

DARRICK WOOD SCHOOL
CHILDREN WITH HEALTH NEEDS WHO CANNOT ATTEND SCHOOL POLICY

Reviewed: November 2025

Agreed: November 2025

Next Review Due: November 2026

Person Responsible: Mrs R Cardy

MISSION STATEMENT:

To ensure that suitable education is arranged for pupils on roll who cannot attend school due to health needs and that pupils, staff and parents understand what the School is responsible for when this education is being provided by the local authority.

GOALS

Customer Goal:

To support students and parents accessing education in the most appropriate setting when a student has additional health needs

Curriculum Goal:

To ensure all students have access to appropriate education taking in to account their health needs.

School Community Goal:

To be an inclusive school that adapts to the needs to its students.

Quality Goal:

To strive for the highest outcomes for all students regardless of their additional health needs.

Introduction

The School is dedicated to providing a suitable education to pupils who cannot attend due to health needs in accordance with legislation and the requirements of the Education Act 1996.

This policy will detail the School's responsibilities in meeting this provision and how it will monitor the arrangements put in place.

Statement of Intent

Darrick Wood School aims to support the LA and ensure that all children 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 children may be admitted to hospital or placed in alternative forms of education provision. We recognise that, whenever possible, students should

receive their education within their school and the aim of the provision will be to reintegrate students back into school as soon as they are well enough.

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

Local Authority Duties

The LA must arrange suitable full-time education for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would not receive suitable education without such provision. The School has a duty to support the LA in doing so.

The LA should:

- Provide such education as soon as it is clear that a student will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative. They should liaise with the appropriate medical professionals to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the student.
- Ensure the education students 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.
- Address the needs of individual students in arranging provision.
- Have a named officer responsible for the education of children with additional health needs and ensure parents/carers know who this is.
- Have a written, publicly accessible policy statement on their arrangements to comply with their legal duty towards children 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.
- Give clear policies on the provision of education for children and young people under and over compulsory school age.

Definitions

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
- Progressive conditions
- Terminal illnesses
- Chronic illnesses

Our School will request medical evidence of these medical needs and an indication that students are not able to attend school as part of our attendance and absence recording procedures. The evidence provided should come from the medical team that is currently working with the child, not from a GP, and must state that a child is unfit to attend school at this time.

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: home tuition services that act as a communication channel between schools and students on occasions where students are too ill to attend school and are receiving specialist medical treatment.
- Medical PRUs: these are LA establishments that provide education for children unable to attend their registered school due to their medical needs.

Bromley's 'Personalised Education Service' is available to all pupils of compulsory school age who are unable to access school due to medical needs. Pupils are referred via the Local Authority Gateway Panel with evidence of need.

Pupils are eligible for this service if they are a resident of Bromley and

- Have a medical letter requesting support from the Personalised Education Service as part of a medical care plan. The letter must state that the child is unable to attend school. The letter cannot come from a GP and must come from a medical team currently working with the child.
- Are awaiting appropriate provision of education in mainstream, special needs school or alternative provision with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

Responsibilities of the School

On receipt of appropriate medical evidence, the School will make arrangements to deliver suitable education for children with health needs who cannot attend school. The SENCO will be responsible for making and monitoring arrangements for working from home or hospital with parents/carers.

Arrangements may include:

- Uploading classwork or resources to online platforms such as Teams
- Keeping in touch with a pupil via email
- Completing a Gateway referral to support a pupil in accessing alternative education

Once a pupil is able, they will be integrated back into school. Alternative arrangements may be used to make this possible. These will be discussed with parents/carers and the pupil and made in conjunction with any advice from medical professionals. To ensure that a pupil with additional health needs is able to attend school following an extended period of absence, adaptations may need to be considered including:

- A personalised timetable, drafted in consultation with parents and using the advice of medical professionals
- Access to additional support in school
- Support in moving around the school site where possible, or funding is provided
- Places to rest
- Special examination arrangements
- Alternative provision for break or lunch times

The Head Teacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring arrangements for pupils who cannot attend school as a result of their medical needs are in place and are effectively implemented and regularly reviewed
- 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
- Ensuring staff, who support pupils with health needs, have access to suitable information relating to a pupil's health condition and the possible effect the condition and/or medication taken has on the pupil
- Ensuring the LA has been notified when a pupil is likely to be away from school for a significant period of time due to their health needs
- Ensuring that the School liaises with the alternative provision regarding any external examinations or assessments that are due to be completed, including completing any applications for special examination requirements or consideration

The SENCO is responsible for:

- Pupils who are unable to attend school because of medical needs
- Monitoring engagement, pupil progress and reintegration into school
- Supplying pupils' education providers with information about the child's capabilities, progress and outcomes
- Liaising with the Headteacher, education providers and parents to determine pupils' programmes of study whilst they are absent from school
- Liaising with medical professionals as appropriate
- Providing a link between pupils and their parents, and the LA
- Ensuring teachers and support staff are kept informed of the health needs relating to pupils they work with

The Mental Health Lead and Pastoral teams will support the SENCO with the above.

