ratified by Governors:

Next review: December 2025

Signed: ... 

Signed: ... 

Name: Laura Martin
(Executive Headteacher)

Name: Peter Hilton
(Chair of Governors)

Date: 6.12.24.....

Date: ...13.1.25.....

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 education is being provided by the Local Authority.

At the Aspire Federation, we believe that every child should have the best possible start in life through a high quality education, which allows them to achieve their full potential. A child who has health needs should have the same opportunities as their peer group, including a broad and balanced curriculum. As far as possible, children with health needs and who are unable to attend school should receive the same range and quality of education as they would have experienced at their home school.

Due to the nature of their health needs, some children may be admitted to hospital or placed in alternative forms of educational provision. We recognise that, whenever possible, pupils should receive their education within their own school and the aim of any alternative provision will be to reintegrate pupils back into school as soon as they are well enough.

We understand that we have a continuing role in a child's education whilst they are not in school and will work with the Local Authority, healthcare partners and families to ensure that all children with medical needs receive the right level of support to enable them to maintain their education.

This should also include social and emotional needs, for example ensuring that pupils feel fully part of our school community, are able to stay in contact with classmates, and have access to the opportunities enjoyed by their peers. Alternative provision, and the support framework which surrounds it, should enable a child to maintain academic progression and attainment, and allow them to thrive and prosper in the education system. This support framework should work cohesively across organisational boundaries and include a structured understanding and assessment of the needs of a child, and appropriate referral and re-integration that focuses on the child's interest and appropriate outcomes rather than processes. Local authorities, schools, providers, relevant agencies and parents should work together constructively in order to ensure the best outcomes for each child.

Definition

Whilst there is not a legal definition of a healthcare need, in general terms it can be said that such a need is one related to the treatment, control or prevention of a disease, illness, injury or disability, and the care or aftercare of a person with these needs.

Legislation and guidance

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs; DfE 2023
- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions; DfE 2015
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Keeping children safe in Education (2024)
- Working together to improve school attendance (2024)

Links to other school policies

- Accessibility Plan
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions
- Attendance policy
- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) policy
- Equality policy

Roles and responsibilities

The School

Wherever possible, we will attempt to deliver a suitable education for children with significant health needs in school. If this is not possible then we will provide the following:

- Where a child is absent from school for medical reasons, the school will provide education tasks and resources for use at home when the child is well enough to engage with them.
- When an absence is known to be more than 15 days, the school will request that home tuition is provided to the child through the Local Authority.
- Where a child is admitted to hospital, the school will liaise with the teaching service to inform them of the curriculum areas that the pupil should be covering during their absence. Where possible, school will plan the educational programme of the pupil with the service provider, taking account (as appropriate) of the medical condition, treatment, effects of medication, therapeutic programmes provided and the duration of absence from school.

Where a child may be absent from school for an extended period of time, our school will liaise with the educational provider (home tuition or hospital tuition) in order to provide as much information as possible, so that the disruption to the child's education is as little as possible.

We may provide the following information:

- Medium term planning, programmes of study/schemes of work
- Information relating to the pupil's ability, progress to date, assessment data
- Information relating to any special educational needs and/or disabilities
- Resources and materials

Where practical, our school will host review meetings with the alternative providers, healthcare professionals, parent/carers and where appropriate the child.

Where children have recurrent admissions or have a planned admission to hospital, the school will aim to provide a pack of work for the pupil to take into hospital with them.

The Local Authority

If for any reason the school can't make suitable arrangements for the child, Lincolnshire Local Authority will become responsible for arranging a suitable education for the child.

The Local Authority is responsible for the following:

- Arranging suitable full-time education for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would not receive suitable education without such provision;
- 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, Local Authorities 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.
- With planned hospital admissions, Local Authorities should give the teacher who will be teaching the child as much forewarning as possible, including the likely admission date and expected length of stay. This allows them to liaise with the child's school and, where applicable, with the Local Authority about the programme to be followed while the child is in hospital. Local Authorities should set up a personal education plan, which should ensure that the child's school, the Local Authority and the hospital school or other provider can work together.
- Reviewing the provision offered regularly, to ensure that it continues to be appropriate for the child and that it is providing suitable education.

In cases where the Local Authority makes arrangements, the school will:

- Work constructively with the Local Authority, alternative providers, healthcare professionals and parents/carers to ensure the best outcomes for the child;

- Share information with the Local Authority and relevant health services as required;
- Help to make sure that the provision offered to the child is as effective as possible and that the child can be reintegrated back into school successfully.

