R A Butler Academy Infant & Junior Schools

Children with health needs who cannot attend school policy

April 2025

THIS POLICY IS REGULARLY REVIEWED FOLLOWING RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES.

Aims

This policy aims to ensure that:

- RA Butler Academy aims to 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, pupils should receive their education within their school and the aim of the provision will be to reintegrate pupils back into school 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 medical professionals, other key professionals such as social services 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.

Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of the Education Act 1996.

It is also based on guidance provided by our local authority. EA Medical Policy September 2022.docx (live.com), which is general good practice derived from DfE guidance. Additional health needs guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Managing a pupil's medical needs in school

School's role:
Where a pupil is unable to attend school due to their medical needs RA Butler Academy will demonstrate how we have arranged to support the pupil by adopting the TPP values of compassion and kindness, hope and connection and belonging while they are struggling with school attendance.
We will demonstrate that we have sought and followed advice from all relevant professionals. These may include:

- Health professionals,
- EP service,
- PNI Specialist Teachers,
- Essex County Council Attendance team
- SEND Quadrant team.

The school will refer to the Let's Talk: We Miss you - Best practice and Guidance for maximising school attendance including Emotionally Based School Avoidance.
The school, in discussion with health care professionals, may wish to prepare an individual health care plan to evidence how the pupil's health needs can be managed in school – this will be shared with parents and the pupil where appropriate.
For students on the SEN register support will be given by the SENCO and involve identifying and implementing strategies to support better attendance.

Parent / Carers role:
RA Butler Academy expects that parents and carers will seek advice from a qualified medical practitioner or, for children with mental health issues, the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). Parents should seek medical guidance around reasonable adjustments that the school should consider, alongside strategies to support. Advice should be shared with the school to assist them with their support plan or individual health care plan.

Obtaining medical advice and guidance for pupils who are struggling to maintain regular school attendance

Whilst there is an expectation that referrals will be accompanied by appropriate medical advice and guidance outlining the situation, referrals will not be delayed because a pupil is awaiting specialist support and / or struggling to engage with support. The Local Authority Education Access team will consider all available evidence and will, where appropriate, review the educational needs of the pupil with the school, parents / carers and all other professionals involved.

Pupils with an EHCP, SEND or undergoing an EHC needs assessment

Where support is being requested on medical grounds for a pupil with SEND, the school should first discuss the situation with the SEND Operations Team to determine the most appropriate route to follow.
Where a pupil is presenting with an anxiety condition, an urgent review of the pupil's provision is required through the annual review process. This should be attended by the relevant SEND Operations Partner from the SEND Operations Team and the referring school.
Where a change of provision is considered appropriate but there is a delay in securing an appropriate placement, access to interim education arrangements should be discussed with the SEND Operations Team.
The school may wish to advise the parents / carers to contact the SEND IASS team.
http://www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk/listing/send-information-advice-and-support-service/

Pupils unable to attend school because of pregnancy

Please refer to the separate guidance document available on Essex Schools Infolink

Pupils in hospital

Education provision will be available during term time for pupils admitted to the children's wards of the following Essex hospitals by the following services:

- Basildon Hospital – Reintegration Service South
- Broomfield Hospital - Heybridge Co-operative Academy
- Colchester General Hospital - North East Essex Co-operative Academy
- Princess Alexandra Hospital - Reintegration Service West
- Addenbrookes Hospital – Pilgrim Pathways School

Making a referral to Education Access

When a pupil is unable to attend school due to their medical needs for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative, the school should complete the Education Access medical referral form and submit electronically to medical@essex.gov.uk.
The referral form can be accessed through the Education Access pages on Essex Schools Infolink. All referrals need to be completed in full and accompanied by supporting medical advice as highlighted above to avoid delay.
It is the school's responsibility to ensure that any referral is received by Education Access and they must make direct contact with Education Access to confirm receipt.

Education for pupils accepted as medical referrals
Process and partnership agreement

Where a referral has been agreed Education Access will work in partnership with the school, family, and pupil to determine the most appropriate support.
The school will be asked to convene a school-based partnership meeting. The *School based meeting (SBM) and Partnership Agreement* document will be agreed by all parties before the placement can begin.
Pupils with a medical need will remain on the school roll and the school will be expected to arrange review meetings every six weeks. If provision is required beyond week 12 then opinions and advice will be sought from a range of professionals. This will form part of the on-going support plan for the pupil. Schools should be aware that Key Stage Funding will be reclaimed on a pro rata basis after the twelve-week period.
Support available will generally be through our commissioned medical support services and the Medical needs team - Heybridge Co-operative Academy
but may also include:

- AV1 – No Isolation robots
- Online learning packages

If, exceptionally, a different service is required for a pupil this will be sourced through the Education Directorate's alternative education framework.
The decision whether to accept a pupil for support on medical grounds rests entirely with the education directorate within Essex County Council. Referrals must not be made directly to a provider; ECC will liaise with providers to ensure the best available offer is made.
Staff from the identified provider will support pupils in a suitable venue, or exceptionally, in the pupil's home if supported by appropriate medical evidence. If support is required in the home, it will be necessary for the provider to carry out an appropriate risk assessment. If the pupil is supported in the home, there must always be a responsible adult present.

Review meetings
Once provision has started the school will be required to host and chair regular review meetings (normally every 6 weeks), produce action plans, and distribute minutes of these meetings within five school days to those present and Education Access.
Education Access will review the pupil's needs and provision at their half termly provider review meetings and will arrange to attend future meetings if there are concerns around the referral that need to be resolved.

Reintegration
The aim will be to support reintegration to school as soon as the pupil is well enough, and the school will be expected to complete the Reintegration/Engagement document to inform the school-based partnership meeting.

Roles and Responsibilities It is important to link with partner agencies to ensure appropriate support is in place to meet the pupil's educational needs. There is an expectation that the school, Education Access, provider, health, and other support services along with the family and pupil will work together to ensure we achieve the best possible outcomes. It is important to ensure that the nature of provision and hours offered is responsive to the changing health status of the child and in line with evidence from a range of professionals.
We will work collaboratively with the commissioned service to ensure that the pupil is fully supported and is not educationally disadvantaged due to their medical need. The referring school will also assist the commissioned service in supporting reintegration once the pupil is well enough to begin transition.

The **school's** role is to:

- Identify a member of SLT or the SENCO (for SEND students), who are able to make decisions, to host and chair regular review meetings (normally every 6 weeks), produce action plans, and distribute minutes of these meetings within five school days
- Provide a named member of staff with whom each party can liaise (this will be a member of the SEN team or an SSL). The named contact will ensure that the class teachers will provide all curriculum resources.
- Where possible support the pupil to access education in non-core subjects during the period that they are not attending school
- Be proactive in supporting the pupil to still feel part of the school community whilst they are not well enough to attend school
- Provide a suitable working area within the school for the pupil / education provider where necessary
- Be proactive in planning and supporting the reintegration of the pupil back into school as soon as they are well enough. Where necessary the school will need to make reasonable adjustments under equalities legislation. This duty is anticipatory, and adjustments must be put in place beforehand to prevent a pupil experiencing disadvantage
- Ensure that pupils who are unable to attend school, are kept informed about school social events and are encouraged to maintain contact with their peers
- Ensure that there is updated medical advice provided to assist with progressing the case and to support reintegration

- Where a pupil is unable to take their exams within the school setting, it is the school's responsibility to organise those exams, secure an invigilator and locate a safe venue

The **parents'/ carers'** role is to:

- Provide current medical guidance when requested
- Provide early communication if a problem arises or help is needed
- Attend necessary meetings
- Reinforce with their child, the value of a return to school and support the engagement and reintegration process
- Ensure that their child is ready for and attends all provision offered
- Take responsibility for safeguarding their child when they are not receiving education
- Encourage participation with school and peers

The **pupil's role** is to:

- Be ready to work with the provider
- Be prepared to communicate their views
- Engage with school and other agencies as appropriate
- Prepare for reintegration
- Participate in school and with peers when able to

Attendance

- Pupils accessing offsite provision due to medical needs must remain on their school roll. The pupil should be marked using the appropriate attendance code.
    - Code D- pupil is attending a PRU/ AP Free School/ DfE registered alternative provision
    - Code B- an approved alternative provision that does not involve the pupil being registered at any other school

- If a pupil is absent from school, schools should continue to use to appropriate absence code until a pupil's start date with the alternative provision provider is confirmed.

Monitoring attendance

- As a pupil accessing support on medical grounds remains on roll, the school's statutory duties to monitor attendance still apply as detailed below:

Dual registration- code D

- Where a pupil is dual registered, the pupil's enrolment status will be subsidiary 'S' to the registered alternative provider and 'M' for the main school.
- This code is not counted as a possible attendance code in the School Census and is used to indicate that the excluded pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend at another registered setting.
- The registered alternative provider will record the pupil's attendance and absence; schools must ensure that they are fully aware of the alternative provider's procedure for unexplained or unexpected absence.
- The expectation is on the registered alternative provider to follow its attendance policy for any unauthorised absence.
- As part of schools monitoring procedures for pupils accessing offsite provision, schools are advised to request daily attendance from the registered alternative provider.
- Where the alternative offer of education is not full time, schools should continue to use registration code D as the pupil is not expected to return. The registered alternative provider will reflect the absence in its attendance register.
- If a pupil is on a split timetable between the school and the registered alternative provider, the school should only use the D code for the sessions/days that the pupil is expected to attend their

offsite provision. School should use the appropriate attendance/absence code for the days the pupil is expected onsite.

- The alternative provider would D code for all sessions the pupil is expected to attend in school.

Education offsite- code B

- Where the LA has not been able to secure a placement with a registered alternative provision, code B should be used to reflect the approved educational activity. An example being a 1:1 tuition offer.
- It is the school's responsibility to ensure that that they are aware of the pupil's timetable; a B code can only be used when a pupil is present at an offsite educational activity.
- If there is no scheduled alternative educational activity, the appropriate absence code should be used if a pupil is not expected in school.
- Schools will need to monitor a pupil's attendance from their confirmed start date. Schools will need to agree a method for requesting daily attendance from the alternative provider to ensure accurate attendance coding.
- If a pupil does not attend a scheduled session, schools will need to mark using the appropriate absence code.
- Schools will need to follow their attendance policy regarding pupil absence and ensure welfare checks are conducted where necessary.

Safeguarding

- Schools should share any safeguarding concerns with the provider from the outset to ensure that the provider can accurately risk assess their support. A chronology of all CP concerns should be completed and shared at the point of referral into the LA. **(Appendix H)**


Appendix H.docx

- Schools should request timetable information for pupils accessing offsite provision; school must share concerns with the provider and the LA if it is felt that the pupil's offer of education is placing them at any additional risk.
- Schools should refer to the providers safeguarding policy to inform their procedures for monitoring pupils accessing offsite provision. Schools should be clear on how the provider manages child protection concerns, including evidence of any action taken. Schools must be clear on the providers process for sharing safeguarding information.

Dual registration- code D

- If a pupil is accessing support through a DfE registered alternative provision, the expectation is on the registered alternative provider to take forward any child protection concerns in accordance with its safeguarding policy as the pupil is under their care.
- The school will need to agree with the registered alternative provider how child protection concerns will be shared. Schools must have oversight in the management of safeguarding concerns for dual registered pupils as they remain responsible for all pupils on their admissions register.

Education off site- code B

- If the LA has commissioned an unregistered alternative provider to deliver the pupil's onward education, the school must ensure that the process for sharing child protection concerns is agreed with the unregistered provider without delay.

- The LA will only commission alternative provision providers listed on the Alternative Provision Directory; all providers listed on the directory have been assessed and quality assured using clearly defined standards.
- Where a child is at risk of significant harm, the alternative provider should call the Children and Families Hub on 0345 603 7627 and ask for the 'Priority Line' (or call the Police on 999). The provider must inform the school as soon as possible.

- The school will be required to take forward any necessary actions arising from the concern in accordance with its safeguarding policy.

- Schools remain responsible for safeguarding all pupils on its admissions register so will ensure robust measures are in place for all pupils accessing offsite education.

Keeping the pupil in mind

Settings must ensure that arrangements are in place for the pupil and the pupil's parent / carer to continue to receive parent/carer communications. Settings should also consider what reasonable adjustments it can make to ensure that the pupil still feels a part of the school community, and that the pupil knows they are being kept in mind.

Examples include:

- A link member of staff assigned to the pupil who undertakes regular visits to the alternative provision placement;
- Regular invitation to tutor time via remote access if necessary
- Settings continue to reward progress and positive behaviour for pupils accessing offsite alternative education in line with their own policies
- Pupil's accessing offsite alternative education to be included in awards celebrations.
- Consideration given to pupils accessing settings for morning/ after school activities where appropriate
- Consideration given as to how the pupil's peer group remain in communication
- Adjustments made to the pupil's timetable at the point of reintegration where required

Ending of support

The decision to end the commissioned alternative education programme sits with Education Access. Education Access will liaise with the school, provider, health services, family, and pupil to ensure plans are in place to support the pupil with their education.

Further advice and guidance

For further advice or guidance please contact Education Access at medical@essex.gov.uk