

South Avenue Primary School



Children with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School Policy

Version (Date): January 2026

Review (Date): January 2027

Member of Staff Responsible: Mr S Savva
SENCO

Contents

1. Aims	2
2. Legislation and guidance	2
3. The responsibilities of the school	2
4. Monitoring arrangements	4

1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure that:

The school fulfils its statutory obligation to ensure that suitable education is arranged for students on roll who cannot attend school due to health needs.

Students, staff and parents/carers understand what the school is responsible for when this education is being provided by the local authority.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of the following:

- 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 is also based on guidance provided by our local authority - <https://www.kelsi.org.uk/pru-inclusion-and-attendance-service-pias/pupil-referral-unit-and-alternative-provision/kent-health-needs-education-service>

3. The responsibilities of the school

3.1 If the school makes arrangements

Initially, the school will make reasonable arrangements to provide suitable, broad and balanced education for pupils who cannot attend school for 15 school days or more due to health needs. This provision will be appropriate to the pupil's age, ability and any special educational needs.

- The student's class teacher will liaise with parents/carers to put in place suitable arrangements to ensure the best continuity of learning possible
- The SENDCO monitor arrangements between home and school, including liaison with class teachers and the phase leaders
- The class teacher will ensure that appropriate work is sent home or sent to hospital schools where this is relevant.
- The class teacher will monitor the student's engagement with the work and liaise with the student's parents/carers and teachers where necessary.
- Where a student is not attending due to ill health, it is important that they feel supported in their learning. It is also important that each student's situation is assessed on an individual basis and that the student's needs are met accordingly.

- The SENDCO will also be responsible for ensuring a supported reintegration of the student back into school after an extended period of illness. Again, this will include close liaison with parents/carers, attendance lead, STLS if possible, teachers and the LA
- When a student returns to school after an extended period of absence due to ill health, the SENDCO will closely monitor the student for two school terms and support their settling back into their learning and school life.
- Should the student require further support, the SENDCO will make the necessary referrals, either to in-school support programmes such as THRIVE or outside agencies. Again, this will be done in consultation with parents/carers.

3.2 If the local authority makes arrangements

If the school cannot make suitable arrangements, the LA will become 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.

The school will make a referral to the Local Authority's Health Needs Education Service. This service should accept and act based on the criteria below.

3.2.1 Criteria

Pupils with health needs which prevent them attending their home school may be considered disabled in terms of the Disability Discrimination Act (examples of this might include those with epilepsy, diabetes, brain injury, or degenerative neuro muscular conditions). The school will make reasonable adjustments for the inclusion of such pupils and anticipatory planning should be part of the school's Disability Equality Scheme.

Only after such consideration and reasonable adjustments have been made should the school consider referral to the Health Needs Education Service for provision of continuity of education as follows:

- Pupils experiencing severe anxiety, Emotionally Based School Avoidance (ESBA), or depression, or pupils whose mental health needs meet Tier 3 (CAMHS) thresholds
- Pupils whose physical health is evidenced by a hospital (paediatrician, consultant or registrar) to be too unwell to attend school. This applies to pupils whose cases are managed by hospitals within Kent as well as in more specialist hospitals in London and across the country
- Pupils whose illness has reduced their school attendance to less than 50%
- Pupils post 16 will be considered where schools will make a fresh referral and can provide renewed medical evidence to repeat a year

3.2.2 Expectations

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
- Liaise with the alternative provider over planning examinations and examination course requirements where appropriate. Awarding bodies may make special arrangements for students with permanent or long-term disabilities, or temporary disabilities and illnesses. Applications for such arrangements will be submitted by the school, or LA if more appropriate, as soon as possible.
- 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, the school will 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 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.

4. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by Mr Savva (SENDCo) and Miss Cadwallader (Head of School). At every review, it will be approved by the governing board.