



Wigston Academies Trust

CHILDREN WITH HEALTH NEEDS WHO CANNOT ATTEND SCHOOL POLICY: STATUTORY

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APPROVED BY:	Board of Trustees
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Signed by Chair of Trustees:

Date: 13th January 2025

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1. INTRODUCTION

Wigston Academies Trust works in partnership with students, parents/carers, medical services, other professionals and education providers to enable young people with medical needs who are unable to attend school to receive education in a hospital setting or at home. Our Trust will be proactive in promoting the education entitlement of students on roll and in securing effective provision.

This applies to students unable to attend school for reasons of sickness, injury or mental health needs where a medical practitioner considers that a child should or could not attend school.

This policy is based upon the statutory guidance for Local Authorities 'Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs', January 2013. This comes under the category of 'educated off site' when the child remains on the school roll and is educated temporarily in a hospital setting or through home tuition.

The principles underlying this policy are:

- The Trust recognises that children and young people absent for medical reasons are entitled to continuity of education as far as their condition permits and acknowledges that it has a central role to play in securing and ensuring the continuity of education.
- The education provided shall be of high quality and as broad and balanced as possible such that reintegration is achievable as smoothly as possible.

2. THE TRUST'S RESPONSIBILITY

Where a student is absent from school for medical reasons, the Trust, in coordination with parents/carers, will provide education tasks and resources for use at home when the student is well enough to engage in education.

When there is a long term medical need, a referral is made to the Medical Needs Team based at County Hall. The Medical Needs Team panel will then decide if there is a valid medical reason why the student cannot attend school and, if accepted, will usually employ a professional tutor or recommend the Hospital School. This is funded through the student's AWPU.

Referral to the Medical Needs Team is made by the appropriate member of the Pastoral Team in consultation with the Assistant Headteacher responsible for off-site provision.

Where a child or young person is admitted to hospital, the Trust will liaise with the teaching service to inform them of the curriculum areas the student should be covering during their absence. Where possible, school will plan the educational programme of the student with the service provider, taking account (as appropriate) of the medical condition, treatment, effects of medication, therapeutic programmes provided and the duration of absence from school.

The Trust will aim to ensure maximum continuity of education for the student by providing:

- Medium term planning
- Programmes of study/schemes of work
- Appropriate resources
- Information relating to the student's ability, progress to date, assessment data and special educational needs.

Where practical, the Trust will host review meetings as the student remains on the school roll and is therefore is our responsibility. This is particularly important where a student is completing coursework or a controlled assessment which contributes to a formal qualification.

Where students have recurrent admissions or have a planned admission to hospital, the Trust will aim to provide a pack of work for the student to take into hospital with them.

The Trust will foster communication and sharing of best practice between teaching staff at the school and the staff providing the education otherwise.

3. PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS

The Trust is committed to efficient and effective liaison when students with health needs are approaching public examinations. It is expected that the hospital school or home tutors should be able to arrange a suitable focus on the young person's education at this stage in order to minimise the impact of the time lost while the child is unable to attend school.

Awarding bodies will make special arrangements for young people with permanent or long term disabilities or learning difficulties, and with temporary disabilities, illness and indispositions, when they are taking public examinations. The Trust is responsible for submitting applications for special arrangements to awarding bodies as early as possible. Those providing education to a child out of school should provide advice and information to the Trust to assist it with such applications. This may involve supporting the Trust to allow the student to sit their examinations in their homes.

4. REINTEGRATION INTO THE SCHOOL

The School will work with providers of education, doctors, educational psychologists, indeed all relevant professionals, the parents/carers and the student themselves to plan a gradual and sensitively planned reintegration into school.

The Trust will ensure that the students and staff who have maintained contact with the student who has been absent will play a significant role helping the student to settle back into school.

The Trust will accept part-time attendance where students are medically unable to cope with a full day, until the student is able to attend for full school days.

The Trust will make arrangements for students with mobility problems to return to school, taking account of health and safety issues, organising risk assessment and seeking advice on lifting and handling procedures where necessary. The impact on staff will be taken into account and additional support may be required from the SEN devolved budget.

Throughout the absence, the Trust will maintain contact with both parents/carers and the student. This will include invitations to events at school as well as regular communication via letters, calls or e-mail. Both the Trust and the education providers will support and advise students and their parents/carers, as appropriate, during the absence.

The Trust should expect to receive regular reports and assessment of student progress from the service provider during the student's absence and a folder of work on return to school.

SLT, usually through the liaison member of staff, will ensure that all relevant staff are aware of a student's absence and of their responsibility towards maintaining continuity of education for that young person.