



Princecroft

PRIMARY SCHOOL

Incorporating the Hive Nursery

Children with Health Needs who cannot attend school

Review date	February 2024
Date of next policy review	December 2024

This policy is in line with the Single Equality Policy

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CHILDREN WITH HEALTH NEEDS WHO CANNOT ATTEND SCHOOL

This policy should be read and understood in conjunction with the following policies and documents:

School policies:

- Attendance Policy and procedures for reporting an absence from school
- Complaints Policy
- Remote Education Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- School Accessibility Plan
- SEND Offer
- Single Equality Policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions in school

National and Local Authority Guidance:

- [DfE Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs \(January 2013\)](#)
- [DfE Alternative Provision: A guide for local authorities, head teachers and governing bodies of schools, pupil referral units and other providers of alternative provision \(January 2013\)](#)
- Continuity of Educational Provision for Children and Young People with Additional Health Needs (Wiltshire LA Policy)

Definitions:

- **Parents:**
 - biological parents, whether they are married or not
 - any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person (e.g. adoptive parent, a step parent, guardian or other relative)
 - any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has the care of a child or young person
- **Children who are unable to attend school as a result of their medical needs may include those with:**
 - physical health issues
 - physical injuries
 - mental health problems, including anxiety issues
 - emotional difficulties or school refusal
 - progressive conditions
 - chronic illness
 - terminal illness

Introduction:

- This policy outlines both the responsibilities of the school and of the Local Authority (LA) in respect of children who cannot attend school due to health needs.
- It is based on the statutory guidance issued by the [Department of Education \(DfE\) "Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs: Statutory guidance for local authorities"](#)
- **Princecroft Primary School** aims to work in partnership with the Wiltshire Local Education Authority to ensure that all children who are unable to attend school due to health needs and who would not receive a suitable education without such provision, continue to have access to as much education as their medical condition allows, enabling them to reach their full potential.
- The law does not define full-time education, but children with health needs should have provision which is equivalent to the education they would receive at school without compromising either their physical or mental health. Furthermore, this provision should be reviewed on a regular basis for each individual child to ensure that it continues to be appropriate.
- The school recognises that, after a prolonged period of absence, a child will need support in reintegrating back into school life and the importance of our role in providing this support, together with other professionals.

Aims:

- The aim of this policy is to outline the responsibilities of the LA and the school in the suitable provision of education to those children who cannot attend school because of health needs at a level that both enables each child to reach their full potential without compromising their health or medical condition.
- We aim to work in collaboration with parents, pupils, other external service providers and the LA and we understand that it is only through such cooperation and collaboration that we can achieve the best outcomes for individual pupils.

Responsibilities of the Local Authority (LA):

- The LA is legally responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would not receive suitable education without such provision. This applies whether or not the child is on the register of a school and whatever the type of school they attend.
The LA has a written policy statement on their arrangements to comply with their legal duty towards children with additional health needs, which can be found downloaded from the [LA's MERNS \(Medical Needs Reintegration Service\) site](#).

Pupils in hospital:

- Where pupils are admitted to hospital, the school will advise the LA who will the work alongside the school regarding the programme that should be followed while the pupil is in hospital.

Responsibilities of the school:

- The school has a named person who is responsible for dealing with pupils unable to attend school because of their medical needs and at our school this person is **Mrs Gemma Pierson, the Headteacher**

- The headteacher will liaise with the class teacher to determine the level of provision to be made.
- In so doing the school will consult as appropriate with parents, pupils, class teachers and the school's SENCo regarding the arrangements to be made and, if it is appropriate to do so, the class teacher will provide packs of work, which can be completed at home. These may include activities to be completed online using resources purchased by the school. Where IT access is an issue, work packs will be put together and handed to the family and where possible, IT support may be provided by the school.
- Where arrangements are put in place, the head teacher will be responsible for monitoring these arrangements in consultation with the class teacher.
- The class teacher will discuss with parents the most effective way to communicate with both them and the pupil and how they will provide feedback on work completed. Any concerns that arise should be referred to the member of staff named above

First 15 days of absence

- In line with DfE statutory guidance, the school will attempt to make arrangements to deliver suitable education for children with health needs who cannot attend school for the first 15 consecutive days of absence. However, the school recognises that in many cases such provision will not be appropriate, for example where the child's illness is short term and they are not well enough to work (e.g. temperature and sickness).
- However, there are some circumstances in which the LA will be involved from the outset, for example pre-planned and prolonged hospitalisation (as detailed above).

Absence extending beyond 15 days

- Should a pupil's absence extend beyond 15 days, and the school believes that there is a need for additional support from the LA, that support will be requested through the LA's ['Medical Needs Reintegration Service' \(MERNNS\)](#). This service is available to all children of compulsory school age and any referrals for support will be made by the school via the LA's 'Digital Assessment and Referral Tool' (DART).
- The school will therefore continue to work in partnership with the local authority, healthcare partners and families to ensure that children with health needs receive the right level of support, enabling them to continue with their education.
- Where required, an individual health care plan (IHCP) will be developed and regularly reviewed.
- During a prolonged absence, we will enable the pupil to stay in touch with school life as much as possible (e.g. through newsletters, cards, letters or emails from other pupils and staff and, where possible, internet links to lessons from school).
- For hospital admissions, the school will liaise with the LA regarding the programme that should be followed while the pupil is in hospital.
- During an extended period of absence, the school will work with the provider of the pupil's education to establish and maintain regular communication and effective outcomes.

Reintegration:

- When a pupil is due to return to school, depending on the length and nature of their absence, it may be necessary to draw up an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) and this will be undertaken by the SENCo in consultation with parents, the pupil, the class teacher and any other external service providers.

- The school will make reasonable adjustments under pupil's IHCPs in accordance with our policy 'Supporting children with medical conditions'.
- When reintegration is anticipated following a prolonged period of absence, we will:
 - 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 normally have used in school as much as possible
 - create an individually tailored reintegration plan for each child
 - consider any reasonable adjustments to be made.
- The reintegration plan will include:
 - the date for planned reintegration, once known
 - details of regular meetings to discuss reintegration
 - details of named member of staff who has responsibility for the pupil
 - clear stated responsibilities and the rights of those involved
 - a programme of small goals leading up to reintegration
 - ensuring there are robust systems in place for dealing with any health emergencies and critical incidents, for both on and off-site activities

Responsibilities of parents:

- Parents are expected:
 - to contact the school of their first day their child is unable to attend due to illness and the reasons for the absence
 - to continue to provide the school with sufficient and up to date information regarding the reasons for their child's absence and to keep in touch with the school if they believe the absence is likely to extend beyond 15 school days
 - to give the school as much notice as possible in the event of a planned prolonged absence for medical reasons
 - to work in partnership with the school to ensure the best possible outcomes for their child
 - to attend arranged meeting to discuss how support for their child should be planned
 - to provide, if requested, medical confirmation of their child's illness

Complaints:

- Complaints about provision for children who are medically unfit to attend school should be made to the school in the first instance following the procedures as outlined in our school's Complaints policy.

Policy review:

- This policy will be reviewed every **two** years or in line with any changes made to statutory guidance.