

# **CHILD HEALTH NEEDS CANNOT ATTEND SCHOOL POLICY**

V2

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## 1.0 Policy Statement

- 1.1. Beckfoot Trust and The Board of Trustees aims to support the Local Authority (LA) and ensure that all students who are unable to attend their school due to medical or health needs, continue to have access to as full an education as their medical condition allows, to enable them to reach their full potential.

## 2.0 Scope and Purpose

- 2.1. This policy has been created with reference to:

- The Children and Families Act 2014
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education Act 1996 (as amended)
- The Children Act 1989
- The NHS Act 2006
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971
- The Medicines Act 1968
- The School Premises (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014

- 2.2. This policy also has due regard to the following guidance:

- DfE (2013) Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs
- DfE (2015) Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0-25 years
- DfE (2015) Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions.
- DfE (2000) First aid in schools
- DfE (latest) Keeping Children Safe in Education
- DfE (2021) School admissions code
- DfE (2023) Working together to safeguard children
- Ofsted (2024) 'The education inspection framework: maintained schools, academies, non-association independent schools, further education and skills provision and registered early years settings in England.

- 2.3. This policy also has due regard to the following Trust policies:

- Care and Control Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Supporting students with Medical Needs (including Asthma) Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- SEND and Disability Policy
- Attendance Policy

## 3.0 Overarching Principles

- 3.1.1 Beckfoot Trust is committed to ensuring parents and pupils are supported with a range of medical conditions including long-term complex medical conditions which may require on-going support.

Complex medical conditions can be life threatening, and they can have a significant impact on a pupil's ability to learn.

It is important that schools minimise the educational impact and the social and emotional implications associated with medical conditions. Pupils may be self-conscious about their condition/s, and we need to be vigilant to ensure that they are not bullied or that they develop emotional disorders such as anxiety and depression around their medical condition.

Long-term absences because of medical conditions can affect educational attainment, impact integration with peers, and affect wellbeing and emotional health. This policy contains procedures to minimise the impact of long-term absence and effectively manage short-term absence. See Supporting children with medical needs (including asthma) policy for further information.

- 3.1.2 Due to the nature of their medical needs, some students may be admitted to hospital or placed in alternative forms of education provision. We recognise that, whenever possible, students should receive their education within their school and the aim of the provision will be to reintegrate students back into school as soon as they are well enough. Where this is not possible, we will work to provide an appropriate level of education remotely while alternative provision is established.

To ensure that the needs of our pupils who cannot attend due to medical needs are fully understood and effectively supported, we work closely with our Clinical Lead Practitioner, commissioned through the NHS, and consult with health and social care professionals, pupils and their parents/carers.

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

## **3.2 Definitions**

- 3.2.1 Students who are unable to attend their school as a result of their medical needs may include those with:

- Physical health issues.
- Physical injuries.
- Mental health needs, including anxiety issues.
- Emotional difficulties, school refusal and emotionally based school avoidance.
- Progressive conditions.
- Terminal illnesses.
- Chronic illnesses.

- 3.2.2 Students who are unable to attend mainstream education for medical reasons may attend any of the following:

- Hospital school: a special school within a hospital setting where education is provided to give continuity whilst the student is receiving treatment.
- Home tuition: many LAs have home tuition services that act as a communication channel between schools and students on occasions where students are too ill to attend their school and are receiving specialist medical treatment.
- Medical PRUs: these are LA establishments that provide education for students unable to attend their registered school or school due to their medical needs.

- 3.2.3 For further information about the Bradford Medical Needs and Hospital Education service and S19 Provision.

## **4.0 Responsibilities and Arrangements**

### **4.1 The Trust Board**

#### **4.1.1 The Trust Board is Responsible for:**

- Ensuring the roles and responsibilities of those throughout the Trust involved in the arrangements to support the needs of students are clear and understood by all.
- Ensuring systems across the Trust for dealing with medical emergencies and critical incidents are robust and fit for purpose.
- Ensuring robust systems are in place across the Trust to implement and quality assure the training of staff with responsibility for supporting students living with medical needs.
- Approving and reviewing this policy

### **4.2 Headteachers**

#### **4.2.1 Headteachers are responsible for:**

- Working collaboratively with parents and other professionals to develop arrangements to meet the best interests of students.
- Ensuring the arrangements put in place to meet students' medical needs are fully understood by all those involved and acted upon.
- Appointing a named member of staff who is responsible for students living with healthcare needs and liaises with parents, students, the LA, key workers and others involved in the student's care.
- Ensuring a referral is made to the Clinical Lead Practitioner
- Ensuring the support put in place focusses on and meets the needs of individual students.
- Arranging appropriate training for staff with responsibility for supporting students living with medical needs.
- Providing teachers who support students living with medical needs with suitable information relating to a student's medical condition and the possible effect the condition and/or medication taken has on the student.
- Ensuring arrangements for students who cannot attend their school as a result of their medical needs are in place and are effectively implemented.
- Ensuring regular reviews of the arrangements made for students who cannot attend their school due to their medical needs.
- Ensuring the roles and responsibilities of those within the school involved in the arrangements to support the needs of students are clear and understood by all.
- Ensuring robust systems are in place for dealing with medical emergencies and critical incidents within the school, for both on- and off-site activities.
- Ensuring staff with responsibility within the school for supporting students living with medical needs are appropriately trained.
- Notifying the LA when a student is likely to be away from the school for a significant period of time (more than 15 days in one instance or throughout an academic year) due to their medical needs.

### **4.3 Health Care Team Lead**

#### **4.3.1 Each Beckfoot Trust school will have a named member of staff (Health Care Team Lead), and they are responsible for:**

- Being a key contact for students, families, school and external agencies.
- Actively monitoring student progress and reintegration into the school.
- Supplying students' education providers with information about their capabilities, progress and outcomes.
- Liaising with the Headteacher or Head of Years, education providers and parents to determine students' programmes of study whilst they are absent from the school
- Keeping students informed about school events and encouraging communication with their peers.
- Providing a link between students and their parents, and the LA.

#### **4.4 Teachers and Support Staff**

##### **4.4.1 Teachers and support staff are responsible for:**

- Understanding confidentiality in respect of students' medical needs.
- Designing lessons and activities in a way that allows those living with medical needs to participate fully and ensuring students are not excluded from activities that they wish to take part in without a clear evidence-based reason.
- Understanding their role in supporting students living with health needs and ensuring they attend the required training.
- Ensuring they are aware of the needs of their students through the appropriate and lawful sharing of the individual student's health needs.
- Ensuring they are aware of the signs, symptoms and triggers of common life-threatening medical conditions and know what to do in an emergency.
- Keeping parents informed of how their child's health needs are affecting them whilst in the school.

#### **4.5 Parents**

##### **4.5.1 Parents are expected to:**

- Ensure the regular and punctual attendance of their child at school where possible.
- Work in partnership with the school to ensure the best possible outcomes for their child.
- Notify the school of the reason for any of their child's absences without delay.
- Provide the school with sufficient and up-to-date information about their child's health needs.
- Attend meetings to discuss how support for their child should be planned.

#### **4.6 Local Authority**

##### **4.6.1 The Local Authority is responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for children who because of illness or other reasons would not receive suitable education without such provision. There will, however, 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 Local Authority, 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, we would not expect the Local Authority 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.**

For further information, see Bradford's Medical Needs policy.

## **4.7 Managing Absences**

- 4.7.1 Parents are advised to contact the school on the first day their child is unable to attend due to illness and in line with the Trust Attendance Policy available on the School and Trust website.
- 4.7.2 The school will provide support to students who are absent because of illness for a period of less than 15 school days by liaising with the student's parents to arrange schoolwork remotely as soon as the student is able to cope with it or part-time education at the school. The school will give due consideration to which aspects of the curriculum are prioritised in consultation with the student, their family and relevant members of staff.
- 4.7.3 For periods of absence that are expected to last for 15 or more school days, either in one absence or over the course of a school year, the named person with responsibility for students living with health needs will notify the LA, who will take responsibility for the student and their education. The school will continue to support the student in liaison with the LA as part of their overall plan.
- 4.7.4 Where absences are anticipated or known in advance, the school will liaise with the LA to enable education provision to be provided from the start of the student's absence.
- 4.7.5 Effective collaboration between all relevant services (LAs, CAMHS, NHS, the student's school and, where relevant, school nurses) is essential to delivering effective education for students living with additional health needs. This applies whether the student is in hospital or at home.
- 4.7.6 When a student is in hospital, liaison between hospital teaching staff, the LA's alternative provision/home tuition service and the student's school can ensure continuity of provision and consistency of curriculum. It can ensure that the school can make information available about the curriculum and work the student may miss, helping the student to keep up, rather than having to catch up. The school will monitor student attendance and mark registers to ensure it is clear whether a student is, or should be, receiving education otherwise than at their school.
- 4.7.7 The school will only remove a student who is unable to attend because of additional health needs from the school roll where:
- The student has been certified by a Medical Officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend the school, before ceasing to be of compulsory school age; and
  - Neither the student nor their parent has indicated to the school the intention to continue to attend the school, after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
- 4.7.8 A student unable to attend the school because of their health needs will not be removed from the school register without parental consent and certification from the Medical Officer, even if the LA has become responsible for the student's education.

## **4.8 Support for Students**

- 4.8.1 Where a student is living with a complex or long-term health issue, the school will discuss the student's needs and how these may be best met with the LA, relevant medical professionals, parents and, where appropriate, the student.
- 4.8.2 The LA expects all schools and academies to support students living with health needs to attend full-time education wherever possible, or for the school to make reasonable adjustments to students' programmes of study where medical evidence supports the need for those adjustments.

