

Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs Who Cannot Attend School

Statutory Duty

Under Section 19 Education Act 1996, the Local Authority must arrange suitable full-time education (unless medically inappropriate) for children unable to attend school due to illness.

Child is absent from school due to medical needs (physical or mental health) DSL informed and oversight maintained throughout and safeguarding checks conducted during absence.

Absence exceeds or is expected to exceed 15 school days (consecutive or cumulative) School to consider early alternative provision / blended learning up to and after 15 days to prevent gaps in education.

School gathers medical evidence (e.g. from GP, consultant, CAMHS). Provision must meet EHCP requirements where applicable. An annual review or emergency review must be considered.

School holds a review meeting with parents/carers and professionals. Parents and child are involved in all planning decisions.

Can the child attend school with reasonable adjustments?

No

Notify Local Authority (LA) of need for alternative education

LA arranges suitable alternative provision (e.g. home tuition, hospital school, online provision) within 15 school days.

Yes

Implement adjustments e.g. part-time timetable, Individual Health Care Plan

Child returns to school

Unclear / Awaiting further evidence

Temporary adjustments, review in 10 days (e.g. reduced timetable, ELSA, remote work)

School maintains regular contact with child, family and LA

Reintegration planning led jointly by school, LA, medical professionals

Graduated reintegration to school (if/when appropriate)

Ongoing monitoring and support (medical updates, EHCP if needed)