



# Children with health needs who cannot attend school policy

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Linked Documents	Accessibility Plan SEND policy and report Safeguarding Policy Attendance Policy

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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 also based on guidance provided by our local authority.

### 3. The responsibilities of the school

#### 3.1 If the school makes arrangements

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

The Headteachers, SENDCo and lead teacher (JB) will co-ordinate these arrangements.

This may include sending work home; liaising with a hospital school etc. The class teacher is responsible for giving the SENDCo / JB suitable work for the child; marking the work and providing any information requested with regard to the child's needs. The SENDCo / JB will consult on and discuss arrangements on a weekly basis with parents while the child is not in school and will be responsible for organising the plan for reintegration to school.

#### 3.2 If the local authority makes arrangements

If the school can't make suitable arrangements, the London Borough of Redbridge will become responsible for arranging suitable education for these children. See appendix 1: LBR Policy for Medical Referral to the Redbridge Inclusion Panel

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**

This policy will be reviewed annually by Brian Hughes & Julie Crouch (HTs). At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

#### **5. Links to other policies**

This policy links to the following policy Appendix 1:



### **Policy for Medical Referral to the Redbridge Inclusion Panel**

#### **Introduction**

In January 2013 the Department for Education produced statutory guidance for local authorities entitled "Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs". From September 2013 Local Authorities are expected to have regard to the statutory guidance when carrying out their 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. The duty applies to all children and young people who would normally attend mainstream schools, including academies, free schools, independent schools and special schools, or where a child is not on the roll of a school. It applies equally whether a child cannot attend school at all or can only attend intermittently.

The Local Authority is not expected to become involved in arrangements where the child is able to attend school with some support, where the school has made arrangements to deliver suitable education outside of school for the child or when there are arrangements in place for the child to be educated in a hospital or in an on-site hospital school.

The principles behind the request for Home tuition are as follows:

- It will in all cases be the starting expectation that the school in question is responsible for securing the delivery of education to pupils on its roll. The school will be expected to demonstrate why it is not able to make suitable provision for the child in question from its resources. For most pupils this will include the use of an Individual Healthcare plan demonstrating how they have attempted to include the young person.
- All referrals are ratified by The Redbridge Inclusion Panel. Referrals must be accompanied by evidence from a medical consultant or specialist (not a GP), or member of a Child and Mental Health Services team (CAMHS), in which the family and child are engaging. A child unable to attend school because of health needs must not be removed from the school register without parental

consent. Continuity is important for children and knowing that they can return to their familiar surroundings and school friends can help their recovery and their education progress.

- Each child will have a personal education plan which will be agreed with parents, the school and relevant medical and other professionals.
- In deciding whether to allocate Home Tuition the Redbridge Inclusion panel, which is an inter-agency panel, considers the following criteria:
- All attempts should be made to support young people in mainstream education where possible.
- Home Tuition should normally be reserved for young people with serious illnesses which may include an anxiety related disorder or, injury that prevent them accessing their school.
- Home tuition is not an optimal long-term provision for young people, including those with mental health difficulties or with Education Health Care Plans.
- Home tuition should be a time-limited component of a Children & Mental Health Service (CAMHS) led therapeutic plan to enable a young person to return to full time provision. This will be subject to regular weekly review.
- Home tuition is normally only available relating to anxiety related concerns, where a child and their family actively engage mental health services

### **Education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs protocol**

Redbridge is responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for pupils of compulsory school age, who because of illness or other reasons would not receive suitable education without such provision. This protocol applies to children who are pupils on roll of maintained schools, academies, free schools, special and independent schools and special schools, or where a child is not on the roll of a school. It applies equally whether a child cannot attend school at all or can only attend intermittently.

The aim of any education outside school for children with health needs is to minimise the interruption and disruption to the child's schooling by continuing education as normally as the child's health condition permits and to work towards their reintegration into school as soon as possible. There will be a range of circumstance where a child has a health need but will receive suitable education that meets their needs without the intervention of the Local Authority. Examples include: where the child can still attend school with some support, where the school has made arrangements to deliver suitable education out of school for the child, or where the child is being educated in a hospital by an on-site hospital school.

It will in all cases be the starting expectation that the school in question is responsible for securing the delivery of education to pupils on its roll. The school will be expected to demonstrate why it is not able to make suitable provision for the child in question from its resources.

## **1. Redbridge Context**

In Redbridge, education for children who meet the criteria for tuition outside of school will be delivered by the Redbridge Home Tuition Service. The education offer will be of good quality and will enable children to take appropriate qualifications, maintain their educational progress and allow them to reintegrate successfully back into school as soon as possible.

