



**Barcombe Hamsey Plumpton  
Skylark Federation**

## **Education of Children Unable to Attend School due to Health Needs**

**Reviewed and approved by FGB: 29.04.21  
Review: Spring 2022**

Signed .....Chair of Governors      Date .....

Signed .....Executive Head Teacher      Date .....

## **Introduction**

This policy sets out the East Sussex local authority standards for the education of children and young people who are unable to attend school because of health needs. The authority recognises that all children and young people are entitled to an education of high quality and is committed to ensuring that the needs of this vulnerable group of learners are met.

We recognise that there is a shared responsibility between the local authority, schools and partner agencies to successfully implement this policy. It is centred on high quality integrated service provision in order to promote better outcomes for this cohort of children and young people.

## **The Statutory Framework**

In January 2013 the Department for Education published statutory guidance entitled '*Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs – Statutory guidance for local authorities*'. It provides comprehensive guidance to local authorities and related services. Roles and responsibilities, including those of the local authority and school, are outlined in detail. This policy should be read alongside this guidance and any future relevant guidance.

There is a requirement that each local authority publish a policy detailing standards, procedures and responsibilities for those pupils unable to attend school due to health medical needs. In line with Section 19 of the Education Act 1996 we have a duty to:

*make arrangements for the provision of suitable education at school or otherwise than at school for those children of compulsory school age who, by reason of illness, or otherwise, may not for any period receive suitable education unless such arrangements are made for them.*

This policy sets out the roles and responsibilities of the local authority, schools and the relevant alternative education service provider which in East Sussex is the Teaching & Learning Provision (TLP) which sits within Children's Services - ISEND.

## **East Sussex Local Authority Responsibilities**

TLP is responsible for ensuring that pupils who are absent or likely to be absent from school due to health needs for more than 15 working days either consecutive or cumulative with the same medical condition, including pupils who suffer from a recurring chronic condition, are provided with suitable full time education; unless the pupil's condition means that full-time provision would not be in his or her best interests.

Full-time education is not defined in law but it should equate to what the pupil would normally have in school. If they receive one to one teaching, the hours of face to face provision will be fewer as the provision is more concentrated.

East Sussex is responsible for ensuring that there is a named senior officer with responsibility for the provision of education for children and young people who are unable to attend school because of medical needs. In East Sussex the officer is Chloe Cushing TLP Senior Coordinator. [chloe.cushing@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:chloe.cushing@eastsussex.gov.uk) 01273 336888

TLP will ensure that provision offered is regularly reviewed and continues to be appropriate for the pupil. The aim of this provision is to:

- o minimise disruption to learning;
- o deliver an appropriate and personalised education and to successfully reintegrate pupils into mainstream provision at the earliest opportunity when they are well enough to return.

TLP will deliver suitable personalised provision based on the level of need and age which will include some or all of the following:

- o Individual one to one teaching in the home or hospital or other suitable venue such as a public library with follow up work delivered by support workers
- o Support worker sessions to aid transition to school

The focus of the provision will be on core and examination entry subjects; however TLP will make all reasonable attempts to provide a broad and balanced curriculum including social and emotional aspects of learning.

Provision will change in response to the changing health status of the child.

TLP will provide educational progress reports three times a year and feedback via pupil voice at each personal educational planning (PEP) review meeting and regularly inform schools of the attendance and engagement of the pupil.

TLP will ensure that all service staff access regular high quality continuous professional development and are kept up to date with educational developments and current good practice.

### **School responsibilities**

A pupil unable to attend school because of health needs will not be removed from the school register without parental consent and certification from the school medical officer even if TLP have become responsible for the pupil's education. Prime responsibility for their education lies with that school. Continuity is important for the pupil: knowing that they can return to their school friends can help their recovery and educational progress. Where the pupil is receiving education via TLP the school will B code absence in the school register for the sessions accessed by the pupil.

Schools are responsible for providing support to pupils who are absent from school because of illness for a shorter period than 15 days, for example by enabling access to the school virtual learning platform or sending work home.

In some cases where a pupil is hospitalised for a protracted period of time, education is provided by a hospital school. In such cases the hospital school will liaise directly with the school. In some cases TLP may support the planning of provision.

It is good practice for schools to have a publicly accessible policy that sets out how pupils with health needs will be supported.

Schools, should have a named contact person to liaise with TLP, parents and health professionals. This works best where the named contact is a member of the senior management team and has the authority to agree support on reintegration, for example the Inclusion Leader.

The named school contact will liaise with TLP to arrange personal educational planning meetings usually held in the school or in the home every 6 to 8 weeks. Parents, pupils, health professionals and any other involved parties will be invited to attend.

The named school contact will ensure that class teachers/heads of department provide TLP with all necessary curriculum resources in order that the pupil can complete courses and prepare for assessments and examinations.

The school will provide opportunities for the pupil to maintain contact with their peers and the wider school community through newsletters, invitations to performances and events etc. The school will provide TLP with all relevant educational information, including prior assessments, attainment and achievement, curriculum details, public examinations entered, timelines for controlled assessments, dates of examinations etc.

The school will apply to the awarding body for any necessary special arrangements for pupils with disabilities or indispositions, for example allowing pupils to sit examinations in a venue other than at school.

### **Arranging provision**

Schools should make a referral to TLP at the earliest date when a pupil is too sick to attend school using the ISEND Front Door referral form (see further sources of information for link). Medical evidence from a medical practitioner (paediatrician or CAHMS) stating that the pupil is currently too sick to attend school needs to be attached to the referral. The referral needs to include details of the reasonable adjustments in place and the dates of the review meetings and a copy of the active Additional Needs Plan. To avoid delay in provision TLP will support pupils absent from school who are currently supported at GP level but medical evidence from the GP needs to state that further investigation from a medical consultant has been sought.

TLP will write to the school via email to state whether the referral has been accepted. If the referral is not accepted a reason will be given and the school may be signposted to another agency.

TLP will contact the school and ask them to arrange a PEP meeting at the school, where possible. The provision agreed will be informed by advice from medical professionals, the school, the views of the parents and the pupil. Where the pupil's illness is protracted updated medical evidence will be requested.

### **Reintegration**

We recognise that, whenever possible, pupils should receive their education within their mainstream school and the aim of the provision will be to reintegrate pupils back into mainstream education at the earliest opportunity as soon as they are well enough. Arrangements for reintegration will be discussed with school staff and each pupil will have a

personalised reintegration plan. Information is also available through the SEN Matrix (see further sources of information for link)

TLP will support the reintegration of a pupil where necessary by allocating a support worker. Schools will facilitate the successful reintegration of pupils who have sufficiently recovered by making any necessary reasonable adjustments under equalities legislation which may include for example a gradual reintegration, additional adult support or attendance at a learning support facility within the school.

### **Further sources of information**

‘Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs Statutory guidance for local authorities’ January 2013

<http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/statutory/g00219676/health-needs-education>

‘Alternative Provision: A guide for local authorities, head teachers and governing bodies of schools, pupil referral units and other providers of provision’

<http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/statutory/g00211923/alternative-provision>

Advice to schools on attendance

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/attendance>

Special Educational Needs East Sussex Local Offer To Families

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/childrenandfamilies/specialneeds/>

ESCC SEN Matrix of Need and Provision

<https://czone.eastsussex.gov.uk/inclusion-and-send/sen-matrix/the-matrix/>

ISEND Front Door Referral Form

<https://czone.eastsussex.gov.uk/inclusion-and-send/front-door-referrals/>

### **TLP Contact details**

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