



BIRCHINGTON CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

LEARNING AND GROWING; SAFE IN GOD'S LOVE

Supporting Children with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School Policy and Procedures

Approval Requirements	Headteacher
Approval & Ratification Date	17 th March 2025
Review date	March 2026
Reviewed by	Headteacher (KB) & Inclusion Leader

Aim

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/carers understand what our school is responsible for when education is being provided by the local authority (LA)

2. 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](#)

The Equality Act 2010 is also an important part of the legal framework around children and young people with significant medical needs. This policy should be read in conjunction with our other policies on Health and Welfare including but not limited to:

- First Aid Policy
- SEND Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Policy for Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs

RESPONSIBILITIES

The School

Birchington CE Primary School is committed to educating every child including when pupils have succumbed to medical situations which preclude them from attending school on a regular basis.

The Inclusion Leader will lead in any relevant cases with the support of Headteacher and any other appropriate staff.

The primary aim of educating children and young people who cannot attend school due to illness or medical reasons is to minimise, as far as possible, the disruption to normal schooling by continuing education as normally as their health needs allow.

Pupils who are unable to attend school because of medical needs should be able to access suitable and flexible education appropriate to their needs and the nature of the educational provision made must be responsive to the demands of a changing medical status.

Birchington CE Primary School, working with the Local Authority, must arrange suitable full-time education (or part-time when appropriate for the child's needs) for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would not receive suitable education without such provision. It applies equally whether a child cannot attend school at all or can attend only intermittently because of a medical condition.

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. If they receive one-to-one tuition the hours of face-to-face provision could be fewer as the provision is more concentrated.

There will be a wide range of circumstances where a child has a health need but will receive suitable education that meets their needs without the intervention of the LA – for example where the child can still attend school with some support or where the school has made arrangements to deliver suitable education outside of school for the child.

All pupils should be treated as individual cases and as far as possible, pupils should be involved in any decisions from the start with the ways in which they are engaged, reflecting their age and maturity.

The Local Authority

Local Authorities are responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would not receive suitable education without such provision. This applies whether or not the child is on the roll of a school and whatever type of school they attend, including pupils in Academies.

Where full-time education would not be in the best interests of a particular child, because of reasons relating to their physical or mental health, LAs should provide part-time education on a basis they consider

to be in the child's best interests.

The Local Authority are responsible for:

- Supporting pupils aged 5-16 who live in Kent and who are temporarily unable to attend school for health-related reasons or severe anxiety for at least 15 days.
- Providing a named officer responsible for the education of children with additional health needs. In Kent this is accessed via the Health Needs Education Service
- A team of qualified and experienced teachers and teaching assistants working closely with schools to support a suitable education programme for pupils. Provision should be reviewed regularly and staff liaise with school, health professionals and other supporting agencies to plan and support the pupil's needs.

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

Working with External Organisations

1.1. Birchington CE Primary School staff will work with all external organisations as necessary.

These include, but are not limited to:

- CAMHS
- Professional medical services

- Private or NHS GPs/specialists
- Hospital schools
- The Local Authority

In Kent, pupils may be referred to the Health Needs Education Team (or a similar body) which aims to support parents and carers to deliver support to children with acute and chronic complex health needs. Their role includes:

- teaching, training and assessment of carers and parents
- supporting inclusion
- reducing hospital admission and re-admission
- reducing absence from school by delivering nursing care such as intravenous antibiotic therapy
- chronic disease management promoting self-care
- advocate support
- working in partnership with the family to meet their child's health care needs.

Birchington CE Primary School will ensure that any external educational provision meets the required safeguarding standards prior to a pupil commencing study with that organisation.

Working together – with parents/carers, children, health services and local authority

Any educational provision for a child with additional health needs will be discussed with parents/carers first. Parents/carers have a key role to play in their child's education and can provide helpful information to ensure that the teaching approach is successful. In the case of a Child in Care, Local Authority representatives and primary carers would fulfil this role. Children will also be involved in decisions, their engagement dependent on their age and maturity.

Reintegration into School

When reintegration into school is anticipated, the school will work closely with any external organisations – for example the Health Needs Education Team - to ensure that pupils receive the necessary support they need to facilitate this process. A member of the school will hold a meeting with the appropriate external organisation and the pupil's parent(s)/carer(s).

In many cases a gradual reintegration will take place with a reduced timetable. Appropriate external professionals may work alongside a pupil when they are returning to school so a good handover takes place and the pupil feels confident in their return.