



CHILDREN WITH HEALTH NEEDS THAT CANNOT ATTEND SCHOOL

Approved by: Epsilon Star MAT Board of Trustees

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1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure that:

- Pupils who cannot attend school due to medical needs receive suitable education in accordance with Section 19 of the Education Act 1996.
- Pupils with health needs continue to make academic progress and remain connected to school life.
- The school works collaboratively with parents, health services and the local authority.
- Pupils are supported to reintegrate successfully into school when their health allows.
- The school meets its duties under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the following legislation and guidance:

- Education Act 1996 (Section 19)
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- DfE guidance: *Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs* (2013)
- DfE guidance: *Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school* (2015)
- Local Authority guidance on education access for pupils with medical needs.

This policy also complies with the trust's funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Responsibilities of the school

At the Epsilon Star Trust, we aim to ensure that all children, regardless of circumstance or setting receive a good education to enable them to shape their own futures. Where children are unable to attend school because of their health, the school will follow Department of Education Guidance and work with Essex County Council Local Authority who have the responsibility to arrange suitable fulltime education (or part-time when appropriate for the child's needs) for children who are unable to attend a mainstream school because of their health. 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.

3.1 If the school makes arrangements

Where a pupil is unable to attend school due to health needs, the school will take reasonable steps to ensure suitable education is provided as soon as it is clear the pupil will be absent for an extended period.

The **Executive SENDCo**, alongside the pastoral team and senior leadership, will oversee arrangements for pupils who cannot attend school due to medical needs.

The school will:

- Work with parents/carers and relevant health professionals to understand the pupil's needs and barriers to attendance.
- Provide access to suitable education as soon as possible, ensuring provision reflects the curriculum delivered in school wherever appropriate.
- Ensure education is full-time, or as close to full-time as the pupil's health allows.
- Develop or review an **Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP)** where appropriate.
- Consider **reasonable adjustments in line with the Equality Act 2010**.
- Maintain regular communication with the pupil and their family and monitor wellbeing and engagement with learning.
- Support the pupil's **successful reintegration into school** when their health allows.

3.2 If the local authority makes arrangements

If the school can't make suitable arrangements, Essex County Council Local Authority will become responsible for arranging suitable education for these pupils.

Where a pupil is unable to attend school due to health needs for **15 days or more (consecutive or cumulative)**, the school will notify the Local Authority so that suitable education can be arranged in accordance with Section 19 of the Education Act 1996."

Where the Local Authority arranges education provision, the school will:

- Remain responsible for the pupil's educational progress and welfare.
- Share curriculum plans and resources with the provider.
- Maintain regular contact with the pupil and family.
- Monitor attendance and academic progress.
- Work with the Local Authority to plan reintegration.

3.3 Reintegration

The school will work with families, healthcare professionals and the Local Authority to develop a personalised reintegration plan which may include:

- phased return to school
- adjusted timetable
- additional pastoral support
- reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010.

4. Monitoring arrangements

The Executive SENDCo will monitor:

- the number of pupils unable to attend school due to health needs
- the quality and suitability of alternative provision
- the effectiveness of reintegration arrangements.

Findings will be reported annually to the Trust Board

5. Links to other policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- SEND Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Equality Policy
- Accessibility Plan.