

CHILDREN WITH HEALTH NEEDS

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This policy sets out our approach to children with health needs who cannot attend school across the Ascend Learning Trust. Section(s) [3, probably, but maybe 2 as well] set(s) out the specific local arrangements for [name of school].

LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This policy reflects the requirements of the Education Act 1996.

It also based on guidance provided by the following local authorities,
 Swindon: <https://localoffer.swindon.gov.uk/media/36376/policy-doc-pupils-with-medicalneeds-eotas-v6-final-19-11-21.pdf>
 Wiltshire: <https://rightchoice.wiltshire.gov.uk/Page/16129>

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

This policy links to the following policies:

- Accessibility plan
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- SEND Policy
- Attendance Policy

AIMS

1.1 Trust Statement

The Ascend Learning Trust aims to support all of the Local Authorities (LA) where its schools are based to ensure that all children 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.

1.2 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.

1.3 Definition

Children who are unable to attend school because 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.

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

- Hospital school: a special school within a hospital setting where education is provided to give continuity whilst the child is receiving treatment.
- Home tuition: a service that acts as a communication channel between schools and pupils on occasions where pupils are too ill to attend school and are receiving specialist medical treatment.
- Medical PRUs: these are LA establishments that provide education for children unable to attend their registered school due to their medical needs.

The relevant alternative education service provider is Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) for Swindon Schools and for Wiltshire schools the Medical Needs Education and Reintegration Service.

2. THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL

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 Local Authority – for example, where the child can still attend school with some support.

The Local Authority would not become involved in such arrangements unless it had reason to think that the education being provided to the child was not suitable or, while otherwise suitable, was not full-time or for the number of hours the child could benefit from without adversely affecting their health. This might be the case where, for example, the child can attend school but only intermittently.

Local Authorities are responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for pupils who – because of illness or other reasons – would not receive suitable education without such provision. This means that where a child cannot attend school because of health problems, which have been confirmed by an appropriate professional, and would not otherwise receive a suitable full-time education, the Local Authority is responsible for arranging provision.

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 at school. Where full time education would not be in the best interests of a child because of reasons relating to their physical or mental health, local authorities should provide part time education on a basis they consider to be in the child best interests.

3.1 If the school makes arrangements

DFE Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-children-with-health-needs-who-cannot-attend-school>

ALT schools will have a policy and named person (usually the SENDCO) responsible for dealing with pupils unable to attend school because of their medical needs.

Initially, the school will attempt to make arrangements to deliver suitable education for children with health needs who cannot attend school if pupils are absent for up to 15 school days, this may be consecutive or cumulative with the same medical condition. Mental Health Conditions which have not been “clinically defined”;

There may be occasions where a GP or another professional who is providing support to a family recommends that a pupil should not perhaps attend school due to their mental health. In such cases a mental health condition is not “clinically defined”. Such situations need to be considered carefully and it is noted that in most cases colleagues working within specialist mental health services (TAMHS, CAMHS) would recommend that where possible the pupils should attend school with a support package. In most cases continuity and daily routine are better for the pupil’s mental health

At all times, the pupil remains the responsibility of the school where they are on roll.

- The school’s named person will liaise with parents/carers to put in place suitable arrangements to ensure the best continuity of learning possible.
- The named person will monitor arrangements between home and school, including liaison with Subject Leaders and Teachers.
- The named person may delegate some tasks related to home schooling where appropriate.
- The school will ensure that appropriate work is sent home or sent to hospital schools where this is relevant. As far as possible, the child will be able to access the curriculum and materials that they would have used in school.
- Where appropriate, the school will provide the child’s education provider with relevant information, curriculum materials and resources. It may be decided that a remote offer of education either via video or live lessons can be provided by the school. In those cases, the school will make use of the remote learning platforms that have been successfully used previously.
- The school will monitor the child’s engagement with the work and liaise with the child’s parents/carers and teachers where necessary.
- The school should expect to receive regular reports and assessment of pupil progress from the service provider during the pupil’s absence and a folder of work returned to the school.
- Where a child is not attending due to ill health, it is important that they feel supported in their learning. It is also important that each child’s situation is assessed on an individual basis and that the child’s needs are met accordingly.
- The named person will also be responsible for ensuring a supported reintegration of the child back into school after an extended period of illness. Again, this will include close liaison with parents/carers, attendance lead, Subject Leaders, teachers and the Local Authority.
- When a child returns to school after an extended period of absence due to ill health, the school will closely monitor the child for one school term and support their settling back into their learning and school life.
- Should the child require further support, the school leaders will make the necessary referrals, either to in-school support programmes or outside agencies. Again, this will be done in consultation with parents/carers.

- Whilst a pupil is away from school, the school will work with the Local Authority to ensure the pupil can successfully remain in touch with their school and may use the following methods:
 - School newsletters
 - Emails
 - Invitations to school events
 - Platforms such as Satchel One, Google classrooms, GCSE Pod and any other online tools used by ALT schools.

3.2 If the local authority makes arrangements

If the school can't make suitable arrangements, the Local Authority will become responsible for arranging suitable education for these children.

The Local Authority is responsible for ensuring that pupils with health needs are not at home or in hospital for more than 15 working days without access to education; this may be consecutive or cumulative with the same medical condition. Effective liaison with medical professionals will ensure that there is a minimum of delay in starting appropriate support.

LA REFERRALS:

Swindon: EOTAS (Education other than at School) is made through the website – www.eotas.org.uk

Wiltshire: Medical Needs Education and Reintegration Service
Lydia.thomas@wiltshire.org.uk

In cases where the local authority makes arrangements, the school and trust 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 MAT Lead for SEND and inclusion. At every review, it will be approved by the full board of trustees.