



Reach Schools

Children with health needs who cannot attend school

Document Control Table	
Title	Children with health needs who cannot attend school
Category	Student
Owner	Trust Designated Safeguarding Lead
Date approved	2nd July 2026
Approved by	Board of Trustees
Date of next review	July 2027
Updates/revisions	July 2026- updated terminology
Academies to note: This is a Reach Schools policy and should not be modified.	



**Reach
Schools**
CHOICE & OPPORTUNITY
FOR EVERY CHILD

Reach Schools works in partnership with families, children and the Access, Inclusion & Participation team in Hounslow to monitor and ensure that all children who are unable to attend school due to medical needs, and who would not receive suitable education without such provision, continue to have access to as much education as their medical condition allows, to enable them to reach their full potential.

Due to the nature of their health needs, some children may be admitted to hospital or placed in alternative forms of education provision.

We understand that we have a continuing role in a student's education whilst they are not attending Reach Schools and will work with the LAs, healthcare partners and families to ensure that all children with medical needs receive the right level of support to enable them to maintain links with their education. Individual cases, which can be complex, will be discussed with Education Welfare Officers who can provide additional support and guidance.

We recognise that, whenever possible, students should receive their education within their school and the aim of the provision will be to reintegrate students back into school as soon as they are well enough.



Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Aims of policies	3
3. Legislation and Guidance	4
4. Roles and responsibilities	4
4.1 If our school makes the arrangements	5
4.2 If the local authority makes the arrangements	6
5. Reintegration	7
6. Monitoring arrangements	9
7. Links with other policies	9



1. Introduction

Children and young people with medical conditions who are unable to attend school are entitled to a full education and have the same rights of admission to school as other children. This means that no child with a medical condition can be denied admission or prevented from taking up a place in school because arrangements for their medical conditions have not been made. The need for support to meet healthcare needs is a frequent barrier to accessing education for children with complex health needs. This lack of support has the potential to have a significant impact on a child's educational attainment and fails to meet the outcomes of Every Child Matters.

Government legislation places an obligation on statutory agencies to ensure joined up services and multi-agency working to improve outcomes for all children.

The local governing body will ensure that arrangements are in place in schools to support students at school with medical conditions.

The local governing body should ensure that school leaders consult health and social care professionals, students and families to ensure that the needs of children with medical conditions are properly understood and effectively supported.

2. Aims of policies

This policy aims to ensure that:

- Suitable education is arranged for students on roll who cannot attend school due to health needs;
- Students, staff and families understand what the school is responsible for when this education is being provided by the local authority.



3. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the following legislation:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)

It is also based on the following statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE):

- [Alternative provision](#)
- [Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school](#)

This policy also follows guidance provided by our local authority.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

4. Roles and responsibilities

Children who are unable to attend school because of their medical needs may include those with:

- Physical health issues;
- Physical injuries;
- Mental health problems, including anxiety issues;
- Emotional difficulties or school refusal;
- Progressive conditions;
- Terminal illnesses;
- Chronic illnesses.



**Reach
Schools**
CHOICE & OPPORTUNITY
FOR EVERY CHILD

Families are responsible for informing their child's school of any new diagnosis, or changes to their child's medical condition, as soon as possible. Once a child is offered a place at Reach Schools the earlier the family can inform the school the easier it is to prepare to meet the needs of the student in their learning environment.

Children who are unable to attend school for health reasons may attend any of the following:

- Hospital school: a special school within a hospital setting where education is provided to give continuity whilst the child is receiving treatment.
- Home tuition: a service that acts as a communication channel between schools and students on occasions where students are too ill to attend school and are receiving specialist medical treatment.
- Medical PRUs: these are LA establishments that provide education for children unable to attend their registered school due to their medical needs

4.1 If our school makes the arrangements

Initially, our school will attempt to make arrangements to deliver the same high standard of education for children with health needs who cannot attend school.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Attendance Officer will make and monitor these, this could include a child having work set from school to do at home. We will liaise with hospital schools to ensure that work completed is inline with the student's learning and ability.

We will always consult families about any arrangements we propose, to ensure that they are in agreement that this is the optimal way to deliver education to their child.

When a student is due to return to the school setting, we will ensure that we will consult with the student, families and any other relevant professional. In this consultation, we will plan for a transition back into school taking into account any needs of that student e.g. we could implement a softer start to the day or initially a reduced timetable. When reintegrating

a student back into the school setting we will ensure that their needs and interests are at the forefront of any decision.

4.2 If the local authority makes the arrangements

If our school cannot make suitable arrangements, or if it is clear that a child will be away from school for 15 days (consecutive or over the course of the year) or more because of their health needs, Hounslow local authority will become responsible for arranging suitable education for these children.

When the local authority arranges alternative education, the education should begin as soon as possible, and at the latest by the 6th day of the child's absence from school.

Where full-time education is not in the child's best interest for reasons relating to their physical or mental health, the local authority must arrange part-time education on whatever basis it considers to be in the child's best interests.

In cases where the local authority makes the arrangements, our school will:

- Provide to the local authority, at agreed intervals, the full name and address of any pupils of compulsory school age who are not attending school regularly due to their health needs
- Work constructively with the local authority, providers, relevant agencies and parents/carers to ensure the best outcomes for the child
- Collaborate with the local authority to ensure continuity of provision and consistency of curriculum, including making information available about the curriculum
- Along with the local authority, regularly review the provision offered to ensure it continues to be appropriate for the child and that it is providing suitable education
- Share information with the local authority and relevant health services as required
- When a child has complex or long-term health issues, work with the local authority, parents/carers and the relevant health services to decide how best to meet the



child's needs (e.g. through individual support, arranging alternative provision or by them remaining at school, being supported at home and back into school after each absence)

- Where possible, allow the child to take examinations at the same time as their peers, and work with the local authority to support this
- Help make sure 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 child to access the same curriculum and materials that they would have used in school as far as possible, including through digital resources.
- Enable the child to stay in touch with school life (e.g. through newsletters, emails, digital learning platforms, social media platforms, invitations to school events or internet links to lessons from their school), and, where appropriate, through educational visits
- Create individually tailored reintegration plans for each child returning to school, which includes extra support to fill any gaps arising from the absence
- Consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made

5. Reintegration

When a student is considered well enough to return to school, the school will develop a tailored reintegration plan in collaboration with the LA. For longer absences, the reintegration plan will be developed near to the student's likely date of return, to avoid putting unnecessary pressure on an ill student or their families in the early stages of their absence.

The school is aware that some students will need gradual reintegration over a long period of time and will always consult with the student, their families 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 student;
- 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 consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made to provide suitable access to the school and the curriculum for the student.

These may include the following adaptations:

- A personalised or part-time timetable, drafted in consultation with the named staff member;
- Access to additional support in school;
- Online access to some of the curriculum from home;
- Movement of lessons to more accessible rooms;
- Places to rest at school;
- Special exam arrangements to manage anxiety or fatigue.

The school will ensure a welcoming environment is developed and encourage students and staff to be positive and proactive during the reintegration period. Following reintegration, the school will support the LA in seeking feedback from the student regarding the effectiveness of the process.



**Reach
Schools**
CHOICE & OPPORTUNITY
FOR EVERY CHILD

6. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by Georgia Strong, Trust DSL.. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

7. Links with other policies

- Attendance policy
- Accessibility plan
- Supporting students with medical conditions