- 4.8.3 The school will make reasonable adjustments under students' Health Action Plans, in accordance with the Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy.
- 4.8.4 Students admitted to hospital will receive education as determined appropriate by the medical professionals and hospital tuition team at the hospital concerned.
- 4.8.5 During a period of absence, the school will work with the provider of the student's education to establish and maintain regular communication and effective outcomes.
- 4.8.6 Whilst a student is away from their school, the school will work with the LA to ensure the student can successfully remain in touch with the school using the following methods:
- School newsletters
  - Emails
  - Invitations to school events
  - Cards or letters from peers and staff
- 4.8.7 Where appropriate, the school will provide the student's education provider with relevant information, curriculum materials and resources.
- 4.8.8 To help ensure a student living with additional health needs is able to attend their school following an extended period of absence, the following adaptations will be considered:
- A personalised or part-time timetable, drafted in consultation with the named staff member
  - Access to additional support in the school
  - Online access to the curriculum from home
  - Movement of lessons to more accessible rooms
  - Places to rest at the school
  - Special exam arrangements to manage anxiety or fatigue.

#### **4.9 Reintegration**

- 4.9.1 When a student is considered well enough to return to school, the school will develop a tailored reintegration plan in collaboration with the LA.
- The school will work with the LA when reintegration is anticipated, to plan for consistent provision during and after the period of education outside the school. As far as possible, the student will be able to access the curriculum and materials that they would have used in the school.
- 4.9.2 If appropriate, the school nurse will be involved in the development of the student's reintegration plan and informed of the timeline of the plan by the appointed named member of staff, to ensure they can prepare to offer any appropriate support to the student.
- 4.9.3 The school will consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made to provide suitable access to the school and the curriculum for the student.
- 4.9.4 For longer absences, the reintegration plan will be developed near to the student's likely date of return, to avoid putting unnecessary pressure on an ill student or their parents in the early stages of their absence.
- 4.9.5 The school is aware that some students will need gradual reintegration over a long period of time and will always consult with the student, their parents and key staff about concerns, medical issues, timing and the preferred pace of return.
- 4.9.6 The reintegration plan will include:



- The date for planned reintegration, once known.
- Details of regular meetings to discuss reintegration.
- Details of the named member of staff who has responsibility for the student.
- Clearly stated responsibilities and the rights of all those involved.
- Details of social contacts, including the involvement of peers and mentors during the transition period.
- A programme of small goals leading up to reintegration.
- Follow up procedures.

4.9.7 The school will ensure a welcoming environment is developed and encourage students and staff to be positive and proactive during the reintegration period.

Following reintegration, the school will support the LA in seeking feedback from the student regarding the effectiveness of the process.

#### **4.10 Information Sharing**

4.10.1 It is essential that all information about students living with health needs is kept up-to-date.

4.10.2 In order to protect confidentiality, all information-sharing techniques, e.g. staff noticeboards/medical files, will be agreed with the student and their parent in advance of being used.

4.10.3 All teachers, TAs, supply and support staff will be provided with access to relevant information, including high-risk health needs, first aiders and emergency procedures, via the agreed school procedures.

4.10.4 Parents will be made aware of their own rights and responsibilities regarding confidentiality and information sharing. To help achieve this, the school will:

- Ensure this policy and other relevant policies are easily available and accessible.
- Provide the student and their parents with a copy of the policy on information sharing.
- Ask parents to sign a consent form which clearly details the organisations and individuals that their child's health information will be shared with and which methods of sharing will be used.
- Consider how friendship groups and peers may be able to assist students living with health needs.

4.10.5 When a student is discharged from hospital or is returning from other education provision, the school will ensure the appropriate information is received to allow for a smooth return to the school. The named member of staff will liaise with the hospital or other tuition service as appropriate.

#### **4.11 Record Keeping**

4.11.1 In accordance with the Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy records will be kept of all medicines administered to students

Proper record keeping protects both staff and students and provides evidence that agreed procedures have been followed.

All records will be maintained in line with the Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy.

#### **4.12 Training**

4.12.1 Staff will be trained in a timely manner to assist with a student's return to school.

Once a student's return date has been confirmed, staff will be provided with relevant training before the student's anticipated return.

Healthcare professionals should be involved in identifying and agreeing with the school the type and level of training required.

Training will be sufficient to ensure staff are confident in their ability to support students living with additional health needs.

Parents of students living with additional health needs may provide specific advice but will not be the sole trainer of staff.

#### **4.13 Examinations and Assessments**

4.13.1 The named member of staff will liaise with the alternative provision provider over planning and examination course requirements where appropriate.

Relevant assessment information will be provided to the alternative provision provider if required.

Awarding bodies may make special arrangements for students with permanent or long-term disabilities and learning difficulties, or temporary disabilities and illnesses. Applications for such arrangements will be submitted by the school, or LA if more appropriate, as early as possible.

### **5.0 Review of Policy**

5.1 This policy is reviewed annually. We will monitor the application and outcomes of this policy to ensure it is working effectively.

## Appendix 1. Flowchart - support a child living with health needs who can't attend

