



Children with health needs who cannot attend school Policy

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Date	Author	Version	Comment
September 2023			New policy / format
November 2025	Melanie Morris		Scheduled Review

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 is also based on guidance provided by our local authority.

<https://www.tameside.gov.uk/childrenwithmedicalneeds>

3. Responsibilities of the school

Where a child is absent from school for 15 or more school days, cumulative or consecutive where the absence relates to a medical condition, schools should make a referral to the Local Authority and arrangements will be put in place to support the pupil and their family.

In cases where a pupil is unable to attend school for medical reasons the local authority will work alongside schools, health professionals, and parents to provide an alternative provision which will meet a pupil's individual needs, including social and emotional needs, and enable them to thrive and prosper in the education system.

Wherever possible the local authority would look at education provision being provided by school to ensure continuity for pupils. However, it is recognised that in some circumstances that is not possible and provision for such cases will be considered by a case management panel on an individual basis.

3.1 If the school makes arrangements

Initially, the school will attempt to make arrangements to deliver suitable education for children with health needs who cannot attend school.

- Class teacher, Mrs Douse- SENCO, Miss Morris-Pastoral Manager and Attendance Lead and Mrs Ashley-Inclusion Co-ordinator will all work with Parents/Carers to ensure as much continuity of education and support as possible including online learning, sending work home, home visits and phone call check-ins.
- Ongoing contact with peers is also supported to ensure social and emotional relationships are continued, these may be by video calls, contact on dojo or letters home.
- School staff will meet with Parents/Carers and after completing an initial plan, continue to meet regularly during the period of absence to review the plan.
- A reintegration plan will also be completed once the pupil is well enough to return to school.

3.2 If the local authority makes arrangements

If the school can't make suitable arrangements, Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council will become responsible for arranging suitable education for these pupils.

Tameside Council is responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would not receive suitable education otherwise. This duty applies to all children and young people who live in Tameside, regardless of the type or location of the school they would normally attend and whether or not they are on the roll of a school.

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.

It is a statutory requirement that local authorities have a named person responsible for the education of children with additional health needs.

Parents/carers can contact the tracking officer in order to discuss their child's specific circumstances relating to medical needs education provision. This may be particularly appropriate in instances where they feel their child's educational needs are not being addressed due to a medical condition or ill health.

Schools can contact the tracking officer to obtain support, advice and guidance in relation to medical needs education provision and their own statutory responsibilities in supporting children with additional health needs, both in general terms and in relation to specific cases.

The tracking officer will also liaise with professionals and colleagues within both health and education as appropriate to ensure children with additional health needs are able to access a suitable 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 Mrs K Thornburn – Principal, Mrs Ashley- Inclusion Co-ordinator and Miss Morris-Pastoral Manager and Attendance Lead.