When reintegration is anticipated, our school will work with the Local Authority to:

- Plan for consistent provision during and after the alternative education, allowing the child to access the same curriculum and materials that they would have used in school as far as possible;
- Enable the child to stay in touch with school life (e.g. through newsletters, emails, invitations to school events or links to remote lessons);
- Create individually tailored reintegration plans for each child returning to school;
- Plan any reasonable adjustments which need to be made.

The Governing Body and Executive Headteacher

The Governing Board and Executive Headteacher are responsible for the following:

- Ensuring arrangements for pupils who cannot attend school as a result of their medical needs are in place and are effectively implemented;
- Ensuring a termly review of the arrangements made for pupils who cannot attend school due to their medical needs;
- Ensuring a suitable member of staff is assigned responsibility for the education of pupils with additional health needs to be a point of contact for the LA and parents.
- Ensuring the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the arrangements to support the needs of the child are clear and understood by all (this policy);
- Notifying the Local Authority when a pupil is likely to be away from the school for a significant period of time due to their health needs.

The SENDCo

The SENDCo is responsible for the following:

- Overseeing the arrangements for children who are unable to attend school because of medical needs (this policy);

- Actively monitoring pupil progress and reintegration into school;
- Supplying any necessary information about the child's capabilities, progress and outcomes and any special educational needs and/or disabilities with the alternative education provider;
- Supplying any necessary information about the child's curriculum with the alternative education provider e.g. Medium term planning, programmes of study/schemes of work and any resources and materials (mentioned earlier);
- Liaising with the Executive Headteacher and staff members, to ensure a joined up approach and smooth transition;
- Ensuring 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 the child's health condition, and the possible effect the condition and/or medication taken has on the child;
- Liaising with the parents/carers and pupils to ensure a sense of belonging and ensure continuity;
- Liaising with any Outside Agencies and organising any necessary review meetings.

Teachers and Support Staff

Teachers and support staff are responsible for the following:

- Understanding confidentiality in respect of pupils' health needs;
- Designing lessons and activities in a way that allows those with health needs to participate fully and ensuring pupils are not excluded from activities that they wish to take part in, without a clear evidence-based reason;
- Understanding their role in supporting pupils with health needs and ensuring they attend the required training (in line with the 'Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy');
- Ensuring that they have read and are following the child's individual health care plan (in line with the 'Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy');

- Keeping parents informed of how their child's health needs are affecting them whilst in the school.

Absences

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

Absences due to illness will be authorised unless the school has genuine cause for concern about the authenticity of the illness.

The school will provide support to children who are absent from school because of illness for a period of less than 15 school days, by liaising with the child's parents to arrange schoolwork as soon as they are able to cope with it or part-time education at school. The school will give due consideration to which aspects of the curriculum are prioritised in consultation with the child, their family and relevant members of staff.

For periods of absence that are expected to last for 15 or more school days, either in one absence or over the course of a school year, the school SENDCo or Executive Headteacher will notify the Local Authority, who will take responsibility for the pupil and their education.

For planned hospital admissions, the appointed named member of staff will liaise with the LA and the hospital education provider as early as possible to discuss the likely admission date and expected length. Plans will be made, where possible, for the educational programme to be followed while the pupil is in hospital.

The LA will set up a personal education plan (PEP) for the pupil which will allow the school, the LA and the provider of the pupil's education to work together.

The school will monitor pupil attendance and mark registers to ensure it is clear whether a pupil is, or should be, receiving education other than at school.

The school will only remove a pupil who is unable to attend school because of additional health needs from the school roll where:

- The pupil has been certified by the school's 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.

A pupil unable to attend school because of their health needs will not be removed from the school register without parental consent and certification from the school's medical officer, even if the LA has become responsible for the pupil's education.

Staff will be alert to the fact that missing education can put pupils at risk of harm and may be an indicator of a safeguarding issue. Concerns will be handled in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Children Missing from Education Policy. Staff will also be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for pupils with additional health

school will provide to the LA, at agreed intervals, the full name and address of any pupils who are not attending school regularly, including if this is due to any additional health needs.

Reintegration into the School

When a pupil is considered well enough to return to school, the school will develop a tailored reintegration plan in collaboration with the LA.

During a lengthy absence, a reintegration plan will be developed near to the likely date of return to avoid putting unsuitable pressure on an ill pupil in the early stages of their absence.

