

**Coppice Primary
Partnership**

An Ethic of Excellence



Children with health needs who cannot attend school policy

Approved: Term 6 2024

Next review: Term 6 2026

1. 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

Coppice Primary Partnership aims to support the Local Authority (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.

Due to the nature of their health needs, some children may be admitted to hospital or placed in alternative forms of education provision. We understand that we have a continuing role in a pupil's education whilst they are not attending the school and will work with the LAs, healthcare partners and families to ensure that all children with medical needs receive the right level of support to enable them to maintain links with their education.

Individual cases, which can be complex, will be discussed with a wider team of professionals who can provide additional support and guidance. We recognise that, whenever possible, pupils should receive their education within their school and the aim of the provision will be to reintegrate pupils back into school as soon as they are well enough.

2. Legislation and guidance

2.1 Legislation

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 (2013) 'Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs'
- DfE (2015) 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions'

It is also based on guidance provided by our local authority.

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

2.2 Definitions

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

3. Responsibilities of the school

3.1 If the school makes arrangements

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

Schools would usually provide support to children who are absent from school because of illness for a shorter period for example when experiencing chicken pox or influenza.

More generally, local authorities should be ready to take responsibility for any child whose illness will prevent them from attending school for 15 or more school days, either in one absence or over the course of the school year, and where suitable education is not otherwise being arranged.

Where a pupil has a complex or long-term health issue, the pattern of illness can be unpredictable. The school will discuss the pupil's needs and how these may be best met with the Local Authority, relevant medical professionals, parents and, where appropriate, the pupil. Flexibility and responsiveness may be needed.

The Local Authority expects the school to support pupils with health needs to attend full-time education wherever possible, or for the school to make reasonable adjustments to pupils' programmes of study where medical evidence supports the need for those adjustments.

The school will make reasonable adjustments under pupils' individual healthcare plans.

Pupils admitted to hospital will receive education as determined appropriate by the medical professionals and hospital tuition team at the hospital concerned.

During a period of absence, the school will work with the provider of the pupil's education to establish and maintain regular communication and effective outcomes. 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 pupil'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 provide by the school. In those cases the school will make use of the remote learning platforms that have been successfully used previously including monitoring pupil engagement and systems for marking and returning work. The duration of this arrangement will be agreed on a case-by-case basis and in partnership with families, the responsible local authority and relevant health and social care partners.

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

3.2 If the local authority makes arrangements

If the school can't make suitable arrangements, Kent County Council will become responsible for arranging suitable education for these pupils.

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

4. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

5. Links to other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Accessibility plan
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions