



Bassingbourn Community Primary School

Children with Health Needs that Cannot Attend School Policy

This policy was ratified by Governors on: 09.07.2026

Implemented on: 09.07.2026

Review date: July 2027

Aims

Bassingbourn Community Primary School aims to support the LA and ensure that all children who are unable to attend school due to medical needs, and who would not receive suitable education without such provision, continue to have access to as much education as their medical condition allows, to enable them to reach their full potential.

Due to the nature of their health needs, some children may be admitted to hospital or placed in alternative forms of education provision. We recognise that, whenever possible, children should receive their education within their school and the aim of the provision will be to reintegrate children back into school as soon as they are well enough.

We understand that we have a continuing role in a child's education whilst they are not attending the school and will work with the LA, healthcare partners and families to ensure that all children with medical needs receive the right level of support to enable them to maintain links with their education.

Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the following legislation:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)

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](#)
- [Working together to improve school attendance](#)

This policy should be read alongside our Attendance policy. Working together to improve school attendance became statutory from 19th August 2024 and the DfE expects it to be applied together with the health needs guidance above, so that absence linked to a child's health needs is recorded, monitored and supported consistently.

This policy also follows guidance provided by our local authority: [Cambridgeshire County Council – Access to education for children with health needs](#)

Responsibilities

Where possible, the child's health needs should be managed by the school so that they can continue to be educated there with support, and without the need for the intervention of the local authority.

Not every health need will meet the threshold for an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, and not every EHC plan relates to a health need. Where a child already has an EHC plan, their Individual Health and Education Plan (IHEP) will be developed and reviewed alongside it, rather than in place of

it. Where a child is looked after, the school will also inform the Virtual School and ensure the plan reflects any existing care plan.

If our school makes the arrangements

Our school will make arrangements to deliver the same high standard of education for children with health needs who cannot attend school. The following steps may be taken to support children:

- The Attendance Lead, in liaison with the Inclusion Lead, will make arrangements for this, once notified of the absence.
- Arrangements made will be to send work home. Where a child is admitted to hospital, the school will liaise with Pilgrim Pathways School – Cambridgeshire’s hospital and home education service, covering Addenbrooke’s Learning and Education Centre and the Croft Child and Family Unit – to maintain continuity of education.
- A meeting will be held to discuss and plan for the arrangements – this will involve consultation with parents/carers and the Cambridgeshire Specialist Teaching Team for our SEND District (South Cambridgeshire & City). An Individual Health and Education Plan (IHEP) will be written at this meeting and reviewed at agreed intervals, in line with Cambridgeshire’s Medical and Mental Health Needs Pathway.
- On the child’s return to school, a plan will be agreed regarding any support required to enable an effective return to school.

If the local authority makes the arrangements

If our school cannot 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, Cambridgeshire County Council will become responsible for arranging suitable education for these children.

When the local authority arranges alternative education, the education should begin as soon as possible, and at the latest by the 6th day of the child’s absence from school.

Where full-time education is not in the child’s best interest for reasons relating to their physical or mental health, the local authority must arrange part-time education on whatever basis it considers to be in the child’s best interests.

The Attendance Lead, in liaison with the Inclusion Lead, will notify the LA who will take the responsibility for the child and their education. Where medical advice states that a child is too unwell to attend school at all, the completed IHEP and supporting documents will be sent to the Cambridgeshire Access and Inclusion team, who will arrange medical tuition.

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

- Provide to the local authority, at agreed intervals, the full name and address of any children 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/carers 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 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 child to access the same curriculum and materials that they would have used in school as far as possible, including through digital resources
 - Enable the child to stay in touch with school life (e.g. through newsletters, 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

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Inclusion Lead. At every review, it will be approved by the Full Governing Body.

Key contacts

For advice on individual cases, the school's Attendance Lead can contact:

- Cambridgeshire SEND Service 0–25 – South Cambridgeshire & City SEND District: 01223 728311
- Cambridgeshire Attendance Support: 01223 715682 / nsa.helpline@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
- Pilgrim Pathways School (hospital and home education): referral via the SEND Service contact above

Links to other policies

- Accessibility plan

- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions policy
- SEND policy
- Attendance policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy