

WIMBLEDON PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Policy for the Education of Pupils with Medical Needs

Introduction

This policy is written following the guidance contained in the document “Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs”, Ref: DFE-00307-2013

This policy covers access to education for the following groups of pupils:

- Those who are absent from school for a significant period of time due to illness or injury
- Those with long term or recurring conditions such as asthma or epilepsy which may lead to frequent absence from school and necessitate individual arrangements for medical care in school
- Those with mental health issues such as depression which may lead to frequent absence from school

Aims

The school's aim is to ensure that all pupils continue to have access to as much high quality 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. The nature of the provision will be responsive to the demands of medical conditions that can sometimes be changeable.

Responsibilities

Schools have a vital part to play in ensuring that pupils who are absent from school because of their medical needs have the educational support they need to maintain their education. The school has a designated contact (Paul Lufkin, Headteacher) responsible for the education of pupils with medical needs whose role it is to facilitate communication with all parties and ensure that the school is meeting the needs of all pupils in the school with a medical condition.

The school is fully responsible for ensuring the education for pupils who are away from school due to illness for a period (single period or cumulative in one school year) of less than 15 working days. Above 15 days, Local Authorities have the responsibility for providing the education directly. In Merton, this home tuition is provided by the SMART Centre, based at the Chaucer Centre.

School areas of general responsibility include:

- Maintaining a list of pupils with medical conditions in the school.
- Ensuring that medical needs referral forms are completed and passed to the relevant agencies.
- Ensuring that close contact is maintained with pupils (and their families) who are away from school due to illness for a period of less than 15 working days.
- Making arrangements for the setting and marking of work (if the pupil is well enough).
- Support continuing contact with other pupils, for example by helping them to send letters or cards.
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of the up to date medical situation of the pupil and ensuring that any adjustments to accommodation, curriculum are made, together with ongoing monitoring of the pupil's situation and needs whilst in school.
- Keeping the Educational Welfare Officer informed of all attendance issues regarding pupils where there may be medical needs, either physical or mental.
- Ensuring that the school register is marked appropriately.
- Maintaining contact with the school nurse.
- Notifying the local authority if a pupil is (or is likely to be) away from school due to medical needs for more than 15 working days in one school year.

- Liaise with the SMART Centre, EWO and other healthcare professionals to convene a planning meeting to draw up a PEP/IEP to cover the complete education of a pupil who is likely to be at home/in hospital for more than 15 working days and pupils with chronic illnesses who regularly miss school.
- Supply the SMART Centre with information about a pupil's capabilities, educational progress, and programmes of work.
- Ensuring that children who are unable to attend the school because of medical conditions have access to public examinations, including requesting special arrangements where necessary
- The school has a key role to play in successful reintegration and will be proactive in working with all agencies to support a smooth transition and in ensuring that peers are involved in supporting pupil's reintegration after a period of medical absence.

Pupils with chronic conditions

Some pupils may have long term conditions such as asthma, epilepsy, severe allergies or congenital heart disease which may lead to frequent absences from school, to episodes which need to be managed quickly within school and to periods of time where the pupil is unable to work to their full potential. Where a pupil is absent from school and likely to experience prolonged or recurring periods of absence, the school will make a referral to the SMART Centre.

As far as possible within school, pupils with chronic medical conditions should have access to an appropriately challenging curriculum with the same experiences and activities as that offered to other pupils of their age and curriculum level. Teachers (or staff taking responsibility for a group in the absence of a teacher) should assess risk carefully and take note of the following points when planning activities:

- Some activities or stimuli may trigger a medical incident. For example, certain kinds of lighting may trigger a seizure, sudden exertion may affect a pupil with congenital heart disease. Alternative activities or additional support may be needed.
- Pupils who are able to should be supported to monitor their health and to avoid possible triggers. For example, a pupil with cardiac difficulties should be encouraged to tell an adult when he or she is tired. Appropriate contingency plans should be in place.
- Some pupils do use their medical conditions as a pretext to avoid activities they dislike. Classroom staff should be alert to this possibility while giving the benefit of any doubt to prevent compromising a pupil's health.
- Some conditions require an immediate response to a medical need e.g. a seizure or an episode of breathlessness.
- In school or on a school activity, no pupil who may need the use of an epi-pen should be without a member of staff who is able to recognise and respond to the need for this procedure.

Emotional/mental health needs

For pupils whose emotional/mental health needs are causing a concern about safety and/or lack of attendance, the school should call a Team Around the Child (TAC) Meeting. This should include relevant members of school staff, Educational Psychologists, Education Welfare Officer, Medical Practitioner/CAMHS worker, school nurse, parent/carer and pupil and other supporting agencies (i.e. Social Inclusion Service, Youth Offending Team, Children and Family Service). From this meeting an action plan should be set. This may include a referral request for tuition or for a SMART Centre placement.

Degenerative medical conditions

Pupils with a variety of progressive or degenerative medical conditions may require special consideration when educational support or intervention is considered. In particular:

- Some conditions are rapidly progressive. This means that the direction of their progress runs counter to that of their peer group and raises particular issues of curriculum accessibility and appropriate activities for the child and young person's age and ability. They require rapid responses from the various agencies contributing to SEN statutory assessment and provision at school.
- Maintaining educational input, even when a condition is progressing rapidly, is important to the child and family.
- Although regression may occur with varying degrees of rapidity, reviews of educational and other provision may need to occur more frequently and more rapidly for this group of pupils.
- These pupils will have greater medical needs than many others with SEN. Close liaison between health professionals, hospital schools and other schools will be necessary, particularly where medications and medical equipment are provided.
- Appropriate training and support for staff in the relevant care procedures will be needed to help pupils access learning activities, and to enable staff to manage pupils' medical needs.

Partnership with parents/carers and pupils

Parents/carers hold key information and knowledge and have a crucial part to play. They should be full collaborative partners and should be informed about their child's educational programme and performance. Children and young people also have a right to be involved in making decisions and exercising choices.

Where educational provision is being made through the SMART Centre, parents'/carers' views of their child's education are taken fully into account when planning programmes and parents/carers will be encouraged to provide additional liaison with the school.

In the case of a child or young person in public care, the LEA, as the corporate parent, is responsible for safeguarding and promoting their welfare and education.

Involvement of Governors

The Standards, Teaching and Learning Committee of the Governing body will be responsible for periodically reviewing this policy as necessary (and at least every three years) and annually for monitoring the effectiveness of this policy through the headteacher's report.

Approved by the Full Governing Board
at its meeting on 24th March 2015

Chair of Governors

Policy date Mar 2015
Next review date Mar 2018