The Olympus Academy Trust
Children with Health Needs
Who Cannot Attend School Policy

Document Summary

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On Trust Website?	Yes
On School Websites?	Yes

Amendment History

Version	Amendment Date	Author	Amendment Summary
v0.1	12th February 2021	Trust SEND, Inclusion and Safeguarding Lead	• New Policy.
v0.1	11th March 2021		• Approved by Audit & Risk Committee
v0.1	1st April 2021		• Approved by the Board of Trustees
v1.0	1st April 2021		• Policy Issued.
v2.0	28th March 2022		• Reviewed- no changes
v3.0	3rd April 2023	Trust Director for Safeguarding, SEND and Inclusion	• Reviewed – no changes • Issued to ARC for approval
v3.1	4th May 2023	Policy Coordinator	• Policy approved by ARC and issued
V4.0	27th June 2024	Trust Director for Safeguarding, SEND and Inclusion	• Review of policy following changes to processes with the Local Authority • Approved by ARC on 5th July 2024
V5.0	September 2025	Trust Director for Safeguarding, SEND and Inclusion	• Policy reviewed – see tracked changes for details
V5.1	October 2025	Policy coordinator	• Approved by ARC on 22nd September 2025

1. Aims

1.1 This policy aims to ensure that:

- Suitable education is arranged for children on roll who cannot attend school due to health needs.
- Children, staff and parents understand what the school is responsible for when this education is being provided by the local authority.

2. Legislation and guidance

2.1 This policy reflects the requirements of the Education Act 1996

- It is also based on the following statutory guidance from the Department for Education: Alternative provision

Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school - GOV.UK

This guidance relates to local authorities statutory duties under section 19 of the Education Act 1996. The s.19(1) duty states that local authorities are responsible for arranging suitable and (normally) full-time education for children of compulsory school age who, because of exclusion, illness or other reasons, would not receive suitable education without such provision. This duty is referred to as 'the s.19 duty' throughout this guidance.

- This means that where a child cannot attend school because of a physical or mental health need, and cannot access suitable full-time education, the local authority is responsible for arranging suitable alternative provision.

Local Authority information can be found here: Education other than at school (EOTAS) | South Gloucestershire (southglos.gov.uk)

3. The Responsibilities of the School

3.1 Initially, the school will attempt to make arrangements to deliver suitable education for children with health needs who cannot attend school in the short term.

Who in the school will be responsible for making and monitoring these arrangements?

SENCO

What if a child is too ill to attend school?

The school will look at ways to ensure that learners are supported to minimise the disruption to their studies.

What sort of arrangements could be made (e.g. sending work home, hospital schools)

- For a short term absence, this might mean sending some work home to complete. We aim to match this as closely as possible to the work being completed in their lessons

- If the absence becomes more long term, we will liaise with parents and offer to set work if it would be appropriate to do so.
- If a learner is receiving support through the Hospital Education Service, we will work closely with them to maximise continuality of education

How we will consult parents/carers and learners about these arrangements

We will work closely with parents to assess the appropriateness of work being sent home as this will dependent on the health needs of the child.

Individual healthcare plans (IHPs), EHAP and Integrated Learner Support Plans (ILSP)

- Where mental health or other medical issues are on-going and are affecting attendance at school, lesson attendance and ability to manage the environment, we will coordinate support through either an IHP, an EHAP (if other agencies are working with the child and family) or through an ILSP
- Plans are written in collaboration with the learner (if appropriate), their parent/carer, and any other relevant professionals.
- The plan is likely to contain some of the following details:
- The mental health or medical issue (and its triggers, signs, symptoms and treatments)
- The learner's needs resulting from the condition
- Specific support for the learner's educational, social and emotional needs
- The level of support needed
- Who will provide the support
- Who in our school needs to be aware of the child's condition
- What to do in an emergency

Children and young people with a medical condition and Special Educational Needs (SEN) If a child or young person has SEN and a medical condition, their provision should be planned and delivered in a coordinated way with the IHP. IHPs are not the same as Education, Health Care Plans (EHCP), which set out the support needed by children with SEN, although some children may have both types of plan. If a child has both a medical condition and an EHCP detailing provision to meet their special educational needs, they will still need an IHP. The IHP can be used as advice to help with an EHCP, particularly in relation to sections C and G (Health needs and provision).

