



Children with health needs who cannot attend school Policy



Status	Statutory
Policy reviewed by	LMT
Policy ratified by	Governing Body
Date of policy	March 2024
Date of next review	March 2025
Links to other policies	Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy Attendance Policy Admissions & Transitions Policy
Signed	



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(adapted from the Croydon Model Policy)

Aims

This policy aims to ensure that:

- Suitable education is arranged for pupils on roll who cannot attend school due to health needs;
- Pupils, staff and parents understand what the school is responsible for when this education is being provided by the local authority;

Legislation and Guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of the Education Act 1996. It is also based on guidance provided by the local authority. The Local Authority has a duty set out in Section 19 of the Education Act 1996 and in the statutory guidance 'Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs' (DfE, 2013) and 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions – Statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academies in England' (DfE, 2014). The Equality Act 2010 is also an important part of the legal framework around children and young people with significant medical needs.

Introduction

Children and young people with temporary or recurring medical or mental health needs are valued as full and participating members of the school community. In September 2014 a new duty was introduced for governing bodies to make arrangements to support pupils at school with medical conditions, in terms of both physical and mental health, to enable them to play a full and active role in school life, remain healthy and achieve their academic potential.

The school's co-ordinator for children with medical needs will have overall responsibility for ensuring that this, and other policies and procedures, are regularly reviewed and fully implemented.

At this school, the Coordinator for pupils with medical needs is: The Deputy Head
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Procedure to be followed when notification is received that a pupil has a medical condition

Prior to a pupil with medical needs starting at Red Gates, the school will liaise with the nursing team to create an individual health care plan for the pupil, and staff training will be arranged for all relevant professionals (including therapists, where appropriate)

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who work with the pupil, prior to them starting. Healthcare plans (HCP) can help to ensure that schools effectively support pupils with medical conditions. They provide clarity about what needs to be done, when and by whom. They are likely to be helpful in the majority of cases, and especially for long-term and complex medical conditions, although not all children will require one. This process also applies when a current pupils' medical needs change during their time at Red Gates (refer to Admissions & Transitions Policy).

Health Care Plans will be reviewed at least annually at the beginning of every academic year, during annual review meetings, or earlier if the child's needs change. They will be developed in the context of assessing and managing risks to the child's education, health and social well-being and to minimise disruption.

- **At this school the individual(s) responsible for drawing up HCPs will be: the Special School Nurse in liaison with the Deputy Head**

When drawing up a Health Care Plan, the following will be considered:

- the medical condition, its triggers, signs, symptoms and treatments;
- the pupil's resulting needs, including medication (its side-effects and its storage) and other treatments, dose, time, facilities, equipment, testing, dietary requirements and environmental issues e.g. crowded corridors, travel time between lessons;
- specific support for the pupil's educational, social and emotional needs – for example, how absences will be managed, use of rest periods or additional support in catching up with lessons, counselling sessions;
- the level of support needed, (some children will be able to take responsibility for their own health needs), including in emergencies. If a child is self-managing their own medication, this should be clearly stated with appropriate arrangements for monitoring;
- who will provide this support, their training needs, expectations of their role, cover arrangements for when they are unavailable and confirmation of proficiency to provide support for the child's medical condition from a healthcare professional;
- who in the school needs to be aware of the child's condition and the support required
- written permission from parents and the head teacher at your school for medication to be administered by a member of staff, or self-administered by individual pupils during school hours;

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- separate arrangements or procedures required for school trips or other school activities outside of the normal school timetable that will ensure the child can participate e.g. risk assessments;
- where confidentiality issues are raised by the parent/child, the designated individuals to be entrusted with information about the child's condition
- what to do in an emergency, including whom to contact, and contingency arrangements. Other pupils in the school should know what to do, such as informing a teacher immediately if they think help is needed. If a child needs to be taken to hospital, staff should stay with the child until the parent arrives, or accompany a child taken to hospital by ambulance.

Further guidance on the process of creating Individual Health Care Plans can be found in annex A.

- **In the event of an emergency, the ambulance (or other emergency service) should be directed to: Red Gates School, Farnborough Ave, Croydon CR2 8HD**

Collaborative working arrangements

Supporting a child with a medical condition during school hours is not the sole responsibility of one person. Partnership working between school staff, healthcare professionals, and where appropriate, social care professionals, local authorities and parents and pupils is critical.

The Governing body will:

- ensure that arrangements are in place to support pupils with medical conditions. In doing so they should ensure that such children can access and enjoy the same opportunities at school as any other child. No child with a medical condition will be denied admission or prevented from taking up a place in school because arrangements for their medical condition have not been made;
- take into account that many of the medical conditions that require support at school will affect quality of life and may be life-threatening. They will often be long-term, on-going and complex and some will be more obvious than others. The governing body will therefore ensure that the focus is on the needs of each individual child and how their medical condition impacts on their school life;
- ensure that their arrangements give parents confidence in the school's ability to support their child's medical needs effectively. The arrangements will show an understanding of how medical conditions impact on a child's ability to learn, increase their confidence and promote self-care. in line with their safeguarding

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duties, not place other pupils at risk or accept a child in school where it would be detrimental to the child and others to do so;

