



# **Bracken Hill School**

## **Children with health needs who cannot attend school Policy**

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**Policy Type: Whole School**

This policy is reviewed biennially to ensure compliance with current regulations

*The Governors of the school recognise that all staff play a vital role in the achievement of high standards and in providing our pupils with the best opportunities matched to their needs.*

## **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. Definitions**

The following definitions are provided to clarify key terms used throughout this policy and ensure a consistent understanding among all stakeholders.

*'Suitable education'* means education that is appropriate to the child's age, ability, aptitude, and any special educational needs they may have.

*'Full-time education'* typically equates to what the pupil would normally receive in school – for example, around 25 hours per week for Key Stage 4.

*'Reasonable adjustments'* refers to changes that schools and local authorities must make to remove or reduce disadvantages faced by disabled pupils.

## **3. Legislation and guidance**

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

## **4. The responsibilities of the school**

There will 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 LA – 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. The LA would not be expected 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 could benefit from without adversely affecting their health. This might be the case where, for example, the child can attend school but only intermittently.

### **4.1 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.

- These arrangements will be arranged by SLT in conjunction with relevant health professionals, parents and the class teacher.
- Arrangements *may* include sending work home, liaising with hospital schools, providing alternative provision, supporting learning at home with school staff. The arrangements and time for these must take into account the medical needs of the child and other considerations, such as the more intense nature of 1:1 sessions compared to that length of time in school.
- Reintegrate pupils back into school will be planned for carefully, taking into account the needs of the child and through discussions with relevant health professionals, parents and the class teacher. Reintegration will be monitored and reviewed as necessary depending on the needs of the child.

#### **4.2 If the local authority makes arrangements**

If the school can't make suitable arrangements, Nottinghamshire County Council will become responsible for arranging suitable education for these children.

Local authorities must:

- 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. Local authorities should:
- Provide such education as soon as it is clear that the child will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative. They should liaise with appropriate medical professionals to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the child. This applies whether those days are consecutive or cumulative within an academic year.
- Ensure that the education children receive is of good quality, as defined in the statutory guidance *Alternative Provision (2013)*, allows them to take appropriate qualifications, 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.

Local authorities should not:

- Have processes or policies in place which prevent a child from getting the right type of provision and a good education.<sup>4</sup>
- Withhold or reduce the provision, or type of provision, for a child because of how much it will cost (meeting the child's needs and providing a good education must be the determining factors).

- Have policies based upon the percentage of time a child is able to attend school rather than whether the child is receiving a suitable education during that attendance.
- Have lists of health conditions which dictate whether or not they will arrange education for children or inflexible policies which result in children going without suitable full-time education (or as much education as their health condition allows them to participate in).

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

### **5. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed biennially by the Deputy Head Teacher. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board. The Deputy Head Teacher is also responsible for monitoring the implementation and review of individual reintegration plans, including coordinating regular reviews with staff and health professionals.

### **6. Links to other policies and documents**

This policy links to the following policies/documents:

- Accessibility plan
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions
- DfE guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-children-with-health-needs-who-cannot-attend-school>

In line with the Equality Act 2010, the school is committed to ensuring that no pupil is disadvantaged due to a disability or long-term health condition.

## **7. Safeguarding and Mental Health**

Prolonged absence due to health needs may raise safeguarding concerns. The school follows guidance under Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) to ensure that any concerns are addressed appropriately. Staff should be aware of the impact of long-term health issues on pupils' mental health and ensure that support is offered or referrals made where needed.