



**Children who are unable to attend school because of health needs
Policy**

2024-2025

Introduction

An increasing number of children and young people with health needs, including long-term conditions and highly complex needs, are attending mainstream school. Some of these pupils have short-term needs for support, such as being helped to take prescription medicines.

However, many require continuous and ongoing care and intervention while at school, including intimate or invasive care procedures.

The Children and Families Act 2014 brought with it a change in the law meaning that from September 2014, schools have to make arrangements to support pupils with medical conditions.

The Department for Education (England) published new statutory guidance to accompany this change, called "Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions", and schools must have regard to this. The guidance can be found online:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3>

The statutory guidance contains detailed information about what a school policy for supporting pupils with medical conditions should contain, and the roles and responsibilities of governors, staff, health professionals and parents. We have referred to this guidance when creating this policy. This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Medical Policy that covers many of the key recommendations for students attending school with medical conditions.

The Statutory Framework

Section 19 of the Education Act 1996 provides that each local education authority shall make arrangements for the provision of suitable education at school or otherwise than at school for those children of compulsory school age who, by reason of illness, exclusion from school or otherwise may not for any period receive suitable education unless such arrangements are made for them.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/contents>

Section 100 of the Children and Families Act 2014 places a duty on governing bodies of maintained schools to make arrangements for supporting pupils at their school with medical conditions.

Equality Act 2010 also provides a context on education for children with medical needs and the need to comply with the equality duties.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs – Statutory Guidance for local authorities.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/269469/health_needs_guidance_-_revised_may_2013_final.pdf

Key Points

Tameside Local Authority has a duty to arrange full time education (or as much as the child's health condition allows) for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness would not otherwise receive suitable education.

Once notified by school that a child will be absent for 15 days or more, the local authority will work alongside school and health professionals (where appropriate) to ensure that suitable education is available. This will be achieved by allocating an Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to work with schools to monitor Individual Health Care Plans (IHCP) and if appropriate, as outlined below escalate to the multi-agency case management panel.

The local authority, by way of a case management panel, will assess the needs of pupils that cannot attend school and provide alternative provision on an individual needs basis.

Definitions of Medical Conditions:

Pupils' medical needs may be broadly summarised as being of two types:

- 1) Short-term affecting their participation in school activities because they are on a course of medication or recovering from an illness
- 2) Long-term potentially limiting their access to education and requiring extra care and support (deemed special medical needs)

Role of Health

Denton Community College has access to school nursing services. They are responsible for notifying the school when a child has been identified as having a medical condition, which will require support in school. Wherever possible, they will do this before the child starts at the school. They would not usually have an extensive role in ensuring that schools are taking appropriate steps to support children with medical conditions, but may support staff on implementing a child's individual healthcare plan and provide advice and liaison, for example on training. Our school nurse can liaise with lead clinicians locally on appropriate support for the child and associated staff training needs – for example, there are good models of local specialist nursing teams offering training to local school staff, hosted by a local school. Community nursing teams will also be a valuable potential resource for school seeking advice and support in relation to children with a medical condition.

Referral to the Service

Where a pupil is absent for a period of 15 days due to a medical condition, we are required to notify the local authority tracking officer. All referrals are made using Annex B and are emailed to medicallenquiries@tameside.gov.uk All referrals are accompanied (where possible) by an individual health care plan (IHCP) and are supported by medical confirmation from one of the following health professionals:

Hospital Consultant

Consultant Child Psychiatrist or Adolescent Psychiatrist

Denton Community College will make reasonable steps to meet the short-term needs of the pupil and education provision should continue to be provided by school where possible.

The aim will be to increase education provision so as to provide as much education as a pupil's health condition allows. Where a pupil requires alternative provision, the overall aim, in all cases, is to reintegrate pupils back into mainstream education as soon as possible, through an individually tailored reintegration plan

Local Authority Tracking

Once the tracking officer receives notification of a pupil, this will be recorded on the pupil's record and an Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will be allocated to liaise with school. Education Welfare Officers (EWOs) play a key role in resolving attendance issues and importantly in the identification of attendance problems related to medical issues.

The EWO will:

Ensure school has completed an IHCP and that every effort is being made to enable the pupil to attend school

Ensure there is a date scheduled so that the IHCP is reviewed at least termly

Ensure that school has made reasonable adjustments to allow the pupil to access a suitable full-time education (or as much as the child's health condition can manage) in line with statutory guidance "Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions". This may include arrangements for school work

being sent home for short periods of absence, a part-time time table or on-line learning

Monitor that the pupil's level of attendance is reviewed regularly and that appropriate codes are being

used on the school register

Ensure that regular contact is made with the parent/carers and pupil

Where a pupil's school attendance declines, or at the discretion of any professional involved in the IHCP, And who is of the opinion that the child may not be receiving suitable education in line with the law, the EWO will escalate the matter to the case management panel.

