



Ranelagh Primary School

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Children with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School Policy

Reviewed on: 13th March 2025

Next Review due: Spring 2027

Signed by:

Chair of Governors

Signed by:

Headteacher

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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 and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of the [Education Act 1996](#).

It is also based on the following statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE):

[Alternative provision](#)

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

It also based on guidance provided by our local authority [Suffolk County Council guidance](#)

3. The responsibilities of school

At Ranelagh Primary School, we aim to ensure that all children, regardless of circumstance or setting receive a good education to enable them to shape their own futures. Where children are unable to attend school because of their health, the school will follow Department of Education Guidance and work with Suffolk County Council who have the responsibility 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 school because of their health.

The Local Authority is responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for children who – because of illness or other reasons – would not receive suitable education without such provision. There will however, be a wide range of circumstances where a child has a health need but will receive suitable education that meets their needs without the intervention of the Local Authority, for example, where the child can still attend school with some support. Where the school has made arrangements to deliver suitable education outside of school for the child; or where arrangements have been made for the child to be educated in a hospital by an on-site hospital school, we would not expect the Local Authority to become involved in such arrangements unless it had reason to think that the education being provided to the child was not suitable or, while otherwise suitable, was not full-time or for the number of hours the child would benefit from without adversely affecting their health. This might be the case where for example, the child can attend school but only intermittently.

It is the responsibility of the school to notify the Local Authority when a child or young person is likely to be absent from school for more than 15 days.

3.1 If the school makes the arrangements

Initially, the school will attempt to make arrangements to deliver suitable education for children with health needs who cannot attend school.

This will involve:

- Initial contact being made by the Inclusion Team (E.g. SENDCo/member of SLT) to establish the child's individual medical need and potential barriers to learning.
- Meetings with parents/carers will take place and arrangements agreed and established e.g. sending work home, (including consideration as to whether virtual learning is a possibility), education offsite (including through hospital schools) or additional adult support within school (in line with an individual health care plan as appropriate).
- On-going discussions between families, school and health providers to monitor agreed arrangements and identify when/how pupils can be reintegrated back into school (where appropriate) and a re-integration plan drafted.
- Liaising with SENDCo for pupils whom also have Special Education Needs (SEN).

Where children are unable to attend school because of their health, the school will follow the Department of Education Guidance and work with Suffolk County Council who have the responsibility 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.

If the school can't make suitable arrangements, or if it is clear that a child will be away from school for 15 days (consecutive or over the course of the year) or more because of their health needs, Suffolk County Council will become responsible for arranging suitable education for these children.

4. The responsibilities of the local authority

- Suffolk County Council 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 this Local Authority the officer is:

Maria Hough

Maria.Hough@suffolk.gov.uk

- Suffolk County Council is responsible for ensuring that pupils with health needs are not at home or in hospital for more than 15 working days without access to education: this may be consecutive or cumulative with the same medical condition. They should liaise with appropriate medical professionals to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the child. This should begin at the latest by the 6th day of the child's absence from school.
- Suffolk County Council will arrange suitable full-time education (or as much education as the child's health condition allows) for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would otherwise not receive suitable education.
- 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.
- Ensure that the education children receive is of a good quality and allows them to take appropriate external test, prevents them from slipping behind their peers in school and allows them to reintegrate successfully back into school as soon as possible.

- Address the needs of individual children in arranging provision. ‘Hard and fast’ rules are inappropriate: they may limit the offer of education to children with a given condition and prevent their access to the right level of educational support which they are well enough to receive. Strict rules that limit the offer of education a child receives may also breach statutory requirements.
- Where full-time education would not be in the best interests of a particular child because of reasons relating to their physical or mental health, provide part-time education on a basis they consider to be in the child’s best interests. Full and part-time education should still aim to achieve good academic attainment particularly in English, Maths and Science. The nature of the provision must be responsive to the demands of what may be a changing health status.
- Where appropriate, use electronic media such as ‘virtual classrooms’, learning platforms and so on – to provide access to a broader curriculum, but this should generally be used to complement face-to-face education, rather than as sole provision (though in some cases, the child’s health needs may make it advisable to use only virtual education for a time).
- Ensure teachers who provide education for children with health needs receive suitable training and support and are kept aware of curriculum developments. They should also be given suitable information relating to a child’s health condition, and the possible effect the condition and/or medication taken has on the child.
- Set up a personal education plan, which should ensure that the school, the hospital school or other provider can work together.
- Ensure effective collaboration between all relevant services (LAs, CAMHS, NHS, schools and, where relevant, school nurses) in delivering effective education for children with additional health needs.
- It is recognised 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 child or young person will have a personalised reintegration plan.
- All providers that Suffolk commission to deliver this provision should also make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage faced by children with disabilities, and plan to increase these children’s access to their premises and their curriculum.
- The named providers of this service will maintain good links with the child or young person’s home school and, through regular reviewing, involve them in decisions concerning the educational programme and pupil progress. This should also include social and emotional needs, for example ensuring that learners feel fully part of their school community, are able to stay in contact with classmates, and have access to the opportunities enjoyed by their peers.
- The education provided should be tailored to the learner’s individual educational needs and the impact of their medical condition on their ability to access education. Use of baseline assessment information from the home school will inform individual education plans, which should be suitable and flexible enough to be appropriate to the learner’s needs. The nature of the provision should also reflect the demands of what can be a changing or fluctuating medical condition.

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

- Provide to the local authority, at agreed intervals, the full name and address of any pupils of compulsory school age who are not attending school regularly due to their health needs
- Work constructively with the local authority, providers, relevant agencies and parents to ensure the best outcomes for the child
- Collaborate with the local authority to ensure continuity of provision and consistency of curriculum including making information available about the curriculum.
- Along with the local authority, regularly review the provision offered to ensure it continues to be appropriate for the child and that it is providing suitable education

- Share information with the local authority and relevant health services as required
- When a child has complex or long-term health issues, work with the local authority, parents/carers and the relevant health services to decide how best to meet the child's needs (e.g. through individual support, arranging alternative provision or by them remaining at school, being supported at home and back into school after each absence)
- Where possible, allow the child to take examinations at the same time as their peers, and work with the local authority to support this
- 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 including through digital resources
 - Enable the pupil to stay in touch with school life (e.g. through newsletters, digital learning platforms, social media platforms, emails, invitations to school events or internet links to lessons from their school), and, where appropriate, through educational visits.
 - Create individually tailored reintegration plans for each child returning to school, which includes extra support to fill any gaps arising from the absence.
 - Consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made

4. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the Inclusion Lead (Faye Turner) and will be approved by the full governing body.

5. Links to other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- SEND
- Accessibility plan
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions