

# Reach Academy Trust



## Children with health needs who cannot attend school Policy 2023-24

*Reach Academy Feltham works in partnership with parents, children and the School Organisation and Access to Education team in Hounslow to monitor and 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 Reach Academy Feltham 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 Education Welfare Officers 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.*

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## 1. Introduction

Children and young people with medical conditions who are unable to attend school are entitled to a full education and have the same rights of admission to school as other children. This means that no child with a medical condition can be denied admission or prevented from taking up a place in school because arrangements for their medical conditions have not been made. The need for support to meet healthcare needs is a frequent barrier to accessing education for children with complex health needs. This lack of support has the potential to have a significant impact on a child's educational attainment and fails to meet the outcomes of Every Child Matters.

Government legislation places an obligation on statutory agencies to ensure joined up services and multi-agency working to improve outcomes for all children.

The local governing body will ensure that arrangements are in place in schools to support pupils at school with medical conditions.

The local governing body should ensure that school leaders consult health and social care professionals, pupils and parents to ensure that the needs of children with medical conditions are properly understood and effectively supported.

## 2. Aims of policies

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.

## 3. Legislation and Guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of the [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) and 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions'.

It is also based on guidance provided by the Hounslow local authority [Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions in Hounslow Schools](#)

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

## 4. Roles and responsibilities

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

### Parents/carers

Parents/carers are responsible for informing their child's school of any new diagnosis, or changes to their child's medical condition, as soon as possible. Once a child is offered a place at Reach Academy Feltham the earlier the parent can inform the school the easier it is to prepare to meet the needs of the pupil in their learning environment.

### Healthcare Providers

Healthcare providers have statutory obligations to support Local Authorities in meeting the needs of children with health needs, which include:

- Helping parents/carers/teachers etc to understand the child's health needs/disability;
- Provide access to any specialist advice services required;
- Advise on any matters such as access, provision of equipment and training in medical procedure.

Health services will support schools by supporting with healthcare plans when requested to by education settings and support the school to undertake a risk assessment and identify the level of daily care required and who can provide that care.

### Local Authority

Hounslow local authority has a duty to promote cooperation between relevant partners – such as governing bodies, clinical commissioning groups and NHS England – with a view to improving the wellbeing of children with regard to their physical and mental health, and their education, training and recreation. Local authorities and clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) must make joint commissioning arrangements for education, health and care provision for children and young people with SEN or disabilities.

### CCG

Hounslow CCG should ensure that commissioning is responsive to children's needs, and that health services are able to cooperate with schools supporting children with medical conditions. They have a reciprocal duty to co-operate under Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 and must make joint commissioning arrangements for education, health and care provision for children and young people with SEN or disabilities (as described above for local authorities).

## 5. Monitoring arrangements

The law does not specify the point during a child's illness when it becomes the Local Authorities responsibility to secure for the child suitable full time education. We 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. Initially, we will attempt to make arrangements to deliver suitable education for children with health needs who cannot attend school. The Co-Headteacher in Primary or Secondary and the pupils Head of Year will be responsible for making and monitoring these arrangements. Where pupils are at home the school will ensure that weekly safe and well home visits will take place by a member of the school team. During these visits we will ensure that appropriate work is being set and reviewed using appropriate platforms to suit the pupils health needs.

If the school cannot make suitable arrangements, London Borough of Hounslow, will become responsible for arranging suitable education for these children. The Co-Headteacher responsible will liaise with the LA School Organisation and Access to Education team to source appropriate provision. This could include accessing education from the:

### The Hospital School

The Hospital School which is based on the Paediatric Ward at West Middlesex University Hospital, Isleworth. It caters for school aged children from Year 1 up to Year 11, who are admitted as patients onto Starlight Ward. The hospital teachers work with recurrent day patients who are receiving regular treatment on a monthly basis, on the Sunshine Day Unit and liaise closely with the home schools for these patients. The Hospital school is staffed by three part-time teachers and operates 5 days a week, providing personalised, flexible learning for students, taking into account their medical needs and emotional well-being. Teaching takes place 1:1 at the bedside or in the Hospital Classroom, when appropriate. The Hospital School aims to provide positive educational opportunities, focusing on literacy and numeracy, as well as a wide range of enrichment activities. Patients are also offered support with work from their home schools. All activities are delivered in a holistic way to enable all students to feel valued, nurtured and respected during their time on the ward.

### Home Medical Tuition

A small team of Home Medical Tutors, provide up to 5 hours home tuition per week, for students resident in Hounslow, who are unable to attend school due to illness, accident or a medical condition. Referrals for Home Medical Tuition, are made via a Hospital Consultant with a clear guide as to how long tuition will be required for. The Home Medical Tutors liaise closely with the student's home school to ensure continuity of education.

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.

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 provided 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 via school newsletters, emails, invitations to school events, online platforms such as Google classroom, Sparx etc

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Co-Headteacher. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

## 6. Reintegration

When a pupil is considered well enough to return to school, the school will develop a tailored reintegration plan in collaboration with the LA. For longer absences, the reintegration plan will be developed near to the pupil's likely date of return, to avoid putting unnecessary pressure on an ill pupil or their parents in the early stages of their absence.

The school is aware that some pupils will need gradual reintegration over a long period of time and will always consult with the pupil, their parents and key staff about concerns, medical issues, timing and the preferred pace of return.

The reintegration plan will include:

- The date for planned reintegration, once known;
- Details of regular meetings to discuss reintegration;
- Details of the named member of staff who has responsibility for the pupil;
- Clearly stated responsibilities and the rights of all those involved;
- Details of social contacts, including the involvement of peers and mentors during the transition period;
- A programme of small goals leading up to reintegration;
- Follow up procedures.

The school will consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made to provide suitable access to the school and the curriculum for the pupil.

These may include the following adaptations:

- A personalised or part-time timetable, drafted in consultation with the named staff member;
- Access to additional support in school;
- Online access to some of the curriculum from home;
- Movement of lessons to more accessible rooms;
- Places to rest at school;
- Special exam arrangements to manage anxiety or fatigue.

The school will ensure a welcoming environment is developed and encourage pupils and staff to be positive and proactive during the reintegration period. Following reintegration, the school will support the LA in seeking feedback from the pupil regarding the effectiveness of the process.

## 7. Training

Where necessary, staff will be trained in a timely manner to assist with a pupil's return to school. Healthcare professionals should be involved in identifying and agreeing with the school the type and level of training required that may be required. Training will be sufficient to ensure staff are confident in their ability to support pupils with additional health needs. Parents of pupils with additional health needs may provide specific advice but will not be the sole trainer of staff. Local authorities have policies and procedures linked to this policy. Schools and families are advised to contact their own responsible LA for further detail.

## 8. Links with other policies

Attendance policy