The school will work with the LA when reintegration into school is anticipated to plan for consistent provision during and after the period of education outside school.

As far as possible, the pupil will be able to access the curriculum and materials that they would have used in school.

If appropriate, a member of the schools' nursing team will be involved in the development of the pupil's reintegration plan and informed of the timeline of the plan by the appointed named member of staff, to ensure they can prepare to offer any appropriate support to the pupil.

The school will consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made to provide suitable access to the school and the curriculum for the pupil.

For longer absences, the reintegration plan will be developed near to the pupil's likely date of return, to avoid putting unnecessary pressure on an ill pupil or their parents in the early stages of their absence.

The school is aware that some pupils will need gradual reintegration over a long period of time and will always consult with the pupil, their parents and key staff about concerns, medical issues, timing and the preferred pace of return.

The reintegration plan will include:

- The date for planned reintegration, once known.
- Details of regular meetings to discuss reintegration.

- Details of the named member of staff who has responsibility for the pupil.
- Clearly stated responsibilities and the rights of all those involved.
- Details of social contacts, including the involvement of peers and mentors during the transition period.
- A programme of small goals leading up to reintegration.
- Follow-up procedures.

The school will ensure a welcoming environment is developed and encourage pupils and staff to be positive and proactive during the reintegration period.

Following reintegration, the school will support the LA in seeking feedback from the pupil regarding the effectiveness of the process.

Support for pupils

Where a pupil has a complex or long-term health issue, the school will discuss the pupil's needs and how these may be best met with the LA, relevant medical professionals, parents and, where appropriate, the pupil.

Pupils with continuing health needs will have an IHP which is subject to regular review and assessment. Where a pupil's needs amount to ongoing SEND, an EHC plan may be more appropriate to meet their long-term needs. Where a pupil has an EHC plan and an IHP, both plans will be reviewed alongside each other.

Medical evidence will be used where available to best understand a pupil's needs and identify the most suitable provision. Where specific medical evidence is not readily available, the school will consider liaising with other medical practitioners and other sources of evidence to ensure appropriate provision can be arranged as soon as possible.

The LA expects the school to support pupils with additional health needs to attend full-time education wherever possible, or for the school to make reasonable adjustments to pupils' programmes of study where medical evidence supports the need for those adjustments.

The school will make reasonable adjustments under pupils' IHPs, in accordance with the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy.

Pupils admitted to hospital will receive education as determined appropriate by the medical professionals and hospital tuition team at the hospital concerned.

During a period of absence, the school will work with the provider of the pupil's education to establish and maintain regular communication and effective outcomes.

The use of digital resources will be considered to support learning and complement face-to-face education, where appropriate. Digital resources will only be used in accordance with the pupil's needs. Staff will follow procedures set out in the Remote Education Policy.

Whilst a pupil is away from school, the school will work with the LA to ensure the pupil can successfully remain in touch with the school using the following methods:

- A personalised or part-time timetable, drafted in consultation with the Executive Headteacher, Head of School, SENDCo, class teacher and parent/carer;
- Access to additional support in school;
- Invitations to school events;
- Online access to the curriculum from home;
- Movement of lessons to more accessible rooms;
- Places to rest at school;
- Special arrangements for school tests and assessments to manage anxiety or fatigue.

The school will ensure that pupils are involved in decision-making as much as possible, in accordance with the pupil's age and maturity, to help ensure that the right provision is offered and encourage their commitment and engagement.

Alongside the LA, the provision offered to a pupil will be regularly reviewed by the school to ensure it continues to be appropriate for the pupil's needs and that suitable education is being provided. The review process will seek input from:

- The pupil.
- Parents.
- Relevant agencies and medical practitioners, where possible.
- The LA SEND team, where the pupil has an EHC plan.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the SENDCo and SEND Governor **annually** and in consultation with staff. It will also be updated if any changes to the information are made during the year. It will be approved by the governing board.

Complaints

The school works, wherever possible, in full partnership with parents/carers to ensure a collaborative approach to meeting pupils' needs. All complaints are taken seriously and will be heard through the school's complaints procedure. In most instances, complaints can be resolved at a class teacher level. However, if this is not possible, complaints relating to SEND should be addressed to the SENDCo and/or Head of School or Executive Headteacher.

If the situation remains unresolved, then a letter outlining your concern should be sent formally to the Clerk to the Governing Board at the school address.