

Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs Protocol

September 2024

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This document identifies the duties and local procedures for children who are unable to attend a mainstream or special school because of their health. The protocol applies to all children and young people who would normally attend mainstream schools, including academies, free schools, independent schools and special schools. It applies when a pupil cannot attend school at all or can only attend intermittently due to illness or specific health needs.

This document has been consulted on by: Information Advice and Support Service (IAS) and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM) schools as well as wider Achieving for Children (AfC) services (Early Help, Education Welfare Team, School Support and the Educational Psychology Service).

Principles

Education provision for pupils who are physically ill, injured or who have clinically defined mental health problems are the responsibility of **all schools and education services**. Where the pupil presents with a complex pattern of need it is important that a coordinated multi-agency approach is taken.

‘Supporting a pupil with a medical condition during school hours is not the sole responsibility of one person. A school’s ability to provide effective support will depend to an appreciable extent on working cooperatively with other agencies. Partnership working between school staff, healthcare professionals (and, where appropriate, social care professionals), local authorities, and parents and pupils will be critical.’

[Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions \(Dec 2015\)](#)

- Children and young people should attend school wherever possible. School attendance can significantly improve the wellbeing of a young person.
- Good planning between professionals enables pupils to participate in education, and return to school wherever possible.
- Schools should make every ‘reasonable adjustment’ (Education Act 2010) to enable pupils to be in school.
- Pupils with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education.

Statutory duties of local authorities

- Local authorities (LAs) have a statutory duty under section 19 of the Education Act to provide education other than at school for pupils unable to attend school because of illness or other health reasons who would not receive suitable education without such provision.
- Children’s services in RBWM are delivered by Achieving for Children. This statutory duty is therefore provided by AfC.

- Local authorities must have a named officer for children missing education. The name of this officer for AFC is Nico Auckbur. More details can be found on the Education welfare service information page on the [local offer](#)

Statutory duties of schools and academies

- Pupils at school with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education.
- Governing bodies must ensure that arrangements are in place in schools to support pupils at school with medical conditions.
- Governing bodies should ensure that school leaders consult health and social care professionals, pupils and parents to ensure that the needs of children with medical conditions are properly understood and effectively supported.

AfC RBWM has commissioned [RISE Alternative Learning Provision](#) to support them in fulfilling their duties for pupils with medical vulnerabilities. Suitable alternative provision is available within Windsor and Maidenhead. Out of borough and independent alternative provision is also accessible.

Objectives of the service

- To provide continuity of learning and facilitate inclusion.
- To arrange suitable full time education (or as much as the pupil's health needs allow) for children of compulsory school age as soon as it is clear that the pupil will be away from school for 15 school days or more, which do not have to be consecutive.
- To develop effective liaison arrangements with the pupil's home (main) school, parents, carers and other relevant professionals such as the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) team, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), attendance officers, family support workers, educational psychologists, school nurses and other health professionals and hospital staff to promote a joint approach to the pupil's needs.
- To track and monitor pupil progress and attendance while in receipt of medical tuition.
- To facilitate reintegration to school as and when appropriate through a tailored reintegration plan.
- To provide access to education from a range of available resources.
- To work in partnership with families, carers, medical professionals, schools and support agencies. Other professionals may include CAMHS, School Nursing Team or IAS.

Criteria for accessing support

There will be a wide range of circumstances where a pupil has a health need but will receive suitable education that meets their needs without the intervention of the local authority, for example where a pupil can still attend school with some support or where the school has made arrangements to deliver suitable education outside of school using the school's resources.

It is the responsibility of the school to continue to provide education for a pupil who can access school with adjustments, even if these are significant adjustments, often determined through an Individual Health Care Plan (IHP) or the Educational, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) process.

'The Children and Families Act 2014 places a duty on maintained schools and academies to make arrangements to support pupils with medical conditions... where children and young people also have SEN, their provision should be planned and delivered in a coordinated way with the healthcare plan.' ([SEND Code of Practice 2015](#))

The high needs funding system supports provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) from their early years to age 25, enabling local authorities and institutions to meet their statutory duties under the Children and Families Act 2014. High needs funding is also intended to support good quality alternative provision for pre-16 pupils who, because of exclusion, illness or other reasons, cannot receive their education in mainstream or special schools.

Schools must have a policy that sets out the support for pupils at school with medical conditions. (DfE statutory guidance September 2015). However, there are some pupils for whom the local authority must arrange suitable full-time education (or as much education as the pupil's health condition allows) who cannot attend school due to medical needs.

Support for pupils

Pupils of compulsory school age (5 to 16) who are unable to attend school due to medical needs or injury are eligible for support. Education should be provided as soon as the pupil will be away from school for 15 school days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative. Medical evidence must be provided by a health or CAMHS consultant. Where supporting medical evidence is not quickly available due to extensive service assessment waiting times, consideration will be given to other medical professional evidence, such as the pupil's GP.

Evidence must clearly state the medical diagnosis and the reasons why the pupil is too unwell to attend school. Where possible, it should also state the expected time period of the condition and absence from school. If a pupil is under the care of CAMHS, there is an expectation that CAMHS practitioners will form part of the multi-agency 'team around the child' (TAC) and support education professionals with advice and guidance and offer relevant timescales for regular medical tuition reviews which they attend and support.

Information regarding the additional support a young person is receiving from relevant health professionals is important to ensure educational support will compliment, rather

than hinder, any progress. All involved health professionals will be invited to attend review meetings, or provide a medical update.

There may be times when children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying behaviours that challenge, or worrying behaviour. It can occasionally result in Emotionally Related School Avoidance (ERSA). These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. When a health need presents as a social, emotional or mental health (SEMH) SEN, schools must consider what can be offered to support that need, with the help of the local authority.

AfC RBWM recognises that, whenever possible, pupils should receive their education within their own school and the aim of the provision will be to provide short term access to education and to support the pupil with reintegration back into their school at the earliest opportunity and as soon as they are well enough. Arrangements for reintegration will form an essential part of the plan.

Support from the Specialist Advisory Teacher Service is provided based on the medical needs of the pupil and cannot be a result of the home school not making appropriate adjustments to keep a pupil in school if they could be there with the appropriate adjustments.

Support that could be offered

Decisions about support offered to pupils will be based on the pupil's health needs and will involve discussions between the pupil, parents, home school, health professionals and local authority teams.

Support may be one, or a combination, of the following:

- 1:1 sessions in the home or the Bungalow
- Group sessions in the Bungalow
- Use of an AV1 robot to access lessons from school
- Access to lessons via the online platform 'EdClass'

The pupil's health needs will be paramount and final decisions will be based on the presenting needs and difficulties. The views of relevant health professionals will be sought and will be the main contributing factor to what support is offered.

If the home school does not agree with the offer of support, or feels that it cannot accommodate any necessary requirements, then it will become the responsibility of the school to provide education to the pupil during their absence.

Process for referral

Step 1

For pupils who are residents of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead or children who are looked after (CLA) by RBWM and not in hospital, requests must be made using the Pupils Educationally at Risk (PEAR) Hub. Requests will need to be initially triaged by the Specialist Advisory Teacher for Medical Needs, Clare Raffaelli (clare.raffaelli@achievingforchildren.org.uk)

During the triage you will be asked for more detailed information about the pupil including:

- confirmation that the pupil is medically unable to attend school
- the reason for the absence (physical or mental health condition)
- what the length of the absence from school is likely to be
- current support plan on offer from the school
- supporting medical advice from the health professional who treats your pupil. This must show the impact the physical or mental health condition has on the pupil's attendance and progress in school

If there is a diagnosed medical need and support with education is required, a referral to the PEAR Hub should be subsequently completed.

The PEAR Hub convenes once a month and includes members from a relevant selection of Local Authority and Health teams. However, if a health need arises unexpectedly and support is required sooner, contact Clare Raffaelli for a discussion as decisions can be made via an exceptional process when circumstances dictate necessity.

Step 2

The home school will be asked to present the pupil's case to the panel, outlining the presenting needs and what support the school is requesting. Depending on the medical advice and additional information given, an outcome may be:

- additional funding to support:
 - a placement at an alternative provision that has been commissioned by the school
 - access to an on-line education provider or similar, arranged by the school
- further support through signposting to another team
- an advice and guidance package to the school and young person
- the use of an AV1 Robot
- direct support for the pupil from the Specialist Advisory Teacher

If the medical evidence provided states that a young person is not going to be able to return to school at all, then a referral will be made to [Rise Alternative Provision](#). The pupil will remain on their home school roll, but will be dual rolled with Rise. The home school will then be responsible for submitting an application for a statutory needs assessment, if applicable, so a more specialist, long term educational setting can be explored.

There must always be:

- a clear and agreed time limit for support
- continued and regular input from health care provision

Pupils will remain on roll of their school during any period of alternative provision being offered.

Step 3

If direct support from the Specialist Advisory Teacher/Medical Needs Service is offered, an initial meeting will need to be arranged by the school, involving relevant school staff, the Specialist Advisory Teacher, the pupil's parents and any healthcare professionals if deemed necessary, during which a partnership agreement will be agreed. (See Appendix 1)

During the meeting, the scope and level of support needed will be discussed and agreed. A plan will be made to include a potential start date, transition arrangements and the responsibilities of all parties involved throughout the period of support

Step 4

Schools must continually review the pupil's progress and Individual Healthcare Plan, the minimum review period being termly. Reviews should include the lead professionals from all services providing support to the pupil.

In line with the [Working together to improve school attendance](#) guidance, any support offered to a pupil from the medical needs service should be recorded as code 'K' in the register for each session of support they receive. All other sessions in the school week should be coded using whichever code the school feels is best suited to the pupil's circumstances.

Roles and responsibilities

The school's role is to:

- create individual healthcare plans through partnership between the school, parents, healthcare professionals and, whenever appropriate, the pupil (see Appendix 2)
- arrange an initial meeting between the specialist advisory teacher, parents, the referring school, and medical representative to agree educational support, a mainstream reintegration plan and joint review cycle. Where the medical

representative's attendance at this meeting would cause a significant delay, the school may decide to obtain this information through a written report or verbally so that it can be available in the meeting

- maintain purposeful, regular contact with the pupil directly so they feel 'kept in mind' and have a sense of belonging to the school - this should be face-to-face at least weekly
- maintain communication with family to ensure they are kept up to date with school events (social as well as school curriculum meetings and parent interviews)
- provide a key worker who will coordinate, with multi-agencies, the individual healthcare plan and monitor the pupil's progress
- convene any subsequent planning and review meetings ensuring up-to-date medical evidence is available for the meeting
- convene and plan any annual review meetings for pupils with EHCPs
- continue to maintain any plans such as personal education plans and ISPs, etc
- Request statutory assessment for pupils should that be an appropriate course of action
- communicate information to all agencies involved
- provide the programme of curriculum and relevant materials, and liaise with the specialist advisory teacher to agree the individualised learning programme, ensuring termly plans and schemes of work are available in all subjects which the pupil would normally be studying, including exploring the use of blended or multi-platform learning
- be active in the monitoring of progress (including the marking of coursework for secondary pupils), etc
- loan of any appropriate resources relating to the pupil's education
- pay examination entry fees and arrangements, including the application for any exam concessions and commissioning any required testing
- make arrangements for any national assessment procedures
- assess of coursework for accreditation
- provide information, advice and guidance as appropriate for the pupil
- communicate any changes or alterations of the individual health care plan to all agencies
- implementation of the reintegration plan
- keep the pupil on roll

The school's special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) or inclusion leader is usually the person responsible for overseeing continued support and the key contact for the home school. However, schools may wish to appoint another member of staff to this role. It is important that the school contact remains constant for all pupils with medical needs to ensure effective communication between school and other professionals.

Sharing of information will be necessary between the Specialist Advisory Teacher, schools, health and other professionals and parents or carers. Schools and settings should make available relevant information such as school records, assessments, provision maps, planning, Individual Support Plans, EHCPs, reviews, relevant medical diagnosis, educational psychologist's report, professionals' reports and staff and pupil views, etc. Where the pupil has an active Child Protection (CP), Child in Need (CIN) or Early Help Family Support Plan, or is a child looked after (CLA), relevant information must be shared. Confidentiality and data protection policy must be followed involving the sharing and use of such information.

In accordance with statutory guidance January 2013, it is recognised that the home school or college has a central role in ensuring continuity in a pupil's education.

The local authority role is to:

- attend an initial meeting with the parents, the referring school and medical representative to agree educational support, mainstream reintegration plan and joint review cycle
- complete an initial home visit and risk assessment
- arrange medical tuition suitable to the pupil's needs as quickly as possible - tuition will start in the home and where possible local venues such as libraries
- liaise directly with the school regarding the individualised learning programme and, in the case of secondary pupils, support the return of set pieces of work for marking
- make sure the support will be sensitive to the needs of the pupil and the family and provide flexibility where possible
- provide regular reviews with pupils, parents, school and health professionals to monitor progress and plan for re integration
- support the pupil to successfully, when well enough, reintegrate into their school

The parent's role is to:

- ensure the pupil is up, dressed and ready to engage in learning
- ensure regular attendance (including access and engagement if at home)
- make sure, when in the home, a responsible adult is present in addition to the tutor
- provide an appropriate workspace (not in the pupil's bedroom) to allow work to be completed
- commit fully to the reintegration plan and eventual return to school
- provide early information to either the school or the Specialist Advisory Teacher if a problem arises
- attend meetings and agree to share information regarding the pupil's medical needs

- sign the tuition agreement form which outlines the expectations around tuition, including an appropriate home environment

The pupil's role is to:

- be ready to engage and work with the teachers
- complete any agreed independent homework within the agreed timescales
- be ready to communicate any needs or views
- work together with the teachers and the school regarding the planned return to school (reintegration)

Withdrawal of support from the specialist advisory teacher or alternative provision

Support for pupils with medical needs will cease when:

- the pupil is well enough to attend school
- the outcome of a review is that the pupil is returning to school and their educational needs are being met
- the pupil is too ill to access provision, in which case the final review meeting will agree an appropriate course of action with advice from medical professionals
- the young person fails to engage with or access the provision in which case the final review meeting will agree an appropriate course of action
- other provisions are agreed at a review meeting
- the pupil leaves school
- the pupil acquires an EHCP and their educational needs are met through it

Any questions regarding support and pupil's eligibility should be directed to Clare Raffaelli, Specialist Advisory Teacher for Medically Vulnerable Pupils:

E: clare.raffaelli@achievingforchildren.org.uk

Related documents

[Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions](#)

Statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academies in England, DfE (December 2015)

[Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs](#)

Statutory guidance for schools and local authorities, DfE (December 2023)

[Mental Health and behaviour in schools](#)

Non Statutory Guidance for Schools, DfE (November 2018)

[Alternative Provision](#)

Statutory guidance for local authorities, DfE (January 2013)

[Working together to improve school attendance](#)

Statutory guidance for schools and local authorities, DfE (August 2024)

[Section 19 of the Education Act 1996](#)

This guidance is also inline with RBWM's [Inclusion Charter](#)

This protocol will be reviewed annually and amended as necessary in line with government guidelines.

Appendix 1: Partnership agreement between school, AfC RBWM, parents and carers

The provision of education for pupils with medical needs that prevent them from attending school requires a partnership approach with each partner agreeing to certain roles and responsibilities.

Support will begin when the appropriate medical advice has been received and this document has been signed by all parties.

Pupil name:		Date of birth:	
School:			

School	Specialist advisory teacher	Parents and carers
The pupil is to remain the responsibility of the school they are on roll at.	Liaise with appropriate medical professionals and family to ensure minimal delay in arranging suitable provision for the pupil.	Parents to maintain close contact with Home school and specialist advisory teacher.
Attend an initial meeting to discuss support to be provided and arrange six weekly review meetings for pupil, parents and appropriate professionals.	Address the needs of individual pupils in arranging provision providing access to suitable and flexible education. Make a home visit and carry out a risk assessment.	Parents to encourage and support pupil to attend agreed sessions outside of the home and to work with professionals to support attendance if the pupil is struggling.
Provide a named contact responsible for dealing with Pupils unable to attend due to medical needs	Ensure that the education received is of good quality broad and balanced.	Parents to inform specialist advisory teacher of any medical appointments that will impact on tuition times.
Maintain regular, weekly contact with the pupil and family, through phone calls, video calls or home visits.	Keep the home school informed of the pupil's progress during the tuition period.	If support is provided in the home, parents to provide a quiet suitable place to work, free from distractions.
Provide information about the pupils' capabilities, levels and exams entered for (if appropriate).	Keep the parents informed of the pupil's progress and work closely with parents and pupil to consider their views.	Ensure a responsible adult is present when sessions are carried out within the home.
Supply an appropriate programme of work consistent with what the pupil would be studying if they were in school.	Ensure parental permission is gained before discussing pupil issues and respect confidentiality.	If three sessions are cancelled without due cause, support will be cancelled until a meeting can be arranged in the home school to discuss the next step.
Supply suitable resources to support programme of work.	Provide and request advice from other professionals.	Parents to share any educational, social or medical information that might affect their pupil's progress.

Assess all coursework and organise exam entries and arrangements for taking exams.	Encourage pupil to evaluate own learning as appropriate.	Support the agreed education programme and reintegration plan.
Convene regular (at least termly) review meetings, ensuring all relevant professionals are invited and relevant paperwork is available.	Provide support to facilitate a successful reintegration into school or next provider of education.	Attend all review meetings.
Apply for a statutory assessment if deemed necessary.		
Work with other professionals and the family to plan and implement a reintegration programme, if and when necessary.		
Keep the pupil and family informed about school events.		
Keep the pupil on roll.		
Headteacher or school contact	Specialist Advisory Teacher	Parent or carer
Signed	Signed	Signed
Date	Date	Date

Appendix 2: Individual healthcare plan

Name of school or setting	
Child's name	
Group, class, form	
Date of birth	
Child's address	
Medical diagnosis or condition	
Date	
Review date	

Family contact information	
Name	
Relationship to child	
Phone No (Mobile)	
Phone No (Home or work)	
Name	
Relationship to child	
Phone No (Mobile)	
Phone No (Home or work)	

Clinic or hospital contact	
Name	
Phone no	
GP	
Name	
Phone no.	

Who is responsible for providing support in school

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Describe medical needs and give details of child's symptoms, triggers, signs, treatments, facilities, equipment or devices, environmental issues, etc

Name of medication, dose, method of administration, when to be taken, side effects, contra-indications, administered by self-administered with or without supervision

Medication		Medication	
Dose		Dose	
Method of administration		Method of administration	
Side effects		Side effects	
Administered by self	Yes / No	Administered by self	Yes / No
Administered by staff	Yes / No	Administered by staff	Yes / No

Daily care requirements

Diet, timetable, activities, other requirements, special educational needs
(Please give details)

Specific support for the pupil's educational, social and emotional needs**Arrangements for school visits, trips, etc****Other information****Describe what constitutes an emergency, and the action to take if this occurs****Who is responsible in an emergency (state if different for off-site activities)**

1.

2.

Plan developed with
1.
2.
3.
4.

Staff training needed/undertaken – who, what, when		
Staff name	Training title	Date delivered/by who

Signed		
Parent or carer		Date:
School healthcare lead		Date:
Headteacher		Date:

Adapted from the government publication on [supporting pupils at school with medical conditions](#)