Teachers and Support staff are responsible for:

- Understanding confidentiality in respect of pupils' health needs
- Designing lessons and activities in a way that allows pupils with health needs to participate fully, ensuring they 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 any required training
- Ensuring they are aware of the needs of their pupils through the appropriate sharing of the individual pupil's health needs
- Ensuring they are aware of the signs, symptoms and triggers in relation to the medical needs of the pupil and know what to do in an emergency
- Reading and understanding any medical care plans and reporting any concerns to the SENCO

Responsibilities of Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Ensure the regular and punctual attendance of their child at school where possible
- Work in partnership with the School to ensure the best possible outcomes for their child
- Notify the School of any reason for absence at the earliest possible opportunity
- Provide the School with sufficient and up-to-date information about their child's medical needs, including supplying medical evidence
- Attend meetings to discuss their child's support and progress

Managing Absences

- Parents and carers are advised to contact the School on the first day that their child is unable to attend due to illness. *This is reported using the StudyBugs app.*
- The School will provide support to students who are absent from school because of illness for a period of less than 15 school days by liaising with the student's parents/carers to arrange schoolwork as soon as the student is able to cope with it or during a phased return to school. The School will give due consideration to which aspects of the curriculum are prioritised in consultation with the student, 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 SENCO will notify the LA, who will take responsibility for the student and their education as long as suitable medical evidence as outlined above is received
- Where absences are anticipated or known in advance, the School will liaise with the LA to enable education provision to be provided from the start of the student's absence.
- The School will monitor student attendance and mark registers to ensure it is clear whether a student is, or should be, receiving education otherwise than at school

Support for Students

- Where a student has a complex or long-term health issue, the School will discuss their needs and how these may be best met with the LA, relevant medical professionals, parents/carers and, where appropriate, the student
- The School will support students with health needs to attend full-time education wherever possible, or for the School to make reasonable adjustments to students' programmes of study where medical evidence supports the need for those adjustments
- Students admitted to hospital will receive education as determined appropriate by the medical professionals and hospital tuition team at the hospital concerned
- During a period of absence, the School will work with the provider of the student's education to establish and maintain regular communication and effective outcomes
- Whilst a student is away from school, the School will work with the LA to ensure the student can successfully remain in touch with their school using some or all of the following methods:
 - School newsletters
 - Emails
 - Invitations to school events
 - Cards or letters from peers and staff

Reintegration

- When a student is considered well enough to return to full time education, the School will develop a tailored reintegration plan in collaboration with the LA
- The School will consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made to provide suitable access to the School and the curriculum for the student
- For longer absences, the reintegration plan will be developed near to the student's likely date of return, to avoid putting unnecessary pressure on an ill student or their parents/carers in the early stages of their absence
- The School is aware that some students will need gradual reintegration over a longer period of time although the aim is always to return a student to full time education. We expect pupils to attend school for five days per week although the hours that they attend may be reduced. The School will always consult with the student, their parents/carers and key staff about concerns, medical issues, timing and the pace of return

Information Sharing

- It is essential that all information about students with health needs is kept up-to-date. Parents and carers should update the School with any relevant information at the earliest possible opportunity
- All teachers, LSAs, supply and associate/support staff will be provided with access to relevant information, including high-risk health needs, first aiders and emergency procedures, via the agreed school procedures
- When a student is discharged from hospital or is returning from other education provision, the School will endeavour to obtain the appropriate information to allow for a smooth return to school
- Proper record keeping protects both staff and students and provides evidence that agreed procedures have been followed. Written records will be kept of all medicines received from a pupil/parent/carers that are stored on the school site, and of all medicines administered to students

Training

- Healthcare professionals should be involved in identifying and agreeing with the School the type and level of training required
- Once a student's return date has been confirmed, staff will be provided with relevant training and information before the student's anticipated return.
- Training will be sufficient to ensure staff are confident in their ability to support students with additional health needs
- Parents/carers of students with additional health needs may provide specific advice but will not be the sole trainer of staff

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by Mrs R Cardy, Assistant Head Teacher. At every review, it will be approved by the Local Governing Body.

Links to other policies

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'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following policies:

- Attendance and Punctuality
- Data Protection
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Special Educational Needs