Children with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School Policy

Holden Clough Primary School

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1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure that:

- Suitable, full-time education (or as much education as a pupil's health condition allows) is arranged for pupils on roll who are unable to attend school because of physical or mental health needs.
- Pupils with health needs receive educational provision that minimises disruption to their learning and supports their academic progress and wellbeing.
- Parents/carers, pupils and staff understand the roles and responsibilities of the school and the local authority in providing education for pupils who cannot attend school because of health needs.
- Pupils are supported to maintain links with their peers, curriculum and wider school life during periods of absence.
- Effective planning is in place to support a successful reintegration to school when a pupil is well enough to return.
- Appropriate consideration is given to pupils' safeguarding, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), and individual healthcare needs throughout any period of absence.
- Appropriate attendance recording, safeguarding oversight and welfare support are maintained throughout any period of absence.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the duties and responsibilities outlined in:

- Section 19 of the Education Act 1996, which places a duty on local authorities to arrange suitable education for children of compulsory school age who are unable to attend school because of illness or other reasons.
- The Children and Families Act 2014.
- The Department for Education's guidance *Arranging Education for Children Who Cannot Attend School Because of Health Needs*.
- The Department for Education's statutory guidance *Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions*.
- The Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils.
- The SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years.
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018.

The school will work closely with the local authority, health professionals, parents/carers and other relevant agencies to ensure that pupils who are unable to attend school because of health needs receive appropriate educational support.

Health needs may include both physical and mental health conditions, including situations where a pupil is unable to attend school due to clinically supported emotional or mental health needs.

Where it becomes clear that a pupil is likely to be absent from school for 15 school days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative, due to health needs, the school will liaise promptly with the local authority and other relevant services to ensure that suitable educational provision is considered without unnecessary delay.

The school will process personal information in accordance with data protection legislation and will share information only where lawful and necessary to support the pupil's educational provision and welfare.

3. Responsibilities of the School

The school recognises that some pupils may experience physical or mental health conditions that prevent them from attending school for a period of time. During such periods, the school will work with families, health professionals and the local authority, where appropriate, to ensure that the pupil continues to access suitable education and remains connected to school life.

The Headteacher will have overall responsibility for ensuring that appropriate arrangements are made and reviewed. Day-to-day coordination will normally be undertaken by the SENDCo, or another appropriately designated member of staff, depending upon the pupil's individual circumstances.

The school will:

- Maintain regular communication with the pupil and their parents/carers.
- Consider advice provided by medical professionals and other relevant agencies.
- Take account of the pupil's individual circumstances, including any SEND, EHCP or healthcare plan.
- Ensure appropriate safeguarding arrangements remain in place during periods of absence, including regular welfare contact, monitoring of engagement and liaison with external agencies where required.
- Maintain accurate attendance records and apply attendance codes in accordance with current DfE guidance.
- Support the pupil's wellbeing during periods of absence.
- Plan for a successful return to school at the earliest appropriate opportunity.

3.1 If the School Makes Arrangements

Where appropriate, the school will initially seek to provide suitable education directly for pupils who are unable to attend school due to health needs.

This may include:

- Providing work through the school's remote learning platform or other appropriate methods.
- Adapting learning activities to meet the pupil's individual needs and medical circumstances.
- Marking completed work and providing regular feedback.
- Maintaining contact with the pupil and family to review the effectiveness of arrangements.
- Meeting with parents/carers and, where appropriate, the pupil to agree support arrangements and review progress.

The school will regularly monitor the impact of any provision to ensure that it remains appropriate and supports the pupil's educational progress.

Planning for reintegration will begin as early as possible. Return arrangements will be tailored to the individual needs of the pupil and developed in consultation with parents/carers, health professionals and other relevant agencies.

Where a phased return or reduced timetable is considered necessary, it will:

- Be used only where it is in the pupil's best interests.
- Have clear educational and welfare objectives.
- Be time-limited and regularly reviewed.
- Include a plan for returning the pupil to full-time education whenever possible.

3.2 If the Local Authority Makes Arrangements

Where the school is unable to make suitable educational arrangements, responsibility for securing appropriate provision may rest with the local authority.

In these circumstances, the school will:

- Work constructively with the local authority, alternative providers, health professionals, parents/carers and other agencies to achieve the best possible outcomes for the pupil.
- Share relevant information, subject to data protection requirements, to support effective planning and provision.
- Continue to monitor the pupil's progress and maintain an appropriate level of contact with the pupil and family.
- Support the local authority in ensuring that educational provision is suitable, effective and responsive to the pupil's needs.
- Work with all relevant parties to plan for successful reintegration into school.
- Work with the local authority and commissioned providers, where appropriate, to secure high-quality alternative provision that meets the pupil's educational, health and welfare needs.

Where reintegration is anticipated, the school will work with the local authority and other professionals to:

- Plan consistent educational provision before, during and after the period of absence.
- Enable the pupil to access, as far as reasonably possible, the same curriculum and learning opportunities as their peers.
- Help the pupil remain involved in school life through newsletters, communications, school events and other appropriate opportunities.
- Develop an individually tailored reintegration plan.
- Consider any reasonable adjustments, SEND support arrangements, risk assessments or healthcare provisions required to facilitate a successful return.
- Monitor the pupil's transition back into school and review arrangements as necessary.

4. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher, or sooner if there are changes to legislation, statutory guidance, Trust requirements or local authority procedures.

Oversight of this policy and its implementation will be provided through the school's governance arrangements and Victorious Academies Trust to ensure that pupils with health needs receive appropriate educational support.

5. Links to Other Policies

This policy should be read alongside the following school policies and documents:

- Accessibility Plan
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Remote Learning Policy
- Equality Information and Objectives
- Data Protection and Records Management Policies