

The Meadows School



Students with health needs who cannot
attend school

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1. Rationale

This policy has been adopted and written in relation to the attendance of children with health needs at the Meadows School and should be read in conjunction with the Local Authority's Policies and Procedures and any Department For Education Policy, Statements and Guidelines.

2. Introduction

The Meadows School aims to support the LA and ensure that all students 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 students may be admitted to hospital or placed in alternative forms of education provision. We recognise that, whenever possible, students should receive their education within their school and the aim will be to reintegrate students back into school as soon as they are well enough.

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

3. Legal Framework

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

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018
- DfE (2023) 'Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs'
- DfE (2017) 'Supporting students at school with medical conditions'
- This policy operates in conjunction with the following School policies:
 - Attendance Policy

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Management of Children with Medical Needs in Education Policy

4. LA Duties

The LA must arrange suitable full-time education for students of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would not receive suitable education without such provision. The Meadows School has a duty to support the LA in doing so.

The LA 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 take 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 responsible for the education of students with additional health needs and ensure parents know who this is.
- Have a written, publicly accessible policy statement 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 it is providing suitable education.
- Give clear policies on the provision of education for students and young people under and over compulsory school age.

The LA should not:

- Have processes or policies in place that prevent a child from getting the right type of provision and a good education.
- Withhold or reduce the provision, or type of provision, for a child because of how much it will cost.
- Have policies based upon the percentage of time a child is able to attend school rather than whether the child is receiving a suitable education during that attendance.
- Have lists of health conditions which dictate whether or not they will arrange education for students or inflexible policies which result in students going

without suitable full-time education (or as much education as their health condition allows them to participate in).

5. Definitions

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 problems, including anxiety issues.
- Emotional difficulties or school refusal.
- Progressive conditions.
- Terminal illnesses.
- Chronic illnesses.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- Ensuring arrangements for students who cannot attend school as a result of their medical needs are in place and are effectively implemented.
- Ensuring the termly review of the arrangements made for students who cannot attend school due to their medical needs.
- Ensuring the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the arrangements to support the needs of students are clear and understood by all.
- Ensuring robust systems are in place for dealing with health emergencies and critical incidents, for both on- and off-site activities.
- Ensuring staff with responsibility for supporting students with health needs are appropriately trained.
- Approving and reviewing this policy on an annual basis.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Working with the Governing Body to ensure compliance with the relevant statutory duties when supporting students with health needs.
- Working collaboratively with parents and other professionals to develop arrangements to meet the best interests of students.
- Ensuring the arrangements put in place to meet students' health needs are fully understood by all those involved and acted upon.
- Appointing a named member of staff who is responsible for students with healthcare needs and liaises with parents, students, the LA, key workers and others involved in the student's care.
- Ensuring the support put in place focusses on and meets the needs of individual students.
- Arranging appropriate training for staff with responsibility for supporting students with health needs.
- 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.
- Providing reports to the Governing Body on the effectiveness of the arrangements in place to meet the health needs of students.
- Notifying the LA when a student is likely to be away from the school for a significant period of time due to their health needs.
- Ensuring blended learning is provided for students unable to attend school for reasons pertaining to their health needs.

The Pastoral Team at The Meadows School are responsible for:

- Communicating with families of students who are unable to attend school because of medical needs.
- Actively monitoring student progress and reintegration into school.
- Supplying students' education providers with information about the child's capabilities, progress and outcomes.

- Liaising with the Headteacher, education providers and parents to determine students' programmes of study whilst they are absent from school.
- Keeping students informed about school events and encouraging communication with their peers.
- Providing a link between students and their parents, and the LA.
- Recording absence or attendance in educational programmes accurately.
- Liaising with the Assistant Headteacher responsible for blended learning to ensure teachers are aware of the need to provide blended learning.

Teachers and support staff are responsible for:

- Understanding and respecting confidentiality in respect of students' health needs.
- Designing lessons and activities in a way that allows those with health needs to participate fully and ensuring students are not excluded from activities that they wish to take part in without a clear evidence-based reason.
- Understanding their role in supporting students with health needs and ensuring they attend the required training.
- Ensuring they are aware of the needs of their students through the appropriate and lawful sharing of the individual student's health needs.
- Making use of blended and home learning systems to set, deliver and assess learning at home.

Parents are expected to:

- Ensure the regular and punctual attendance of their child at the school where possible.
- Work in partnership with the school to ensure the best possible outcomes for their child.
- Notify the school of the reason for any of their child's absences without delay.
- Provide the school with sufficient and up-to-date information about their child's medical needs.

- Attend meetings to discuss how support for their child should be planned
- Access, or support their child with accessing, online and blended learning systems and ensure any issues with these systems are reported to the teacher as soon as possible.

7. 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.

- 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 child will be able to access the curriculum and materials that they would have used in school.
- If appropriate, the school nurse will be involved in the development of the student'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 student.
- 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.
- 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 parents 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 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 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 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.

8. Information sharing

It is essential that all information about students with health needs is kept up-to-date.

- To protect confidentiality, all information-sharing techniques, e.g. staff noticeboards, will be agreed with the student and their parent in advance of being used.
- All teachers, LSPs, supply and support staff will be provided with access to relevant information, including high-risk health needs, first aiders and emergency procedures, via the agreed school procedures.
- Parents will be made aware of their own rights and responsibilities regarding confidentiality and information sharing. To help achieve this, the school will:
 - Ensure this policy and other relevant policies are easily available and accessible.
 - Provide the student and their parents with a copy of the policy on information sharing if requested.
 - Consider how friendship groups and peers may be able to assist students with health needs.
- When a student is discharged from hospital or is returning from other education provision, the school will ensure the appropriate information is

received to allow for a smooth return to the school. The named member of staff will liaise with the hospital or other tuition service as appropriate.

9. Training

Staff will be trained in a timely manner to assist with a student's return to school.

- Once a student's return date has been confirmed, staff will be provided with relevant training before the student's anticipated return.
- Healthcare professionals should be involved in identifying and agreeing with the school the type and level of training required.
- Training will be sufficient to ensure staff are confident in their ability to support students with additional health needs.
- Parents of students with additional health needs may provide specific advice but will not be the sole trainer of staff.