



Children with Health Needs that cannot attend School Policy

This policy will be reviewed every **2 Years**, or earlier if required by legislation or new DfE guidance and presented to the Full Governing Board for adoption.

Ratified By: **Full Governing Board**

Date Ratified: 12th December 2023

Next Review Due: December 2025

Stickney Vision

At Stickney our Christian vision shapes all we do. Our inclusive church school aims to fulfil the potential of all. We work together to open minds and broaden horizons from the foundation of our shared Christian values. We pursue excellence through our inspiring and creative learning environment and we empower every member of our community to seek positive transformation in the world.

New Leake Vision

New Leake Primary is also shaped by its vision as it is an inclusive school which aims to provide a quality education for all within a caring, inspiring and creative learning environment where pupils are valued as individuals, empowered to achieve their potential, and make a positive contribution to our community.

Introduction

All children, regardless of circumstance should receive a good education to enable them to shape their own futures. In light of this, local authorities (LAs) have a statutory duty to arrange suitable full-time education (or part-time when appropriate for the child's needs) for children who are unable to attend a mainstream or special school because of their health. This duty applies whether a child cannot attend school at all or can only attend intermittently. Under this duty, they are responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for children who – because of illness or other reasons – would not receive suitable education without such provision.

The type of provision put in place under these circumstances should offer good quality education on par with that of mainstream schooling, along with the support pupils need to overcome barriers to attainment. This support should meet a pupil's individual needs, including social and emotional needs, and enable them to thrive and prosper in the education system.

We recognise that, wherever possible, supporting a pupil with health needs to continue to attend school provides the best possible outcome, enabling access to a broad and balanced curriculum. We are also aware that maintaining relationships with peers and staff and fostering a sense of belonging are significant protective factors for children and young people.

Lincolnshire Children's Services have established a graduated response to providing for pupils with health needs, underpinned by the fundamental principle that pupils are supported to remain in their local school wherever possible.

This policy is based on the guidance provided by our local authority, entitled Lincolnshire Children's Services Protocol for Referral to Pilgrim Hospital School (September 2020). It also reflects the requirements of the Education Act 1996 and the Equality Act 2010.

Other relevant federation policies include;

- Attendance Policy
- Disability Equality Scheme & Accessibility Plan
- Equality Information and Objectives
- Inclusion Policy
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

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

Role and Responsibilities of the school

We are aware that school staff will be amongst the first professionals to become aware of a pupils health needs and appreciate that we are therefore best placed to implement the initial response to a pupil's changing health needs. When seeking to support a pupil and their family through a period of long term or recurring ill health, an appropriate staff member will offer to complete an Early Help Assessment (EHA) to explore the difficulties being faced. The EHA can also act as a referral to additional support services when appropriate and it can initiate a Team around the Child (TAC) or Early Support Care Coordination (ESCO).

Initially, we will attempt to make arrangements to deliver suitable education for children with health needs who cannot attend our schools. We work closely with Lincolnshire Children's Services Pupil Reintegration Team, SEND team and the Attendance and Inclusion team, when needed, to support this.

It is acknowledged that there are a multitude of health situations which can impact on a pupil's ability to engage with their education provision and individual circumstances will require individual responses. However, our schools are aware that the following broad areas may all require a personalised educational offer for children and young people:

- Long-term sickness
- Anxiety or other mental health difficulties
- Recurrent bouts of chronic illness leading to cumulative lengthy periods of absence (in which case advice and coping strategies may be offered)
- Health needs which are impacting negatively on attendance
- Health needs that require a school make adjustments to the pupils learning or environment

If required, our schools will liaise with the family and agree ways to support the pupil through the period of ill health. There are many and varied interventions, which can be put in place to support a pupil through a period of ill health.

Below are some examples:

- Changes to the timetable and/or school day
- Adaption to the provision in lessons
- Blended learning approach
- Use of virtual learning platforms
- Pastoral support – supporting peer relationships, developing emotional resilience, promoting wellbeing, nurture provision.
- Mentors/buddies

For pupils who are experiencing heightened anxiety, mental health needs or school-based anxiety, early intervention can provide the necessary support and structure to reduce the long term impact on the pupil. It is recognised that where pupils do experience periods of low mood, anxiety or mental health, these are further compounded by low attendance and resulting low achievement.

If a child develops anxiety-based school refusal, the school will use the Emotional Based School Avoidance (EBSA) Ladder provided by Lincolnshire County Council to explore and detail the range of adjustments, and interventions appropriate to the individual child's circumstances. We recognise that in order to minimise the negative spiral effect on the pupil, this support needs to be put in place at the earliest opportunity and we work with parents to ensure this. Our staff may request

support from the Pupil Re-integration Team at the local authority which may involve their attendance at a meeting.

The PSP process involves gathering the voice of the child and their parents or carers, as well as input from other professionals working with the child, including their class teacher. Following the initial meeting to collaboratively develop the PSP, there are planned review meetings after 8 weeks and 16 weeks to evaluate progress.

Where it is evidenced that school based support for a child who has health needs is insufficient to ensure a pupil is able to access broad and balanced curriculum, a referral to the Local Authority for support from Pilgrim Hospital School will be put together.

The referral must include:

- Robust medical evidence from a consultant or medical professional which illustrates that the pupil is unable to access their usual place of learning due to their current health needs.
- For Anxiety-based school refusal a copy of the PSP providing evidence of the support school has established in response to the pupils health needs.
- Copy of the school Attendance register showing 15 days consecutive absence from school.
- The form must be signed by parent, school and wherever possible pupil.

The Lincolnshire County Council Pupil Reintegration Team assesses all referrals. Referrals will be considered at the Pilgrim Hospital School referral panel which meets each week. School will receive notification of the outcome of the panel's decision within 3 working days of the panel meeting.

In cases where the local authority makes arrangements for a child who has health needs, 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 back into our school is anticipated, the school will 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