



Cabot
Learning
Federation

**Children with
Health Needs
that cannot
attend School
Policy**

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1. History of most recent Policy changes

Date	Page	Change	Origin of Change e.g. TU request, Change in legislation
Date	E.g. Whole Document	Detail of change	Reason for change
December 2020	Whole Document	Creation of Policy	Policy is now a statutory requirement
April 2022	Whole Document	No changes	
November 2023	Whole Document	No changes	
November 2024	Whole Document	No changes	

2. Aims

This policy aims to ensure that:

- suitable education is arranged for students on the school roll who cannot attend school due to health needs.
- that all children who are unable to attend school due to health 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.
- whenever possible, students should receive their education within their school and the aim of the provision will be to reintegrate students back into school as soon as they are well enough.
- the academy has a continuing role in a student's education whilst they are not attending the academy and will work with the Local Authority (LA), healthcare professionals and families to ensure that all children with health needs receive the right level of support to enable them to maintain links with their education.

3. Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of the following legislation and statutory guidance:

[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 \(2015\) 'Supporting students at school with medical conditions'](#)

It also based on guidance provided by our local authority and other local authorities which students reside in.

[Bristol City Council Education for ill children](#)

[Bristol Hospital Education](#)

[South Gloucestershire Council Supporting a child with medical needs in school](#)

[South Gloucestershire Council Education other than at school \(EOTAS\)](#)

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

4. Definitions

a. Health Needs

Children who are unable to attend school as a result of their health 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

4.2 Types of provision

Children or young people who are unable to attend mainstream education for health reasons may attend any of the following:

- Hospital school: a special school either within a hospital setting, or specialist site, where education is provided to give continuity whilst the child is receiving treatment.
- Home tuition: many Local Authorities (LAs) have home tuition services that act as a communication channel between schools and students on occasions where students are too ill to attend school and are receiving specialist medical treatment.
- Medical Pupil Referral Units (PRUs): these are local authority settings that provide education for children unable to attend their registered school due to their medical needs.

5. The responsibilities of the Academy

5.1 If the academy makes arrangements

Initially, the academy will attempt to make arrangements to deliver suitable education for children with health needs who cannot attend school. This may take the form of online learning, knowledge organisers or home tuition.

5.2 Responsibilities

The Academy Council are responsible for:

- Ensuring arrangements for students are in place who cannot attend as a result of their health needs, and these are effectively implemented.
- Annual review and ratification of the policy for children with health needs who cannot attend school.

The Principal is responsible for:

- Working with the Academy Council to ensure compliance with the relevant statutory duties when supporting students with health needs.
- Appoint a named member of staff who is responsible for students with healthcare needs and liaises with parents, students, the local authority, key workers and others involved in the student's care. This named person is Nicola Phelps, academy SENDCo.

- Working collaboratively with parents and other professionals to develop arrangements to meet the best interests of children.
- Ensuring the arrangements put in place to meet students' health needs are fully understood by all those involved and acted upon.
- Ensuring the support put in place focuses on and meets the needs of individual students.
- Arranging appropriate training for staff with responsibility for supporting students with health needs.
- Notifying the LA when a student is likely to be away from the school for a significant period due to their health needs.

The named member of staff (Nicola Phelps, SENDCo, Contact: nicola.phelps@clf.uk) is responsible for:

- Overseeing the SEND team to arrange provision for students who are unable to attend school because of medical needs.
- Overseeing the House teams to arrange provision and support, for example access to work at home, adapted timetables for students who are unable to attend school due to health needs.
- Actively monitoring student progress and reintegration into the academy.
- Supplying students' education providers with information about the child's capabilities, progress and outcomes.
- Liaising with the Principal, education providers and parents to determine students' programmes of study whilst they are absent from school.
- Ensure House teams are keeping students informed about academy events and encouraging communication with their peers.
- Providing a link between students and their parents, and the LA.

Teachers and support staff are responsible for:

- Understanding confidentiality in respect of students' health needs.
- Providing educational resources and activities in a way that allows those with health needs to access learning.
- Understanding their role in supporting students with health needs and ensuring they attend the required training.
- Ensuring they are aware of the needs of their students.
- Ensuring they are aware of the signs, symptoms and triggers of common life-threatening medical conditions and know what to do in an emergency.

Parents are expected to:

- Ensure the regular and punctual attendance of their child at the school where possible.
- Work in partnership with the school to ensure the best possible outcomes for their child.

- Notify the school of the reason for any of their child's absences without delay.
- Provide the school with sufficient and up-to-date information about their child's medical needs.
- Attend meetings to discuss how support for their child should be planned.

5.2 Dealing with absences

- Parents are advised to contact the school on the first day their child is unable to attend due to illness.
- Absences due to illness will be authorised unless the school has genuine cause for concern about the authenticity of the illness.
- The academy will provide support to students who are absent from school because of illness for a period of less than 15 school days by liaising with the student's parents to arrange schoolwork as soon as the student is able to cope with it or part-time education at school.
- The academy will give due consideration to which aspects of the curriculum are prioritised in consultation with the student, their family and relevant members of staff.
- For periods of absence that are expected to last for 15 or more school days the Attendance Officer (in liaison with the House Teams and Safeguarding) and the named lead, Nicola Phelps, will notify the local authority and liaise with parents and healthcare professionals to plan appropriate provision. This may lead to a referral to alternative provision for example Bristol Hospital Education Service, or Pathways Learning Centre in South Gloucestershire (further guidance below in section 6 of this policy).
- Where absences are anticipated or known in advance, the academy will liaise with the LA to enable education provision to be provided from the start of the student's absence.
- For hospital admissions, the Leader of Learning Support will liaise with the Bristol Hospital Education Services (BHES) regarding the programme that will be followed while the student is in hospital.
- The academy will monitor student attendance and update registers to ensure it is clear whether a student is, or should be, receiving education beyond the academy.
- The academy will only remove a student who is unable to attend school because of additional health needs from the academy roll where:
 - The student has been certified by the school's medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school, before ceasing to be of compulsory school age¹; and
 - Neither the student nor their parent has indicated to the academy the intention to continue to attend the academy, after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.

¹ You can leave school on the last Friday in June if you'll be 16 by the end of the summer holidays. You must then do one of the following until you're 18:

- stay in full-time education, for example at a college
- start an apprenticeship or traineeship
- spend 20 hours or more a week working or volunteering, while in part-time education or training

- A student unable to attend the academy because of their health needs will not be removed from the academy register without parental consent, even if the LA has become responsible for the student's education.

5.4 Support for students

- Where a student has a complex or long-term health issue, the academy will discuss the student's needs and how these may be best met with the local authority provider, relevant medical professionals, parents and the student.
- The academy will support students with health needs to attend full-time education wherever possible, or with consent from parents make reasonable adjustments to students' programmes of study where medical evidence supports the need for those adjustments.
- The school will make reasonable adjustments under students' Student Support Plans (SSPs) in accordance with the Medical Policy and risk assessments.
- Students 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 academy will work with the provider of the student's education provision to establish and maintain regular communication and effective outcomes.
- Whilst a student is away from the academy, the academy will work to ensure the student can successfully remain in touch with their school using the following methods:
 - Academy letters
 - Emails
 - Invitations to academy events
- Where appropriate, the academy will provide the student's education provider with relevant information, curriculum materials and resources.

5.5 Reintegration and adaptation

- To help ensure a student with additional health needs can attend school following an extended period of absence, the following adaptations will be considered:
 - A personalised or adjusted timetable, drafted in consultation with Nicola Phelps, SENDCo and the SEND leadership team.
 - Access to additional support in school.
 - Online access to the curriculum from home.
 - A space to rest during social times.
 - Special exam arrangements to manage anxiety or fatigue.
- When a student is considered well enough to return to school, the academy will develop a tailored reintegration plan in collaboration with the local authority educational provider or

hospital education team, parents or carers, the child or young person and appropriate medical professionals.

- The academy is aware that some students will need gradual reintegration over a long period of time and will always consult with the student, their parents and key staff about concerns, medical issues, timing and the preferred pace of return.
- The academy will ensure a welcoming environment is developed and encourage students and staff to be positive and proactive during the reintegration period.
- Health care information will be kept up to date and reviewed. All teachers and support staff will be provided access to relevant information, including high-risk health needs, and emergency procedures, via the medical register and Medical Policy.
- In accordance with the Medical Policy, written records will be kept of all medicines administered to students.

