



SUPPORTING CHILDREN WHO CANNOT ATTEND SCHOOL BECAUSE OF HEALTH NEEDS (TORBAY)

Policy Reference No	SG008a
Review Frequency	Annual
Reviewed	Summer 2026
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Approved by	Full Board

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Change Log

Date	Changes to Policy
June 2026	No Change
June 2025	Accessibility and Language Support added.
June 2024	Update to reflect DFE 'Arranging Education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs 2023'. Section 2,3 &4: Greater clarity to arrange education for pupils missing 15 school days or more. Section 5: Updated to include admissions policy link of MTS. Section 9: IHP plans included with reference to other DFE guidance on these.
Autumn 2023	Updated Referral Form. Removal of Annex 2 medical form.
Autumn 2022	Updated application process to reflect changes to Pupil Referral Meetings
Autumn 2021	SEN section updated to include Individual Support Plans and Implementation Plans.

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The **Ofsted** inspection framework places a clear emphasis on meeting the needs of disabled children and pupils with SEN and considering the quality of teaching and the progress made by these pupils. Inspectors are already briefed to consider the needs of pupils with chronic or long-term medical conditions alongside these groups and to report on how well their needs are being met. Schools are expected to have a policy dealing with medical needs and to be able to demonstrate that it is being implemented effectively.

This policy is written in line with the requirements of:

- Children and Families Act, 2014 - section 100
- 'Arranging Education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs 2023'.
- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions, DfE 2015
- 0-25 SEND Code of Practice, DfE 2015
- Equalities Act, 2010
- Local Offer Torbay

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- SEND Disability and Inclusion Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions

Accessibility and Language Support

If you require this policy in an alternative format or language, please contact the Academy Office. We are committed to ensuring that all colleagues have access to our policies and can fully understand and engage with them and will work with you to provide the necessary support and resources

1. Aims

This policy and practice document aims to ensure that all pupils on roll aged 5 – 11 who are unable to attend school because of medical needs and would not receive suitable education without such provision, continue to have access to as much education as their medical condition allows, so that they are able to maintain the momentum of their education and to keep up with their studies. It should be read alongside the statutory guidance produced by the DfE. 'Arranging Education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs 2023'.

Educational provision for children who are not in hospitals and unable to attend school because of their medical needs is provided by MTS (Medical Tuition Service) Torbay. Pupils are usually taught in small groups or on a 1 to 1 dependent on need. Hospital Tuition is provided during a child's admission to hospital if they are well enough to receive it. It is the ethos of the service that wherever possible the service will support an eventual return to educational schooling when the student is medically fit to do so.

Children and young people who are unable to attend school because of their medical needs will include those with:

- Physical health issues
- Physical injuries
- Mental health problems, including anxiety issues
- Emotional difficulties/school refusal
- Progressive conditions
- Terminal illness
- Chronic illnesses

2. General Principles

- Schools will continue to support and provide a suitable Education for children with health needs whenever possible.
- Schools will work in partnership with Torbay Medical Tuition Service (MTS) <https://www.torbay.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/mts-torbay/learning/mts-torbay/> to ensure the child's academic needs are met. Schools will have a named member of staff who will work with the MTS Headteacher to agree a timetable and to support their reintegration back into their originating school.
- The primary aim of the Local Authority's policy and practice is to minimise, as far as possible, who are unable to attend school, the disruption to normal schooling that can be experienced by children and young people with medical needs by continuing education as normally as their needs allow.
- A timetable will be drafted in consultation with the schools named link worker.
- Where a pupil is educated by MTS, the aim will be for full time education as quickly as possible. However, the number of hours offered will be dependent upon the individual child's needs. It is expected that the originating school will continue to offer some hours of education whenever possible to facilitate the child's full-time return.
- Children and young people admitted to hospital will receive education in hospital as determined appropriate by the medical professionals and hospital school/tuition team for the hospital concerned.
- We will work with parents/carers, schools, and Community Paediatricians to establish and maintain regular communication and effective outcomes.
- A school may refer a student to the Medical Tuition Service after 15 school days or more of absence or admittance to a hospital. The school should include all relevant medical evidence from medical professionals and supporting agencies to support the application to the service.

3. The role of the Local Authority

Local Authority must ensure that:

- A pupil who is unable to attend school because of medical needs is not at home without access to education for 15 school days or more.

- Pupils who have a chronic condition or illness which is likely to result in prolonged or recurring periods of absence from school, whether at home or in hospital, should have access to education from day one of the absence as far as is possible.
- Pupils who are unable to attend school because of medical needs receive a suitable full-time education.
- The education provided should be of a similar quality to that available in school, including a broad and balanced curriculum.

