



CHILDREN WITH HEALTH NEEDS WHO CANNOT ATTEND SCHOOL

Policy:	Children With Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School
Reviewers:	Executive Team
Approved by:	Interim Executive Board
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VERSION CONTROL		
DATE	AUTHOR	CHANGES
Jan 2024	Adam Cave/Katie Hawksley	New Policy
April 2025	Adam Cave/Katie Hawksley	No changes made
July 2026	APA	Updated Samworth to Sherwood due to academy name change

Our vision is to create a distinctively Christian and values driven environment that provides the best start to the 70 or more great years our students should enjoy when they leave our school. Our students should have the opportunity to live life in all its fullness and be good citizens wherever they may be.

1 Aims and objectives

- 1.1 Parents/carers have the primary responsibility of their children's health and wellbeing. The Academy aims to work collaboratively with parents/carers, medical professionals, and the local authority to ensure that all students who are unable to attend school due to medical needs and who would not receive suitable education without provision, continue to have access to as much education as their medical condition allows to ensure they are able to continue making progress academically.
- 1.2 Dependent on the nature of the child's health needs, some students may be admitted to hospital or offered an alternative form of education provision. We recognise that, wherever possible, children should receive their education within their school setting and the aim of the alternative education provision they are accessing will be to reintegrate students back into school as soon as they are well enough to do so.
- 1.3 We recognise that we have a continuous role in our student's education whilst they are unable to attend school and will work with parents/carers, medical professionals, and the local authority to ensure that all student's with medical needs receive the right level of support to enable them to maintain links to education.
- 1.4 We acknowledge that on occasion, children may have to travel overseas to access appropriate medical support. In these circumstances, it is unlikely that we will be able to provide the level of support that we wish to however we will support in these situations on a case-by-case process and in line with our attendance procedures.
- 1.5 This policy reflects the requirements set out in the:
 - Education Act 1996
 - Equality Act 2010
 - DfE guidance '[Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs](#)' December 2023.
- 1.6 Students who are unable to attend school as a result of their medical needs may include those with:
 - Physical health issues
 - Physical injuries
 - Mental health needs, including anxiety.
 - Emotional difficulties or school refusal.
 - Progressive conditions

- Terminal Illnesses
- Chronic Illnesses

1.7 Students who are unable to attend mainstream education for health reasons may attend any of the following:

- School within a Hospital setting: education is provided to give continuity whilst the child is receiving treatment.
- Home tuition: home tuition services that act as a communication channel between school and students where the child is too ill to attend and are receiving specialist medical treatment.
- Remote/Online Learning: this will be utilised where appropriate for short periods of time as part of a planned reintegration plan. This may also be used where a student with mental health needs is struggling to access a mainstream classroom and may be accessing learning via alternative learning environments in school.

1.8 Regardless of the type of setting the child attends because of their medical needs, the Academy will maintain regular contact to ensure the student has a sense of connectedness.

2 Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 What is the role of the Local Authority:

The local authority must arrange suitable full-time education for students of compulsory school age who, because of an illness, would not receive suitable education without such provision. The Sherwood Church Academy has a duty to support the local authority in doing so.

2.2 The local authority should:

- Provide education as soon as it becomes clear that the student will be away from school for 15 days or more whether this is consecutive or cumulative. They should liaise with the appropriate medical professionals to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the student.
- Ensure the education students receive is of good quality, allows them to gain appropriate qualifications, prevents them from falling behind their peers in school and allows them to reintegrate successfully back into school as soon as possible.
- Address the needs of individual students in arranging provision.
- Have a named officer who is responsible for the education of students with additional health needs and ensure parents/carers know who this is.
- Have a written, publicly accessible policy statements on their arrangements to comply with their legal duty towards students with additional health needs.
- Review the provision offered regularly to ensure that it continues to be appropriate for the child and that the education provided is of a suitable nature.

- g) Give clear policies on the provision of education for students and young people under and over compulsory school age.

2.3 The local authority should not:

- a) Have processes or policies in place which prevent a child from getting the right type of provision and a good education.
- b) Withhold or reduce the provision, or type of provision, for a child because of how much it will cost.
- c) Have policies based upon the percentage of time a child is able to attend school rather than whether the child is receiving suitable education during that attendance.
- d) Have lists of health conditions which dictate whether or not they will arrange education for children or inflexible policies which result in children going without suitable full-time education (or as much education as their health condition allows them to participate in).

2.4 **What is the Academy responsible for:**

- a) Ensuring arrangements for students who cannot attend school because of their medical needs are in place and effectively implemented.
- b) Ensuring the regular review of the arrangements made for students who cannot attend school due to their medical needs.
- c) Ensuring the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the arrangements to support the needs of students are clear and understood by all.
- d) Ensuring systems are in place to support with health emergencies and critical incidents for both on and off-site activities for students with medical needs.
- e) Ensuring staff with responsibility for supporting students with health needs are appropriately trained to support.
- f) Working collaboratively with parents/carers and other professionals to develop arrangements to meet the best interests of students.
- g) Ensuring the arrangements put in place to meet students' health needs are fully understood by all those involved and acted upon.
- h) Providing teachers who support students with health needs with suitable information relating to a student's health condition and the possible effect the condition and/or medication taken has on the student via individual health care plans.
- i) Ensuring that the designated safeguarding lead, the attendance lead and the SENDCO are aware when a student is likely to be away from school for a significant period due to their health needs in order for them to seek support from the local authority where appropriate.
- j) Actively monitoring student progress and reintegration to the Academy.
- k) Supplying students' education providers with information about the child's capabilities, progress, and outcomes.
- l) Keeping students informed about Academy events and encouraging communication with their peers.
- m) Understanding confidentiality in respect of students' health needs.

- n) Ensuring that teachers are designing lessons and activities in a way that allows those with health needs to participate fully and ensuring that students are not excluded from activities that they wish to take part in without a clear evidence-based reason.
- o) Ensuring they are aware of the needs of their student through the appropriate and lawful sharing of the student's individual health needs.
- p) Ensuring that the healthcare team are aware of the signs, symptoms and triggers of common life-threatening medical conditions and know what to do in an emergency to support other staff. The SENDCO and the healthcare team are responsible for keeping parents/carers informed of how their child's health needs are affecting them whilst they are in the academy.

2.5 Parent/Carer responsibilities

Parents/Carers are expected to:

- a) Ensure that they are providing up-to-date medical information about their child to the Academy.
- b) Ensure the regular and punctual attendance of their child where possible and in line with the Academy's attendance policy (available on the academy website).
- c) Work in partnership with the Academy to ensure the best possible outcomes for the child.
- d) Notify the Academy of the reason for their child's absences without delay.
- e) Provide the Academy with sufficient and up-to-date information about their child's medical needs.
- f) Attend meetings to discuss how support for their child should be planned.

3 Managing absences due to medical needs

- 3.1 Parents/carers must contact the Academy on the first day their child is unable to attend due to illness and provide regular updates if the illness continues for more than 48hrs.
- 3.2 The Academy will provide support to students who are absent from school because of illness for a period of less than 15 school days by liaising with the student's parents/carers to arrange work as soon as the student is well enough or able to access part-time education at the Academy. The Academy will consider to which aspects of the curriculum are prioritised in consultation with the student, their family and relevant members of staff.
- 3.3 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 SENDCO, who is responsible for students with health needs, will notify the local authority who will take responsibility for the student and their education. They will be informed by the parents/carers or the attendance lead to ensure that they can act quickly and notify the local authority in a timely manner.
- 3.4 Where absences are anticipated or known in advance, the Academy will liaise with the local authority to enable education provided to be provided from the start of the student's absence.

- 3.5 For hospital admissions, the SENDCO or other named professional will liaise with the local authority regarding the programme that should be followed while the student is in hospital.
- 3.6 The Academy will monitor student attendance and mark registers to ensure it is clear whether a student is, or should be, receiving education otherwise than at the Academy.
- 3.7 The Academy will only remove a student who is unable to attend school because of additional health needs from the school roll where:
- a. The Academy has been advised in writing by the student's named medical professional (or team) as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before they exceed compulsory school age and a referral to the health-related education team.
 - b. Neither the student nor the parent has indicated to the Academy the intention to continue to attend the Academy, after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
 - c. A student unable to attend the Academy because of their health needs will not be removed from the school register without parental consent even if the local authority has become responsible for the student's education.

