



THE DIOCESE OF SHEFFIELD
ACADEMIES TRUST

Children with health needs who cannot attend school policy

2025 - 26

Approved by: DSAT Trust Board

Last reviewed on: Summer 2025

Next review due by: Summer 2026

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This policy sets out our approach to children with health needs who cannot attend school across the Diocese of Sheffield Academies Trust.

1. AIMS

This policy aims to ensure that:

- Suitable education is arranged for pupils on roll who cannot attend school due to health needs, either by the school or the local authority.
- Pupils, staff and parents/carers understand what the school is responsible for when this education is being provided by the local authority.

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 January 2013
- Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs 2023

This policy also follows guidance provided by the relevant local authorities.

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

3. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL

3.1 If the school makes the arrangements

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

- The school will appoint a member of staff who will be responsible for making and monitoring these arrangements.
- Arrangements may include sending work packs home, access to online learning resources, an offer of hospital school. There must be provision in place to check on work completed and offer marking/feedback where necessary.
- Parents/carers will be asked to meet with school leaders to discuss the arrangements prior to implementation, and decide how they it will be monitored.
- When the child is ready to return to school a plan will be put in place for appropriate reintegration, with the agreement of parents/carers and considering medical advice where necessary.

3.2 If the local authority makes the arrangements

- If the school cannot make suitable arrangements, or if it is clear that a child will be away from school for 15 days (consecutive over the course of the year) or more because of their health needs, the relevant local authority will be responsible for arranging suitable education for these children. Schools should contact their LA Inclusion and Attendance team for advice and support.
- When the local authority arranges alternative education, the education should begin as soon as possible, and at the latest by the 6th day of the child's absence from school.
- Where full time education is not in the child's best interest for reasons relating to their physical or mental health, the local authority must arrange part-time education on whatever basis it considers to be in the child's best interests.

In cases where the local authority makes the arrangements, the school will;

- Provide the local authority, at agreed intervals, with 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 statutory tests or examinations at the same time as their peers, and work with the local authority or relevant agencies to support this.
- Help ensure the child can be reintegrated 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.

4. MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

This policy will be reviewed annually. At every review it will be approved by the board of trustees.

5. LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

This policy links to the following policies in schools:

- **Accessibility plan**
- **Supporting pupils with medical conditions**
- **Medicines**
- **Attendance Policy**

Date of next review – September 2026