4. The role of the academy

All schools are required to establish written policies and procedures for dealing with the education of pupils with medical needs, (including the completion of Health Care Plans as appropriate):

- The policy should include information such as how the school will make educational provision for pupils, what strategies will be used to ensure support for pupils with long-term absences and how pupils will access curriculum materials and public examinations.
- The school will be expected to nominate a teacher to act as the named contact for each child who will facilitate communication between the pupil and the school, arrange reviews and keep records.
- The school will monitor pupil attendance and mark registers so that they show if a pupil is, or ought to be, receiving education otherwise than at school. Children will not be removed from school registers unless medical evidence states that the child will be unable to attend school for the rest of their compulsory schooling.
- In the case of a pupil who is expected to be absent for less than 15 school days and where this is not part of a pattern of absence related to a chronic or recurring illness, make arrangements in liaison with the pupil's parents to provide the pupil with homework as soon as they become able to cope with it.
- Ensure that pupils who are not attending school because of medical needs where the absence is expected to last for 15 school days or more are referred promptly to the Local Authority, so that alternative education can be provided in a timely way.
- Work closely with the staff in the hospital school and/or tuition service and in particular:
 - Ensure that information about the pupil's curriculum, their achievements, and any special educational needs that they may have, is provided promptly
 - Provide appropriate work and materials promptly and regularly
 - Be active in the monitoring of progress and in the smooth reintegration into school, liaising with other agencies as necessary
 - Ensure that pupils who are unable to attend school because of medical needs are kept informed about school social events, and can participate in homework clubs, study support and other activities as appropriate.
 - Encourage and facilitate liaison with peers, for example through visits and videos
 - Schools should promote cooperation between them when children cannot attend school because of ill health

5. Referral Route

The application process for MTS is as follows:

Admission to MTS is not completed via the Admissions Team, as would be the case with other Torbay schools. Should a child have missed 15 days or more of school, then the school will discuss an MTS referral with the parents/carers and medical teams involved (i.e. Paediatrics, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)).

Should MTS be seen as a possible appropriate route, schools should review the MTS admissions Policy <https://www.torbay.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/mts-torbay/mts-policies/> and an application made by the child's school and supported with medical evidence (See Annex 1). The application is made to the Torbay Medical Panel, which sits regularly. Should the panel find MTS to be a suitable support package, then the child's school will inform parents/carers and the admission process will begin.

Please note that all learners remain on roll with the school that made the application for them. The school must not remove them from their roll unless they move out of area or change schools.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation

The progress of pupils receiving tuition because they are unable to attend school due to their medical needs will be monitored by the staff at MTS and/or the staff of the hospital school in conjunction with the named member of the school staff.

7. Public Examinations

- The Hospital tuition, MTS or home tuition teachers should be able to arrange a suitable focus on the child's education at this stage to minimise the impact of the time lost while the child is unable to attend school.
- Awarding bodies will make special arrangements for children with permanent or long-term disabilities or learning difficulties, and with temporary disabilities, illnesses, and indispositions, when they are taking public examinations. The LA (or the school where applicable) should submit applications for special arrangements to awarding bodies as early as possible. Those providing education to a child out of school should provide advice and information to the school to assist it with such applications.

8. SEN

- Children with Special Education Needs (SEN) may have an Individual Support Plan (ISP) and should continue to receive termly reviews organised by the school. Those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) should continue to receive yearly reviews (Annual Review) and termly targets updated in their Implementation Plan. The schools Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator should be regularly involved in liaison with the school and the SEN team.

9. Review and reintegration

- Decisions about when and how a pupil should return to school following illness need to take account of a wide range of views, including those of the pupil, their parents/carers, the staff at MTS and the pupil's school, the Community Paediatrician, and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service.
- It is essential that each pupil receiving tuition because they are unable to attend school due to their medical needs is reviewed between 3 and 6 times per year. This should involve staff at MTC liaising with the relevant Community Paediatrician and/or Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service/or GP to determine:
 - Referrals are accepted on the understanding that the referrer or named contact maintains an overview of each child's situation. The named contact will arrange the date/time/venue of review and invite relevant professionals and parent/carer.
 - Whether the pupil continues to need tuition (unless the advice received previously has indicated a need for longer term tuition, for example in the case of a pupil who is terminally ill)
 - Whether plans need to be made to reintegrate the pupil into mainstream school, and if so, whether there are factors that need to be considered
- When the pupil is considered well enough to return to school, staff at MTS will develop an individually tailored reintegration plan in liaison with the pupil, their parents/carers, the school and other agencies who are actively involved. This could take the form of an Individual Health Care Plan (IHP)- see Annex A of Supporting Pupils at school with medical conditions.
<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5ce6a72e40f0b620a103bd53/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions.pdf>
- Where the pupil might benefit from a phased return to school the staff at MTC may plan to reduce their own input by the number of hours that the pupil is expected to attend school.



