

# Supporting Children unable to attend school due to health needs

**Approved: January 2026**

---

**Approved by: Trust Board**

---

**Review due: January 2028**

---

**Lead author: Trust Designated Safeguarding Lead**

## **OUR VISION**

A community of primary and secondary academies that are the first choice for students and families in Sussex, with an outstanding reputation for high aspiration and high achievement.

*Achieving success together*

## Contents

1. Aims.....	2
2. Legislation & guidance .....	2
3. The responsibilities of the school .....	2
4. Monitoring Arrangements .....	7
5. Links to other policies .....	7

## 1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure that:

- Suitable education is arranged for pupils on roll who cannot attend school due to health needs.
- Pupils, staff and parents understand what the school is responsible for when this education is being provided by the local authority.

## 2. Legislation & guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of the [Education Act 1996](#), [Equality Act 2010](#) and is in accordance with the DfE guidance 'Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs' December 2023.

## 3. The responsibilities of the school

### 3.1 If the school makes arrangements

The school lead will meet the family to assess medical needs and current medical evidence. This will be the responsibility of the Year Leader in conjunction with the Senior Leader responsible for pastoral support to both organise and monitor any arrangements put into place.

The school should also consider starting an individual healthcare plan or an additional needs plan which must be reviewed at least once.

The school should also make reasonable adjustments using the [traffic light checklist](#).

If the green and amber measures are not sufficient, consider a referral to Teaching and Learning Provision (TLP).

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 who 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.

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.

### When Teaching and Learning Provision (TLP) provide the student's education

Where appropriate, 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).

1 The term school is used to refer to mainstream schools, free schools, academies, independent schools and special schools

2 Regulation 9 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 sets out the circumstances in which a pupil can be deleted from a school's admission register.

Medical evidence from a consultant-level 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 may 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.

School 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 leadership team and has the authority to agree support on reintegration for example the Inclusion Manager or SENCO.

The named school contact will liaise with TLP, where provision is supplied by that organisation, to arrange personal educational planning meetings usually held in the school or in the home on a regular basis. 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 requested in order that the pupil can complete courses and prepare for assessments and examinations.

The school should 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 at school level

The school will be able to organise a number of possible arrangements. These will depend upon the severity and length of the student's health needs, the capacity within the school to resource the arrangements made, the number of other students who are already being supported and the ability to effectively communicate with the student and their family. Examples include, but are not restricted to:

- Online learning
- Completion of student work available from the school website
- Work sent home
- Use of third-party software or resources, e.g. MathsWatch
- Use of hospital school (where available)

The school will make arrangements with parents/carers of the student and will aim to invite parents/carers to a meeting (where this is both practical and possible) to discuss the possible arrangements that can be made.

## 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 5 which may include for example, a gradual reintegration, additional adult support or attendance at a learning support facility within the school.

The school will seek to reintegrate students who have been absent due to health needs under the guidance of medical evidence and advice for any reasonable adjustments that need to be made to accommodate the student's return. This is likely to involve a transition period between absence and full attendance and may also include changes to:

- Timetable
- Times school is attended
- Lessons which are attended
- Staff involved to support the return to school
- Additional resources used to support the return to school

### 3.2 If the local authority makes arrangements

If the school can't make suitable arrangements, East Sussex will become responsible for arranging suitable education for these children. 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.

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<sup>3</sup> 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 – for example, for pupils in Key Stage 4 full-time education in a school would usually be 25 hours a week. If they receive one to one teaching, the hours of face to face provision will be fewer as the provision is more concentrated.

Suitable means suitable to the child's age, aptitude, ability and any special educational needs that he or she may have. Suitable education is defined on the Czone website page for TLC

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 contact details are **Telephone:** 01273 336 888 **Email:** [TLP@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:TLP@eastsussex.gov.uk).

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

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

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.

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

- 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.
- E-learning: live lessons delivered by qualified teachers in core and foundation subjects at KS3 and core subjects at KS4.
- Small group teaching and personalised learning delivered in one of three Teaching and Learning Centres in Battle, Eastbourne and Lewes for KS3 and KS4

- Support worker sessions to aid transition to school.

In cases where the local authority makes arrangements, the school will:

- Work constructively with the local authority, providers, relevant agencies and parents to ensure the best outcomes for the pupil
- Share information with the local authority and relevant health services as required
- Help make sure that the provision offered to the pupil is as effective as possible and that the child can be reintegrated back into school successfully
- When reintegration is anticipated, work with the local authority to:
- Plan for consistent provision during and after the period of education outside the school, allowing the pupil to access the same curriculum and materials that they would have used in school as far as possible
- 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 child returning to school
- Consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made

## 4. Monitoring Arrangements

It is the responsibility of the governing body to monitor this policy and ensure that it is reviewed every 2 years.

## 5. Links to other policies

This policy is linked to the following other policies:

- Equal opportunities
- Attendance
- Child protection and safeguarding
- Supporting pupils with medical needs