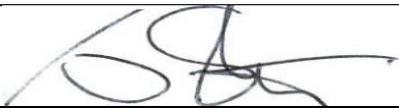




Inspire Academy

Children with health needs who cannot attend school Policy

LAST REVIEW DATE	March 2026	REVIEW PERIOD	Annually
NEXT REVIEW DATE	March 2027	TYPE OF POLICY	Non-Statutory

DATE OF RATIFICATION:	12/03/2026
SIGNATURE	
PRINT NAME	Justin Stuart - Chair of Trust

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.

This policy applies to all children and young people who:

- Have an illness which 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.
- Have a health need, and their absence has been validated by a medical professional, for example a consultant community paediatrician or specialist consultant psychiatrist from NELFT. Where specific medical evidence, such as that provided by a medical consultant, is not quickly available, providers should consider liaising with other medical professionals, such as the child's GP or the school nurse. We will consider each case on an individual basis, even in circumstances where there is no medical evidence.
- Health problems can include physical illnesses, injuries and clinically defined mental health difficulties certified by medical evidence, such as that provided by a medical professional.

Legislation and guidance

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following statutory guidance and legislation:

- [Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs. Statutory guidance for local authorities. January 2013. Department for Education.](#)
- [Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions. Statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academies in England. December 2015 Department for Education.](#)
- [SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities; January 2015.](#)
- [Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance. February 2023. Department for Education.](#)
- [Working together to improve school attendance. Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities. Published: May 2022. Applies from: September 2022. Department for Education.](#)

Other relevant guidance, legislation and documentation:

- [Alternative Provision: Statutory guidance for Local Authorities. January 2013.](#)
- [Area SEND inspections: framework and handbook. Published 29 November 2022 State of the nation 2022: children and young people's wellbeing. Research report. February 2023. Department for Education.](#)
- [Children and Families Act 2014.](#)
- [Children missing education. Statutory guidance for local authorities. September 2016. Department for Education.](#)
- [Children and Young People privacy notice.](#)
- [Education Act 1996. Section 19.](#)
- [Equality Act 2010.](#)
- [Equality act 2010 advice for schools](#)
- [First aid in schools](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK](#)



- [Statutory Policies for Schools](#)
- [Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities. May 2022. Department for Education.](#)

Equalities Statement

Inspire Academy and Rivermead Inclusive Trust are committed to policies and practices that promote equality for all regardless of age, gender, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnerships, or pregnancy and maternity. We believe that all children and families have the right to access opportunities without discrimination, prejudice, harassment or victimisation.

The responsibility of the school

Schools do not have to wait for a formal diagnosis before providing support to children and young people who are unable to attend school due to medical conditions. In cases where a pupil's medical condition is unclear, or where there is a difference of opinion, judgements will be needed about what support to provide based on the available evidence. This would normally involve some form of medical evidence and consultation with parents. Where evidence conflicts, some degree of challenge may be necessary to ensure that the right support can be put in place.

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

- These arrangements will be made and monitored by the T&L lead, welfare team and Head of Academy.
- Where possible work will be sent home either by email or post. Where this cannot happen, there may be an opportunity for the pupil to be educated by an alternative provision, however it will be Medway LA that makes these arrangements.
- Parent/carer and pupils will be contacted regularly by the T&L lead and the welfare team to check on progress and welfare. Where possible, regular meetings will happen, either at school or in the family home, to discuss next steps.
- As part of the parent/carer meetings, there will be a clear plan of action to reintegrate the pupil back in to school, where this is a possibility.

The responsibility of the Trust:

The guidance in the 'Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance. February 2023. The Department for Education outlines that The Local Advisory board should:

- Ensure that child and young people with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips, physical education and other extra-curricular activities.
- Make 'reasonable adjustments' to accommodate child and young people with medical needs. Due regard should be paid to the child or young person's individual needs, and how their medical condition impacts on their school life.
- Ensure that arrangements are in place in schools to support child and young people at school with medical conditions.
- Ensure that school leaders consult health and social care professionals, child and young people and parents/carers to ensure that the needs of children with medical conditions are effectively supported.
- Ensure the arrangements they set up include details on how the school's policy will be implemented effectively, including a named person who has overall responsibility for policy implementation, how individual healthcare plans will be implemented and



reviewed, how medication will be stored and administered, how emergency situations are dealt with, how complaints are addressed, and how staff will be suitably trained.

The responsibility of the Local Authority

If the school are unable make suitable arrangements, Medway LA will become responsible for arranging suitable education for these children.

The statutory guidance states that local authorities are responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for children with additional health needs, who are of compulsory school age, in instances where they are unable to receive suitable education without additional support. There may be occasions when the local authority considers that a pupil's condition means that full-time provision would not be in his or her best interests. On these occasions, suitable education may take the form of part- time education.

These responsibilities apply to all children and young people who live in the county of Medway, regardless of the type of school they would usually attend, including maintained schools, academies, free schools, special schools, or independent schools.

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

The responsibility of parents

Parents know their child best. It is really important that they are involved in all decisions regarding the support that their child requires. Parents/carers should:

- Make sure their child attends school.
- Work with the school and other partner organisations to identify and understand perceived barriers to attendance, with a view to supporting their child to maintain full-time attendance at school.
- Take action as best they can to support their child(ren) to recognise and manage their social, emotional and mental health and wellbeing.
- Be willing to work openly with everyone involved in supporting their child.
- Provide early communication if a problem arises or help is needed.
- Attend necessary meetings, including review meetings.
- Notify the school of any health condition and provide relevant and up-to-date information to support professionals to support the family in the best possible way.



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- Contribute to discussions and decision-making processes about the support and care for their child (such as their individual healthcare plan)
- Support their child's return to school and work with professionals on a plan for reintegration.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually the Head of Academy. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

Links to our other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- > Accessibility plan
- > Supporting pupils with medical conditions



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