Medical Panel Referral Form

Student Details		
Student Name:	Student DoB:	
Year Group:	Key Stage:	
Student UPN:	Student ULN:	
Parent/Carer #1 Name:	Parent/Carer #2 Name:	
Relationship:	Relationship:	
Address:	Address:	
Parent/Carer #1 contact number(s):	Parent/Carer #2 contact number(s):	
Who else lives in the home:	Who else lives in the home:	
General Information		
Gender:	SEN Stage:	Ethnicity:
Receives Free School Meals:	Pupil Premium:	Ever 6:
1 st Language:	EAL:	Language used in home:
Attendance History		
Current Attendance %		
Time Out of Education		
Context for Absence		
Attendance Narrative		
School or Current Setting Details		
Print name of school or setting contact:	Print Position held:	
School or Setting Address:		
Email Address of school or setting contact: Telephone number/extension:		
Safeguarding & Support		
Is there a safeguarding concern? If YES, please complete the box below: Agencies involved:		
For any further information, please contact the DSL on:		
Is there, or has there ever been a CAF/Early Help in place?		
Proposed and refused?		
Lead Professional		
If Early Help please attach last minutes of TAF meeting:		
Code of Practice Stage	Child in Care	

SEN SUPPORT	EHCP	Yes	No
Date of EHCP Annual Review:			
Agreed Health Issue (with supporting Health evidence) Note: Without sufficient supporting evidence, the referral will not progress			
Please indicate by ticking any which apply to the student			
Cognition & Learning		Sensory & or Physical Needs	
Specific Learning Difficulty		Hearing Impairment	
Moderate Learning Difficulty		Visual Impairment	
Severe Learning Difficulty		Multi Sensory Impairment	
Profound Learning Difficulty		Physical Disability	
Dyslexic			
Emotional, Social & Behavioural		Communication & Interaction	
Behaviour, Emotional & Social Difficulty		Speech & Language Needs	
		Social Communication Needs	

Rationale
Reason for Referral - This information informs the panel so please complete it fully.
Chronology of school or setting interventions to date, prior to Referral:
Preferred Outcome - What will success look like in terms of reintegration to on roll or appropriate alternative setting
Timescale for Transition Review & Proposed Return Date

Current Student Timetable

To evidence that the student continues to be supported by the on roll school during this period of ill health, please complete a timetable for them which clearly sets out the current package in place. Items to include might be set times with: □

- Student Support Worker
- Pastoral Support Team
- Learning Mentor
- External or Online Tuition
- Commissioned Partners
- Online Lessons
- Tutor Time

□ Core subject teaching

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Tutor					
Lesson 1					
Lesson 2					
Break					
Lesson 3					
Lesson 4					
Lunch					
Lesson 5					
Lesson 6					
Twilight					

Please complete the following record of assessments (use P levels if appropriate):

Reading Age:	Chronological Age:	Test used:	Date of test:
Spelling Age:	Chronological Age:	Test used:	Date of test:
NC English Level:	Date:		
NC Science Level:	Date:		
NC Maths Level:	Date:		
If Boxall Profile available, please include a copy			
Reason for any gaps in given information:			
IMPORTANT: we are unable to progress the referral until all assessment levels are in place, so please include all information available regarding any assessments.			

Please provide the following:

Candidate Number (if KS4)			
SUBJECT	GRADES		EXAM BOARD
GCSE	Current	Predicted	
ENGLISH			
MATHS			
SCIENCE			
If not following GCSE please give details of alternative:			

Please provide a school contact for the following:

English	Name: Email: Telephone/extension:
Maths	As above
Science	As above
Exam Officer	Name: Email: Telephone/extension: :

Please provide details of ALL professionals currently involved with the student:

	Name	Contact number/email
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Ed. Psych		
Attendance Officer		
C A M H S		
Social Worker		
Consultant		
Other		
If 'other' please give details:		

Please include any other information to help us address his/her emotional, behavioural and learning needs.

INCOMPLETE FORMS WILL BE RETURNED. ALL REQUESTED DOCUMENTS MUST BE ENCLOSED.

Please ensure the following documents are enclosed:

	Ö
CURRENT IEP	
ATTENDANCE	
EDUCATION PSYCHOLOGIST REPORT	
TAF MINUTES	
REPORTS FROM SEN STAFF	
DIAGNOSIS LETTER	
TIMETABLE OF CURRENT SUPPORT	

Completed by:	Position:
Signed:	Date:
School stamp/details:	

Please return to: jhunter@medicaltuitionservice.org.uk & prp@torbay.gov.uk