5.6 Examinations

- The SENDCo will liaise with the alternative provision provider over planning and examination course requirements where appropriate.
- Relevant assessment information will be provided to and requested from the alternative provision provider if required.
- Awarding bodies may make special arrangements for students with permanent or long-term disabilities and learning difficulties, or temporary disabilities and illnesses.
- Applications for such arrangements will be submitted by the academy, their alternative learning provider, or the local authority setting if more appropriate, as early as possible.

6 The responsibilities of the local authority

6.1 Responsibilities of local authorities

If the academy cannot make suitable arrangements, Bristol Local Authority or the local authority where the student resides, will become responsible for arranging suitable education for these children or young persons. The LA should arrange suitable full-time education for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would not receive suitable education without such provision.

The local authority should:

- Work with schools to provide education provision when a student is absent from their home school on medical grounds for 15 consecutive school days or more but still well enough to access education.
- Liaise with the appropriate medical professionals to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the student. Ensure the education students receive is of good quality, allows them to take appropriate qualifications, prevents them from falling behind their peers in school, and allows them to reintegrate successfully back into school as soon as possible.

- Students can be referred to the Bristol Hospital Education Service (BHES) or Pathways Learning Centre in South Gloucestershire if appropriate.

6.2 Bristol Local Authority

- Where there are referrals for children or young people who are admitted to hospital from the Bristol area, the following criteria will be applied:
 - Recurrent admissions.
 - Any inpatient of statutory school age admitted for 5 days or more.
 - Siblings of inpatients of the Children’s Hospital who are not Bristol City Council residents.
 - Students who are aged 16 to 19, who are on roll at a school or college and meet criteria 1 or 2 above.
- Within Bristol, children and young people who are residents of Bristol City Council or in the care of Bristol City Council and not in hospital, a referral must be made:
 - Using the BHES referral form which must be signed by a consultant or community paediatrician.
 - Or using an appropriate hospital discharge notice.
- Following the acceptance of a referral, students must remain on the roll of their mainstream school or college, they will be dual registered with BHES, while the service is providing support.
- No referral will be made without full consultation with the child or young person and parent or carer.
- The aim is for students to have a successful re-integration into full-time mainstream education. BHES provision will cease if:
 - The student is attending school/college.
 - The student is too ill to access BHES provision.
 - The student fails to engage with or access the provision without a medical reason.
 - Other provision is agreed.
 - The student leaves the school.
 - The student stops accessing the health care plan being provided by the referrer.
 - The health referrer ceases to provide a health care intervention

6.3 South Gloucestershire Local Authority

- For students living in South Gloucestershire, the local authority states it:
 - must arrange suitable full-time education for children of school age that can’t access education in the normal way due to illness. Part-time hours may be more suitable for some, depending on their ability to cope.

- must provide education for absences of 15 days or more. This can be either consecutive days or those built up over a period of time.
 - must liaise with medical professionals quickly so there is minimal impact to your child's education.
 - Ensures the education provided is of a good quality and address the needs of the child and enable them to successfully reintegrate back into school.
 - must have a named officer responsible for the education of children and young people with a medical need.
- Referrals can be made by schools, medical professionals and the 0-25 service to Pathways Learning Centre (PLC). Referrals can be made for students with health needs or Social Emotional and /or Mental Health Difficulties and must be under the care of a consultant paediatrician or Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
 - PLC supports the education of children with medical conditions which cause significant absence from school. The aim is to maintain continuity of education and to facilitate the individual learning of each young person by a personalised approach.
 - PLC ensures children are out of school for the shortest possible time, having taken into consideration their medical, emotional and educational needs.
 - The work encompasses close liaison with schools, medical personnel, parent or carers and young people to ensure educational needs are being met and that reintegration into full-time education is supported effectively. Students are typically dual registered with the mainstream school. Schools will be required to work closely with PLC in programme design and delivery, reintegration and the monitoring of attendance.
- In cases where the local authority makes arrangements, the academy will:
 - Work constructively with the local authority, providers, relevant agencies and parents to ensure the best outcomes for the student.
 - Share information with the local authority and relevant health services as required.
 - Help make sure that the provision offered to the student 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 student to access the same curriculum and materials that they would have used in school as far as possible.
 - Enable the student to stay in touch with academy life (e.g. through newsletters, emails, invitations to relevant 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.

7 Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by Nicola Phelps. At every review, it will be approved by the Academy Council.

8 Links to other policies

This policy works in conjunction with the following academy policies which can be found on our website:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- First Aid Policy
- SEND Policy
- Attendance Policy