

We aspire for every pupil and adult to 'experience life in all its fullness' (John 10:10)



Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust (ODBST)

"Empowering our unique schools to excel"



Children with Health Needs who cannot attend School

ODBST Level 2 Policy:	ALL Schools require this policy, which may be adapted where identified to suit local requirements and schools may add their own branding. LGBs will note adoption of this locally adapted policy in LGB meetings. Review will take place at Trust level, and schools will be notified of updates and review dates as necessary.
Other related ODBST policies and procedures:	ODBST Health and Safety Policy June 2025 Accessibility plan Supporting pupils with medical conditions Policy
Committee responsible:	FRAPP
Approved by:	FRAPP
Date Approved:	24.6.2025
Review Date:	23 June 2028

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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

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of the **Education Act 1996**. (In the UK, **local authorities (county councils or unitary authorities)** are legally responsible for ensuring that children of compulsory school age who are **too unwell to attend school** receive a suitable education. This duty is set out in **Section 19 of the Education Act 1996**.)

It is also based on guidance provided by our local authority, this guidance can be viewed here –

Buckinghamshire schools: [Home tuition and hospital teaching services guidance | Buckinghamshire Council](#)
Milton Keynes schools:

https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-05/Policy%20Document%20-%20Children%20Missing%20Education%20for%20Health%20Reasons%20vREVIEW%20Feb22_1%20%281%29.pdf

Local authority information: [Additional health needs guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

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

3. Responsibilities of the school

The local authority sets out statutory guidance for schools.

In order to provide education to children with additional health needs, the following criteria will be adhered to:

- pupils at school with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education
- governing bodies must ensure that arrangements are in place in schools to support pupils at school with medical conditions
- governing bodies 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
- governing bodies should ensure that all schools develop a policy for supporting pupils with medical conditions that is reviewed regularly and is readily accessible to parents and school staff. This policy should cover the role of individual healthcare plans
- individual healthcare plans should be developed with the child's best interests in mind and should capture the steps which a school should take to help the child manage their condition, overcoming any potential barriers to getting the most from their education

Commented [ir1]: Consider expanding to include: The Responsibilities of the SENCo

The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) is responsible for:

- Overseeing the provision for pupils who are unable to attend school due to medical needs, as outlined in this policy;
- Actively monitoring the pupil's progress and supporting their reintegration into school;
- Providing relevant information about the pupil's abilities, progress, outcomes, and any identified special educational needs and/or disabilities to the alternative education provider;
- Sharing necessary curriculum-related information with the alternative education provider, including medium-term planning, programmes of study, schemes of work, and required resources or materials;
- Working collaboratively with the headteacher and school staff to ensure a coordinated approach and a smooth transition for the pupil;
- Ensuring that any teachers providing education for pupils with health needs receive appropriate training and support, are kept informed about relevant curriculum developments, and are given suitable information about the child's health condition and how it may impact their learning or be affected by medication;
- Maintaining regular communication with parents/carers and pupils to foster a sense of belonging and continuity in learning;
- Liaising with external agencies and organising necessary review meetings.

Responsibilities of Teachers and Support Staff

Teachers and support staff are responsible for:

- Respecting the confidentiality of pupils with health needs;
- Planning lessons and activities that enable full participation by pupils with health conditions, ensuring they are not excluded from activities without a clear, evidence-based reason;
- Understanding their role in supporting pupils with health needs and attending any required training, in line with the 'Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy';
- Reading and following each pupil's Individual Healthcare Plan, as per the 'Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy';
- Keeping parents informed about how their child's health needs are impacting their experience and progress in school.

- where the child has a special educational need identified in a statement or EHC plan, the individual healthcare plan should be linked to or become part of that statement or EHC plan. Where a child has SEN but does not have a statement or EHC plan, their special educational needs should be mentioned in their individual healthcare plan
- where a child is returning to school following a period of hospital education or alternative provision (including home tuition), schools should work with the local authority and education provider to ensure that the individual healthcare plan identifies the support the child will need to reintegrate effectively

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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.

The designated person who is responsible for monitoring and making these arrangements is the SENDCO.

Where necessary, the school will seek support from the [Educational Entitlement Team at Buckinghamshire Council](#) or the SEND team at [Milton Keynes Council](#), CAMHS and other external agencies and organisations to coordinate the necessary educational provision.

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<https://www.mkSENDlocaloffer.co.uk/>

We will provide learners with work that allows them to access the core skills and knowledge required in order to give them foundational concepts that will support a successful return to school following a period of absence from medical reasons.

This policy is applicable for students who have an identified long term medical condition requiring additional school support eg. Chronic Fatigue Syndrome.

