



Children with Health Needs who Cannot Attend School

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.

Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of the Education Act 1996.

It also based on guidance provided by the Local Authority.

School Responsibilities

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

It is the responsibility of the school to continue to provide education for a pupil who can access school with adjustments.

This is the case even if these are significant adjustments, often determined through a My Plan+ or EHCP process. Support in the home is only provided due to the child's medical needs. It cannot be due to the setting not making appropriate adjustments to keep a child in school, if there are appropriate adjustments that could be made.

Examples of adjustments that could be made:

- Pupils being educated in a separate classroom as they are too anxious to access the mainstream lessons. Support to reintegrate back in to the main lessons over time.
- A pupil being provided 1:1 teaching on school-site to build up confidence to return to lessons following mental health issues and loss of confidence resulting in hospitalisation out of county.
- Work set for a child if they cannot manage a full day, for example due to ME/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome.

If a child or young person cannot attend school, even with adjustments, then the child or young person will effectively need to be signed off school by a medical professional. There are actually no official 'sick notes' or 'fit notes' for children from medical professionals; however a referral accepted by Gloucestershire Hospital Education Service, where a medical professional has confirmed a child or young person is medically unable to attend school even with adjustments, is effectively this.



Local Authority Responsibilities

Section 19 of the Education Act 1996

When children and young people are unable to continue at school because of illness, the Education Act 1996 requires:

- Local Education Authorities to provide them with 'suitable education' for example in a hospital school or home tuition.
- Suitable education refers to efficient education suitable to the child or young person's age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs he may have'.
- If the school cannot make suitable arrangements, Gloucestershire Local Authority will become responsible for arranging suitable education for these children. If a child or young person cannot attend school, even with adjustments, then the child or young person will effectively need to be signed off school by a medical professional. There are actually no official 'sick notes' or 'fit notes' for children from medical professionals; however, a referral accepted by Gloucestershire Hospital Education Service, where a medical professional has confirmed a child or young person is medically unable to attend school even with adjustments, effectively serves this purpose.

Gloucestershire Hospital Education Service (GHES)

- Referral to Gloucestershire Hospital Education Service (GHES) is made when a pupil is medically unable to attend school and this is likely to be for at least 15 days or more (e.g. surgical recovery). See links in 'Referral forms and full information' section. The referral form is generally completed by an NHS paediatric consultant (or tier 3 CYPS practitioner or psychiatrist). The referrer is asked to provide detailed information about the pupil, including:
 - Confirmation that the pupil is medically unable to attend school.
 - The reason for the absence (medical condition).
 - Likely duration of absence from school.
 - Amount of education (in hours) that is suitable for the young person, taking into account their medical condition and the intensity of one-to-one tuition referral forms and full information. For access to referral forms and full information on Gloucestershire Hospital Education Service go to the Gloucestershire County Council website:
www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/ghes

GHES works in partnership with the home-school to ensure continuity of education whilst a child or young person is unable to attend school. 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.

Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Board.

Links to other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

DDA Accessibility plan

Supporting pupils with medical conditions

Child Protection and Safeguarding policies

Attendance

This policy was written in December 2022.

It will be reviewed in December 2023.

Draft to be ratified by Governors on 13.03.23.