4 Support for students:

- 4.1 Where a student has a complex or long-term health issue, the Academy will discuss the student's needs and how these may be best met by the local authority, relevant medical professionals, parents/carers and where appropriate the student themselves. The local authority expects the Academy to support students with health needs to attend full-time education wherever possible or for the Academy to make reasonable adjustments to student's programmes of study where medical evidence supports the need for those adjustments.
- 4.2 Where the Academy has identified that it is not possible for a student to attend for a period of more than 15 days due to their medical needs, despite the Academy's best efforts to make reasonable adjustments, the Academy will follow their procedures to refer to the Health Related Education Team.
- 4.3 Students who are admitted to hospital will receive education as determined appropriate by the medical professionals and hospital tuition team at the hospital concerned.
- 4.4 Where appropriate, the student's subject teachers at the academy will be responsible for providing access the curriculum via resources in line with their regularly attended lessons unless there is not a full-time provision in place. In this instance, the SENDCO will work with medical professionals and the education provider at the hospital to ensure that work is prioritised appropriately.
- 4.5 During a period of absence, the Academy will work with the provider of the student's education to establish and maintain regular communication and effective outcomes.
- 4.6 Whilst a student is away from the Academy, the Academy will work with the local authority to ensure the student can successfully remain in touch with their setting using methods such as:

- Newsletters
- Emails
- Invitations to Academy events.
- Emails from teachers where work is being provided.
- Visits from key workers/SENDCO where feasible and appropriate.

4.7 To help ensure a student with additional health needs can attend school following an extended period of absence, the following adaptations will be considered:

- A personalised or part time timetable, drafted in consultation with the SENDCO, Attendance Lead or appropriate member of the Learning Manager team.
- Access to additional support.
- Access to the curriculum from home where necessary.
- Movement of lessons to more accessible rooms.
- Access to an alternative learning space or a space to allow for respite worked into the day to lessen demand.
- Appropriate exam arrangements as agreed by the SENDCO to manage physical needs, anxiety or fatigue.

5 Reintegration Plans:

- 5.1 When a student is considered well enough to return to school, the Academy will develop a tailored reintegration plan in collaboration with the local authority.
- 5.2 The Academy will work with the local authority when reintegration into school is anticipated to plan for consistent provision during and after the period of education outside of the Academy.
- 5.3 If appropriate, external medical professionals will be involved in the development of the student's reintegration plan and informed of the timeline of the plan by the SENDCO or other appropriate staff. To ensure they can prepare to offer any appropriate support to the student.
- 5.4 The Academy will consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made to provide suitable access to the Academy and the curriculum for the student.
- 5.5 For longer periods of absence, the reintegration plan will be developed near the student's likely date of return to avoid putting unnecessary pressure on an ill student or their parents/carers in the early stages of their absence.
- 5.6 The Academy acknowledges that some students will need gradual reintegration over a long period of time and will always consult with the student, parents/carers and key staff about concerns, medical issues, timing, and the preferred pace of return.
- 5.7 The reintegration plan will include the date for planned reintegration and regular reviews to consider progress of the reintegration and continuously respond to the student's needs.
- 5.8 The Academy will ensure a sense of connectedness is maintained between the student and the Academy where possible to encourage the reintegration plan has the best chance at success.

6 Information Sharing:

- 6.1 It is essential that all information about the student's health needs is kept up to date and accurate by all parties.
- 6.2 All staff employed by the Academy will be provided with access to relevant information including student's medical plans where necessary and up-to-date information on medical needs of all students as well as first aiders and emergency procedures.
- 6.3 When a student is discharged from hospital or is returning from another education provider, the Academy will ensure that appropriate information is received to allow for a smooth return to the Academy. The SENDCO or other appropriate member of staff will liaise with the hospital or other tuition service as appropriate.

7 Training

- 7.1 If training is required to assist the students return to the Academy and/or manage their condition, training will be arranged in time for the students return for the appropriate member(s) of staff.
- 7.2 Healthcare professionals should be involved in identifying and agreeing on the type and level of training required with the Academy to ensure that all training is fit for purpose.
- 7.3 Training will be sufficient to ensure staff are confident in their ability to support students with additional health needs.
- 7.4 Parents/carers of students with additional health needs may also provide specific advice on the needs of their child.

8 Examinations and Assessments

- 8.1 The SENDCO will liaise with the alternative education provider over planning an examination course requirements and potential access arrangements where appropriate.
- 8.2 Relevant assessment information will be provided to the alternative education provider if required.
- 8.3 Awarding bodies may make special arrangements for students with permanent or long-term disabilities and learning difficulties or temporary disabilities and illnesses applications for such arrangements will be submitted by the SENDCO at the Academy or the local authority, if deemed more appropriate, as early as possible.