

# Children Who Cannot Attend School Due to Health Needs Policy



## St Vincent's Catholic Primary School

Mission Statement:

*To love, serve and learn as Jesus shows us*

### DOCUMENT STATUS

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## **Statement of Intent**

St Vincent's Catholic Primary School aims to support the local authority and ensure 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, enabling them to reach their full potential.

Due to the nature of their health needs, some children may be admitted to hospital or placed in alternative forms of education provision. We recognise that, whenever possible, children should receive their education within their school and the aim of the provision will be to reintegrate children back into school as soon as they are well enough.

We understand that we have a continuing role in a child's education whilst they are not attending the school and will work with the local authority, healthcare partners 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.

## **Named people responsible for policy's implementation**

Head Teacher  
SENDCO

## **Local authority duties**

This section is in accordance with the Department for Education statutory guidance 'Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs, 2013.'

### *Local authorities must:*

Arrange suitable full-time education (or as much education as the child's health condition allows) for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would otherwise not receive suitable education.

### *Local authorities should:*

- Provide such education as soon as it is clear that the child will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative. They should liaise with appropriate medical professionals to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the child.
- Ensure that the education children receive is of good quality, as defined in the statutory guidance Alternative Provision (2013), allows them to take appropriate qualifications, prevents them from slipping behind their peers in school and allows them to reintegrate successfully back into school as soon as possible.
- Address the needs of individual children in arranging provision. 'Hard and fast' rules are inappropriate: they may limit the offer of education to children with a given condition and prevent their access to the right level of educational support which they are well enough to receive. Strict rules that the offer of education a child receives may also breach statutory requirements.

## **Provision for siblings**

When treatment of a child's condition means that his or her family have to move nearer to a hospital, and there is a sibling of compulsory school age, the local authority into whose area the family has moved should seek to ensure that the sibling is offered a place, where provision is available, for example, in a local mainstream school or other appropriate setting.

### *Definitions*

Children who are unable to attend school as a result of their medical needs may include those with:

- Physical health issues.
- Physical injuries.
- Severe mental health problems, including anxiety issues.
- Severe emotional difficulties or school refusal.
- Progressive conditions.
- Terminal illnesses.
- Chronic illnesses.

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

- Hospital school: a special school within a hospital setting where education is provided to give continuity whilst the child is receiving treatment.
- Home tuition: a tuition service that acts as a communication channel between schools and children on occasions where children are too ill to attend school and are receiving specialist medical treatment.
- Medical PRUs: local authority establishments that provide education for children unable to attend their registered school due to their medical needs.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Head Teacher/SENDCo is responsible for:

- Creating an IHCP/PEP for children who are unable to attend school because of health needs.
- Actively monitoring children's progress and reintegration into school.
- Supplying children's education providers with information about the child's capabilities, progress and outcomes.
- Liaising with the class teacher, education providers and parents to determine children's programmes of study whilst they are absent from school.
- Providing a link between children and their parents, and the local authority.

Teachers and support staff are responsible for:

- Understanding confidentiality in respect of children's health needs.
- Designing lessons and activities in a way that allows those with health needs to participate fully and ensuring children are not excluded from activities that they wish to take part in without a clear evidence-based reason.
- Understanding their role in supporting children with health needs and ensuring they attend the required training.
- Ensuring they are aware of the needs of their children through the appropriate and lawful sharing of the individual child's health needs.
- Ensuring they are aware of the signs, symptoms and triggers of common life-threatening medical conditions and know what to do in an emergency.
- Keeping parents informed of how their child's health needs are affecting them whilst in the school
- Providing online learning via the School's Remote Learning Plan if children are well enough to engage.

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 health needs.
- Attend meetings to discuss how support for their child should be planned.
- Engage with the school's Remote Learning Plan, ensuring their children are able to access the online resources provided – tech support to enable this can be advised upon by the school.

### **Managing Absences**

The school will provide support to children who are absent from school because of illness for a period of less than 15 school days by liaising with the child's parents to arrange schoolwork as soon as the child is able to cope with it or part-time education at school. This will be via the School's Remote Learning Plan. The school will give due consideration to which aspects of the curriculum are prioritised in consultation with the child, their family and relevant members of staff.

- For periods of absence that are expected to last for 15 or more school days, either in one absence or over the course of a school year, the HT/SENDCo will notify the local authority, who will take responsibility for the child and their education.
- Where absences are anticipated or known in advance, the school will liaise with the local authority to enable education provision to be provided from the start of the child's absence.
- For hospital admissions, the Head teacher/SENDCo will liaise with the local authority regarding the programme that should be followed while the child is in hospital.
- The local authority will set up a personal education plan (PEP) for the child which will allow the school, the local authority and the provider of the child's education to work together.
- The school will monitor child attendance and mark registers to ensure it is clear whether a child is, or should be, receiving education otherwise than at school.
- The school will only remove a child who is unable to attend school because of additional health needs from the school roll where:
  - The child has been certified by a Medical Officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school, before ceasing to be of compulsory school age; and
  - Neither the child nor their parent has indicated to the school the intention to continue to attend the school, after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
  - A child unable to attend school because of their health needs will not be removed from the school register without parental consent and certification from the Medical Officer, even if the local authority has become responsible for the child's education.

## **Support for Children**

To help ensure a child with additional health needs is able to attend school following an extended period of absence, the following will be considered in the IHCP:

- A personalised or part-time timetable, drafted in consultation with the Head teacher/SENDCo.
- Access to additional support in school.
- Online access to the curriculum from home via our Remote Learning Policy.
- Movement of lessons to more accessible rooms where possible.
- Places to rest at school.

Special exam arrangements as appropriate within DfE guidance.

## **Reintegration**

When a child is considered well enough to return to school, the school will update the IHCP/PEP in line with advice from the school health advisor, the LA and discussions with the parent/carer. The school will ensure positive and proactive reintegration period.