



Blackburn with Darwen L.A.

St. Thomas's Centre

Policy to support Pupils with Health
Needs That Cannot Attend School

2023 - 2024

Review Date: September 2024

Aims

This policy aims to ensure that:

- Suitable education is arranged for pupils who are on roll who cannot attend school due to health needs
- That pupils, staff and parents understand what school is responsible for when this education is being provided

St Thomas's Centre aims to ensure that all pupils who are unable to attend school due to medical needs, and who would not receive suitable education without such provision, continue to have access to as much education as their medical condition allows, to enable them to reach their full potential.

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

We understand that we have a continuing role in a pupil's education whilst they are not in school and will work with the base schools, healthcare partners and families to ensure that all pupils with medical needs receive the right level of support to enable them to maintain links with their education.

Legislation and guidance

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, 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 pupils at school with medical conditions'.

The responsibilities of the referring school (dual registered)

Initially, the base school will make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of the individual pupils and to ensure they can deliver a suitable education for pupils with health needs who struggle to attend school. This could be by having a reduced timetable, sending support home to educate, remote learning etc.

If the school can't make suitable arrangements then they will initiate a planning meeting, inviting parents / carers and relevant healthcare professional. At the meeting a discussion will be held with regards to arrangements for alternative provisions and whether the health care professional feels that it is best suited to the pupils needs at that particular time. They will then provide the mainstream school with the supporting consultants letter and the school will then be able to refer to St Thomas's Centre for a medical placement.

Should St Thomas's Centre be able to offer a medical place, an admission meeting will be arranged with school, parents / carers and where possible the healthcare professional to agree a provision that would meet the individual's needs. The placement will be regularly reviewed with an end goal of returning to the mainstream school.

It is the responsibility of the referring school to maintain overall responsibility for the pupil even though St Thomas's Centre provide the educational package.

St Thomas's Centre will:

Ensure the education pupils receive is of good quality, allows them to take appropriate qualifications, prevents them from falling behind their peers in school, and allows them to reintegrate successfully back into school as soon as possible.

It will:

- Address the needs of individual pupils in arranging provision.
- Have a keyperson responsible for the pupils who have additional health needs and ensure parents know who this is.
- Have a written, publicly accessible policy statement on their arrangements to comply with their legal duty towards pupils with additional health needs.
- Review the provision offered regularly to ensure that it continues to be appropriate for the child and that it is providing suitable education.
- 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 pupil returning to school;
- Consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made.

- Work and liaise with all professional involved to ensure the correct level of support is offered.

St Thomas's Centre Management Committee and Headteacher are responsible for:

- Ensuring arrangements for pupils who cannot attend school as a result of their medical needs are in place and are effectively implemented.
- Ensuring the termly review of the arrangements made for pupils who cannot attend school due to their medical needs are updated and monitored.
- Ensuring the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the arrangements to support the needs of pupils are clear and understood by all.
- Ensuring robust systems are in place for dealing with health emergencies and critical incidents, for both on- and off-site activities.
- Ensuring staff with responsibility for supporting pupils with health needs are appropriately trained.
- Providing teachers who support pupils with health needs with suitable information relating to a pupil's health condition and the possible effect the condition and/or medication taken has on the pupil.

St Thomas's SENCo is responsible for:

- Supporting with pupils who are unable to attend school because of medical needs.
- Actively monitoring pupil progress and reintegration into school.
- Supplying pupils' education providers with information about the pupil's capabilities, progress and outcomes.
- Liaising with the headteacher, education providers and parents to determine the programmes of study whilst they are absent from their mainstream school.
- Liaising with all professionals involved to ensure the education is fit for purpose and adequate for the pupil.
- Supporting and liaising with staff who educate the pupils.
- Sourcing relevant information on any medical conditions that are relevant to the current co-hort.

Teachers and Support Staff are responsible for:

- Understanding confidentiality in respect of pupils' health needs.
- Designing lessons and activities in a way that allows those with health needs to participate fully and ensuring pupils are not excluded from activities that they wish to take part in without a clear evidence-based reason.
- Understanding their role in supporting pupils with health needs and ensuring they attend the required training.

- Ensuring they are aware of the needs of their pupils through the appropriate and lawful sharing of the individual pupil's health needs.

Absences

Parents are advised to contact the school on the first day their child is unable to attend due to illness. Absences due to illness will be authorised unless the school has genuine cause for concern about the authenticity of the illness.

For hospital admissions, the appointed named member of staff, will liaise with the pupil's tutors and mainstream school and work with them at the hospital.

The school will monitor pupil attendance and mark registers to ensure it is clear whether a pupil is, or should be, receiving education otherwise than at school. Where a pupil does not attend or engage with the provision St Thomas's provides it could result in the medical provision package ending.

Support for pupils

Where a pupil has a complex or long-term health issue, the school will discuss the pupil's needs and how these may be best met with the LA, relevant medical professionals, parents and, where appropriate, the pupil. The LA expects the school to support pupils with health needs to attend full-time education wherever possible, or for the school to make reasonable adjustments to pupils' programmes of study where medical evidence supports the need for those adjustments.

The school will make reasonable adjustments under pupils' individual healthcare plans (IHCPs), in accordance with the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy.

Pupils admitted to hospital will receive education as determined appropriate by the medical professionals and hospital tuition team.

During a period of absence, the school will work with the provider of the pupil's education to establish and maintain regular communication and effective outcomes.

Where appropriate, the base school will provide the pupil's education provider with relevant information, curriculum materials and resources.

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

- a personalised or part-time timetable, drafted in consultation with the named staff member;
- Access to additional support in school;

- Movement of lessons to more accessible rooms;
- Places to rest at school;
- Exam access arrangements to manage anxiety or fatigue.

Hospital Education

St Thomas's is commissioned by the LA to provide education for pupils from all Local Authorities in Blackburn Royal Hospital.

St Thomas's will:

- Liaise with the designated member of staff from the Children's Ward to ensure the relevant pupils on the ward are being educated.
- Respond to request of education - planned admission for more than 5 days - from the designated member of staff from the hospital.
- Liaise with mainstream school in regards to learning and work that the pupils need to complete.
- Offer daily support if appropriate to complete the work that has been set.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

Any changes in the policy will be clearly communicated to all members of staff involved in supporting pupils with additional health needs, and to parents and pupils themselves.

Definitions

Pupils 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**
- **Emotional difficulties**
- **Progressive conditions**
- **Terminal illnesses**
- **Chronic illnesses**

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

- Hospital school where education is provided to give continuity whilst the pupil is receiving treatment.
- Medical PRUs: these are LA establishments that provide education for pupils unable to attend their registered school due to their medical needs.
- Provision can consist of being taught in the home or community, in our Hub or in classes on either Lambeth street or Hawthorn street site.

Links to other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Accessibility plan
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions
- Attendance policy
- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) policy