The education provided must be suitable full-time education, or as much education as the child's health condition allows. This protocol reflects the statutory guidance contained in 'Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs'(DfE, January 2013).

Children with health needs who are approaching public examinations may require special arrangements to be made: the school will, unless the Local Authority has agreed to do this, submit the relevant applications to awarding bodies as early as possible.

Children with health needs should have provision which is equivalent to the education they would receive in school. Where children receive 1-1 tuition, the hours of face-to-face provision will normally be fewer as the provision is more concentrated.

Where full time education would not be in the best interests of the child for reasons relating to their physical or mental health a part time education will be provided. In some instances electronic media may be used to complement face to face education. There may be some cases where a child's health needs may make it advisable to use only virtual education for a period of time but this is not expected to be commonly the case or of long duration.

All alternate provision will be subject to the Local Authority's quality assurance framework.

## **2. Identification**

Schools, Health and Social Care professionals, Education Welfare Officers, Special Educational Needs officers, Education Psychologists and a range of other Local Authority professionals working with children and schools are responsible for notifying the Redbridge Inclusion Officer of any child with health needs who may meet the criteria for tuition outside school. The referral form can be found attached.

All referrals will be ratified by The Redbridge Inclusion Panel. Referrals must be accompanied by evidence from the child's treating or supervising consultant, or member of a Child and Mental Health Services team (CAMHS). The evidence should clarify why education outside school is appropriate and identify, in appropriate circumstances, a potential reintegration plan. There may be circumstances where a consultant's evidence is not yet available, or where a child has long term health problems. In these circumstances the Redbridge Inclusion Panel will consider liaising with other medical professionals and consider what, if any, provision is required pending receipt of any reports.

### **3. Schools**

Schools are critical in supporting the education of child with health needs. The Department for Education (DfE) Statutory guidance entitled "Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions" (April 2014). Places a new duty on schools from 1st September 2014 to make arrangements to support pupils at school with medical conditions. The guidance recommends that schools should have a publicly accessible policy that sets out how schools will support children with health needs, as well as a named person who can be contacted by the Local Authority and parents. Furthermore the school's policy must cover the role of Individual Healthcare Plans (IHP), and clarify who is responsible for their development, in supporting pupils at school with medical conditions.

The sharing of information is critical and there must be effective co-operation between schools, the Local Authority and all relevant services to support a child who cannot attend school because of ill health.

Schools would usually provide support to children who are absent from school because of illness for a short period for example: chicken pox, influenza, broken arm.

A child unable to attend school because of health needs must not be removed from the school register without parental consent and certification from the school medical officer, even if the Local Authority has become responsible for the child's education. (The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006). Continuity is important for children and knowing that they can return to their familiar surroundings and school friends can help their recovery and their education progress.

### **4. Working Together**

Partnership with parents, children, health services, schools and other agencies is important in ensuring that there is a robust education offer which meets the needs of the child and enables them to return to their mainstream school as swiftly as possible.

### **5. Personal Education Plans**

Each child will have a personal education plan which will be agreed with parents, the school and relevant medical and other professionals. The plan will include an individually tailored reintegration plan where appropriate.

### **6. Timescales**

Redbridge aims to provide education for children with additional health needs promptly and as soon as the Local Authority is advised that a child's absence for health needs is expected to last more than 15 school days, either in one absence or over the course of a

school year. The expectation is that appropriate medical evidence will accompany the referral form (see referral form for guidance)

## **7. Disability Discrimination**

Some complex and most long-term health issues will be disabilities under the Equality Act and relevant legislation. The Local Authority and schools will need to consider whether there are any reasonable adjustments which may need to be made to alleviate the effect of the disability. This may include the use of an Individual Healthcare plan.

## **8. Redbridge Procedures**

Details regarding the named officer and the process for referring children with health needs can be found on the referral form.

### **Criteria for referrals of young people with anxiety related difficulties and poor school attendance.**

Under Section 19 of the Education Act 1996 (amended by the Children, Schools & Families Act 2010) there is a duty on local authorities to arrange provision of suitable education at school or otherwise for a child of compulsory school age who may not attend school for reasons of illness, exclusion from school or otherwise. The education should be full time unless the child's physical or mental health means that it would not be in their best interests. As a result of increased professional concerns about the impact of educating children with anxiety related disorders in their homes away from both schools and peer groups, there has been a re-evaluation of the core principles and best practice approaches when dealing with such cases.

There is sometimes an overlap between the Education Welfare service, which may be considering prosecution for non-attendance and/or with child protection concerns. In such cases the views of professionals from the relevant agencies will normally be sought.