3.2 Reintegration into the School

- The school will work with providers of education, doctors, educational psychologists, indeed all relevant professionals, the parents/carers and the learner themselves to plan a gradual and sensitively orchestrated reintegration into school.
- The school will ensure that the learners and staff in the school who have maintained contact with the child who has been absent will play a significant role helping them to settle back into school
- The school will accept part-time attendance where learners are medically unable to cope with a full day, until the learner is able to attend for full school days. All reduced offer arrangements will be recorded by schools
- The school will arrange for learners with mobility problems to return to school, taking account of health and safety issues, organising risk assessment and seeking advice on lifting and handling procedures where necessary. The impact

on staff will be taken into account and additional support may be required from the school budget or via review cluster funding where appropriate

- Throughout the absence, the school will maintain contact with both parents/carers and the learner. This will include invitations to events and productions at the school as well as regular communication via letters, newsletters or e-mail. Both the school and the education provider will support and advise learners and their parents/carers, as appropriate, during the absence.
- The school should expect to receive regular reports and assessment of learner progress from the Hospital Education Service and a folder of work on return to school
- The Headteacher, SENCO or Pastoral Lead will ensure that all relevant staff are aware of a learner's absence and of their responsibility towards maintaining continuity of education for the child.

3.3 If the Local Authority makes arrangements

The Strategic Lead for Statutory Education in South Gloucestershire Council and the named officer is Mike Wheeler.

If our school can't make suitable arrangements, or if it is clear that a child will be away from school for 15 days (consecutive or over the course of the year) due to a physical or mental health need, and cannot access suitable full-time education, the local authority is responsible for arranging suitable alternative provision.

When a local authority arranges alternative education, the education should begin as soon as possible, and at the latest by the 6th day of the child's absence from school. Where full-time education is not in the child's best interest for reasons relating to their physical or mental health, the local authority must arrange part-time education on whatever basis it considers to be in the child's best interests.

The process for referring a child to the local authority

When an absence is known to be more than 15 days or exceeds 15 days, then the school should refer the learner using the single referral form found here: PLC-Single-Referral-Form-Updated-Feb-24.docx (live.com) and send this to the educationreferrals@southglos.gov.uk

In cases where the local authority makes the arrangements, our school will:

- Provide the local authority, at agreed intervals, with the full name and address of any learners of compulsory school age who are not attending school regularly due to their health needs
- Work constructively with the local authority, providers, relevant agencies and parents/carers to ensure the best outcomes for the child
- Collaborate with the local authority to ensure continuity of provision and consistency of curriculum, including making information available about the curriculum
- Along with the local authority, regularly review the provision offered to ensure it continues to be appropriate for the child and that it is providing suitable education

- Share information with the local authority and relevant health services as required
- When a learner has complex or long-term health issues, work with the local authority, parents/carers and the relevant health services to decide how best to meet the child's needs (e.g. through individual support, arranging alternative provision or by them remaining at school, being supported at home and back into school after each absence)
- Where possible, allow the child to take examinations at the same time as their peers, and work with the local authority to support this
- Help make sure that the learner 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
- Enable the learner to stay in touch with school life (e.g. through newsletters, emails, digital learning platforms, social media platforms, invitations to school events or internet links to lessons from their school), and, where appropriate, through educational visits
- Create individually tailored reintegration plans for each learner returning to school, which includes extra support to fill any gaps arising from the absence
- Consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made

4. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Trust Director for Safeguarding, SEND and Inclusion. At every review, it will be approved by the Audit and Risk Committee.

5. Links to Other Policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Individual School Accessibility Plans
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

6. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement

We are committed to fostering a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment where every individual is valued and respected. Our policies reflect our dedication to creating a workplace that embraces differences and promotes fairness. We believe that diversity enriches our organisation and drives innovation, and we strive to ensure that all employees have equal opportunities to succeed and thrive.