Case Management Panel

Where the EWO, school staff or any other professional involved in the IHCP require further intervention by the local authority, the Senior EWO will refer the case to the Case Management Panel. This panel will be made up of local authority education officers and health professionals

The panel will consider evidence provided by school, parents and medical staff and additional information will be provided on an individual basis as required

The panel will determine whether any alternative provision should be provided on a temporary basis. The intention in all cases will be to reintegrate the pupil back into school on a full time basis as soon as possible

This alternative provision may consist of home tutoring, one to one tuition, and small group teaching in a specialised setting. Consideration will be given to providing transport where placement is other than school

Responsibilities of the school

School also has a medical policy reflecting statutory guidance (Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions December 2015) and has a named person who is responsible for supporting pupils with a medical need. This is the School's Healthcare Officer.

School will notify the local authority when a pupil is absent for a period of 15 days. The pupil will remain on the school's roll. The named person will liaise with the local authority and continue to review the IHCP. In the event that there is a significant change in the condition of the pupil, or the attendance declines, school will notify EWS.

School remain responsible for all agreed examination entries and ensuring examination fees; arrangements will be made for pupils to sit GCSE examinations including invigilation and assessment of coursework.

School remains responsible for convening Annual Review meetings for those pupils who have an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP).

Responsibilities of the local authority

The LA will provide:

A contact e-mail for all initial enquires to be sent to: medicalenquiries@tameside.gov.uk

A referral and tracking process of pupils who are absent from school for a period of 15 days, where the absence is caused by a medical condition

Support to school staff in monitoring and challenging pupil absence

Escalation to case management panel to ensure the pupil is receiving a suitable education in line with the Law

When agreed by the case management panel, alternative provision and transport to any base other than school may be considered

Re-integration process that focuses on the child's physical and emotional health and education needs.

Ensuring successful reintegration into mainstream school

Returning to school after a period of illness can be an emotional hurdle for a child or young person. Friendships can be damaged by a long absence and peer group contact during an absence, for example cards, letters, invitations to school events, are as important as formal contact. We will ensure a welcoming environment and encourage pupils and staff to be as positive and proactive as possible during the transition period. We believe that consultation with the child and parents/carers and key staff about concerns, medical issues, timing and pace of return is important.

If a child can attend school part time this is preferable to teaching at home and usually enables a speedier and more successful reintegration and monitoring of the child's needs.

Strategies for successful reintegration will be a key element of the child's successful return. The reintegration

Strategy may include:

Date for planned reintegration once known

Details of regular meetings to discuss reintegration

Clearly stated responsibilities and 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

Complaints

In the first instance, you should attempt to resolve issues directly with the school by speaking to Katherine Kilbane (Deputy Headteacher) on 0161 336 2219 or by email:

k.kilbane@dentoncommunitycollege.org.uk

If you are still unable to resolve the issues, please contact the Educational Welfare Service on 0161 342 3258.

ANNEX A

Pathway for supporting pupils at school with medical conditions

We will ensure that we meet our statutory responsibilities as set out in the statutory guidance. This will involve liaising with health professionals to develop an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP). Within the IHCP school will need to establish if any absence relating to the medical condition is to be authorised or otherwise

We will inform the Local Authority Tracking Officer when a pupil is absent for 15 days over any academic year if the absence relates to the medical condition. This information will be recorded on the ONE system

An Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will be made aware of the pupil within 5 days by the tracking officer and will

work with us to ensure that:

- we have made reasonable adjustments to allow the pupil to access a full-time education. This may include arrangements for school work being sent home for short periods of absence, part time timetable or on-line learning
- that an IHCP is in place and has been written having taken the views of the health professional's/ parents / carers / pupils
- there is a date scheduled so that the IHCP is reviewed at least 6 monthly
- the level of attendance is reviewed regularly

Where necessary, the case can be referred, via the Senior EWO, to the case management panel

The panel will consider each case on individual need and will allocate appropriate provision. We will be notified of the outcome

ANNEX B



ABSENCE FOR PUPILS WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS

School Referral Form

Name of Pupil _____ DoB: _____

Name of School _____

Please attach pupil registration certificate

Provide brief details of pupil's medical condition:

Does school have an Individual Healthcare Plan IHCP in place for this pupil? Yes / No

Please attach if available

Provide details of any special arrangements in place at school

This form should be returned to the Education Welfare Service by school via

medicalenquiries@tameside.gov.uk