The school may seek relevant medical evidence as necessary. This may include appointments, reports, consultant's letters etc. This in order to enable the best provision and individualised support to be designed. We may need this evidence to work with the local authority on any further support plans. We will liaise with parents and initially provide work for the Core subjects and two other subjects of their choice. Should a parent wish for more in the first instance or over time then this can be amended as part of the monitoring process.

Work will be set virtually if possible, using classroom apps if currently used, or provided via email. We will provide paper-based resources if necessary and by arrangement with parents if there are significant ICT barriers.

These arrangements will be monitored by the designated person within the school (SENDCO).

The process is:

- Home alerts the school attendance officer to the long-term medical issue that is preventing school attendance (This is different from a student who is self-isolating due to Covid-19 reasons. This falls under the home remote learning strategy.)
- A discussion is undertaken with parents. This establishes the concerns, the length of absence, the school support needed and the subjects to be provided.
- The designated lead will create a space or process for sending work – either via email, online resources or paper based to be used for the period of absence. Work will either be linked to the core content for this period or focus on vital skills and knowledge needed for the academic year.
- The student as well as the parents will be provided with some feedback on the quality of this work from the designated lead.

For longer term absence the school will contact the local authority for further support. The monitoring of this provision is undertaken via a half termly review meeting of students who are dual registered or who are in receipt of alternative education plans covered under this policy.

We will take a gradual approach to reintegration and will work with parents to formulate a personalised plan. This could involve provisions made for catch up, a reduced timetable which is carefully monitored, reducing the volume of content to focus on mastery of critical core and foundational concepts. Any return plans will be carefully monitored and reviewed for success with parents and adjusted as necessary.

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 pupils.

The local authority will take over from the school in becoming responsible for arranging suitable education for pupils once it has become clear that a pupil will be away from school for 15 days or more, either consecutively or cumulatively.

The Local authority must:

- arrange suitable full-time education (or as much education as the child's health condition allows) for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would otherwise not receive suitable education
- suitable provision means suitable to the child's age, aptitude, ability and any special educational needs that he or she may have
- provision should be "full time" unless the pupil's condition means that full-time provision would not be in his or her best interests. Although "Full-time education" is not defined in law, it should equate to what the pupil would normally have in school. If they receive one-to-one tuition, for example, the hours of face-to-face provision could be fewer as the provision is more concentrated

Buckinghamshire council currently provides arrangements using a range of options, this includes but is not necessarily limited to:

- commissioning the Aspire Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) to deliver suitable full-time education (or part-time when appropriate for the child's needs) to children who are unable to attend school because of their health needs.
- Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust provides hospital health care for children at Stoke Mandeville Hospital and the LA provides education for children admitted to the paediatric ward and National Spinal Injuries Centre through the hospital teaching service provided by Aspire PRU.

Milton Keynes does not have a hospital school and the Local Authority does not have any educational provision specifically for children/young people who are not in hospital and unable to attend their school for health reasons. However, the Local Authority is still required to ensure that every child/young person, no matter their background, needs or where they live, should receive a good education and the opportunity to fulfil their potential. For this reason, it is essential that the Local Authority is made aware of children and young people who have health needs which impacts on their attendance at school.

Milton Keynes Local Authority (LA) will ensure that it is ready to take responsibility for any child/young person whose illness will prevent them from attending school for 15 or more school days, either in one absence or over the course of a school year, and where suitable education is not otherwise being arranged:

- LAs should set up a personal provision plan, which should ensure that the child's school, the LA and the hospital school or other provider can work together
- The education provided should be of similar quality to that available in their school/setting (as defined in the statutory guidance Alternative Provision, 2013), including a broad and balanced curriculum, which, where appropriate, may be delivered remotely
- LAs should have regard to any medical advice given by the hospital when they discharge a child, as to how much education will be appropriate for them after discharge, when they might be ready to return to school and whether they should initially return to school on a part-time basis only.
- LAs should work with schools to complement the education a child receives if they cannot attend school full-time but are well enough to have education in other ways (point 17, page 8/9 of the Statutory Guidance, 2013)
- Children/young people will receive appropriate support enabling them to successfully reintegrate back into their originating school/setting. This may come from various sources as appropriate to the needs of the child/young person, for example, Special Educational Needs 4 and Disability Services (SEND), Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Children and Family Practice / Social Care Services, Educational Psychologists, and, where relevant, School Nurses.

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 annually by the Headteacher.

At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

The school is committed to working in close partnership with parents and carers to support each child's individual needs. They take all complaints seriously and address them in line with our complaint's procedure. In most cases, concerns can be resolved by speaking directly with the class teacher.

If the matter cannot be resolved at this level, particularly in relation to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), it should be referred to the SENCo and/or the Headteacher.

Should the issue remain unresolved the Complaints Policy should be followed. This can be found on the school website.