- ensure that the arrangements they put in place are sufficient to meet their statutory responsibilities and should ensure that policies, plans, procedures and systems are properly and effectively implemented. Governing bodies should ensure that sufficient staff have received suitable training and are competent before they take on responsibility to support children with medical conditions. They should also ensure that any members of school staff who provide support to pupils with medical conditions are able to access information and other teaching support materials as needed.
- **Governing bodies should ensure that written records are kept of all medicines administered to children (refer to Administering Medication Policy).**
- **Headteachers have overall responsibility for the development of healthcare plans.**

The Headteacher will:

- ensure that policies are developed and effectively implemented with partners. This includes ensuring that all staff are aware of the policy for supporting pupils with medical conditions and understand their role in its implementation;
- ensure that all staff who need to know are aware of the child's condition;
- ensure that all staff have general medical awareness training annually
- ensure that sufficient trained staff are available to implement the policy and deliver against all individual healthcare plans, including in contingency and emergency situations. This may involve recruiting a member of staff for this purpose;
- contact the school nursing service (mainstream schools) or special school nursing service (special schools) in the case of any child who has a medical condition that may require support at school but who has not yet been brought to the attention of the school nurse;
- make sure that the school is appropriately insured and that staff are aware that they are insured to support pupils in this way (please see annex B for further details).

**Red Gates School is insured with Zurich through the Local Authority. The contact person is Margaret DeVille.
Email: margaret.deville@croydon.gov.uk**

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School staff may:

- any member of school staff may be asked to provide support to pupils with medical conditions, including the administering of medicines (if they are trained), although they cannot be required to do so.
- All staff will have received suitable training, and their competency will be assured, before they take on responsibility to support children with medical conditions.
- Any member of school staff should know what to do and respond accordingly when they become aware that a pupil with a medical condition needs help.

Parents will:

- provide the school with sufficient and up-to-date information about their child's medical needs. They may in some cases notify the school that their child has a medical condition. They will also be involved in the development and review of their child's individual healthcare plan. They should carry out any action they have agreed to as part of its implementation, e.g. provide medicines and equipment and ensure they or another nominated adult are contactable at all times.
- send prescribed medication into school, clearly marked, via the bus or taxi escort and hand it directly to the class team. This will then be stored in locked cupboards in the hygiene room as per the medication storage requirements.

School nurse or other qualified healthcare professionals will:

- notify the school when a child has been identified as having a medical condition who will require support in school. Wherever possible, they will do this before the child starts at the school.
- check all medication for pupils is in date and will inform parents when it becomes out of date.
- liaise regularly with the Deputy Head regarding children with changing medical needs, safeguarding issues and to liaise with multi agency professionals as required.

The school nursing service has a role in ensuring that schools are taking appropriate steps to support children with medical conditions, and will support staff on implementing a child's individual healthcare plan and provide advice and liaison

- The school nursing service is able to provide training to school staff to administer the following medications:
 - Epipen (for allergies)



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- Buccal Midazolam (for epilepsy)
 - Inhalers (for asthma)
 - Enteral (tube) feeding
 - Emergency medication administration
- The school nursing service has a duty phone number for enquiries relating to training or health care plans and can be contacted on 020 8680 4810.

At this school, the allocated special school nurse is: Shairden Damo

GPs, paediatricians and other healthcare professionals will:

- notify the school nurse when a child has been identified as having a medical condition that will require support at school.
- they may provide advice on developing healthcare plans.
- Specialist local health teams may be able to provide support in schools for children with particular conditions (eg asthma, diabetes, epilepsy or other health needs as appropriate).

Local authorities will:

- promote cooperation between relevant partners such as governing bodies of maintained schools, proprietors of academies, clinical commissioning groups and the NHS England, with a view to improving the well-being of children so far as relating to their physical and mental health, and their education, training and recreation;
- provide support, advice and guidance, including suitable training for school staff, to ensure that the support specified within individual healthcare plans can be delivered effectively;

Providers of health services will:

- co-operate with schools that are supporting children with a medical condition, including appropriate communication, liaison with school nurses, and participation in locally developed outreach and training.

Clinical commissioning groups will:

- ensure that commissioning is responsive to children's needs, and that health services are able to co-operate with schools supporting children with medical conditions.

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Staff training and support

Staff must not give prescription medicines or undertake health care procedures without appropriate training (updated to reflect healthcare plans at all times) from a healthcare professional.

- All staff will receive general training in the management of epilepsy, asthma, use of epipen annually.
- Identified staff will be specifically trained to carry out emergency medical procedures for specific children who have an HCP.
- Training will be provided by a special school nurse trainer and will ensure staff are fully competent prior to carrying out a medical procedure.

Managing medicines on school premises

- Medicines will only be administered at school when it would be detrimental to a child's health or school attendance not to do so;
- No child under 16 should be given prescription or non-prescription medicines without their parent's written consent.
- No child under 16 will be given medicine containing aspirin unless prescribed by a doctor. Medication, e.g. for pain relief, should never be administered without first checking maximum dosages and when the previous dose was taken. Parents should be informed;
- Where clinically possible, medicines should be prescribed in dose frequencies which enable them to be taken outside school hours;
- The school will only accept prescribed medicines that are in-date, labelled (with the child's name and instructions for administration, dosage and storage) and provided in the original container as dispensed by a pharmacist. The exception to this is insulin which must still be in date, but will generally be available to schools inside an insulin pen or a pump, rather than in its original container;
- All medicines will be stored safely. Medicines and devices such as asthma inhalers, blood glucose testing meters and adrenalin pens will be readily available to staff but stored securely in the medical room.
- The school will keep a record of all medicines administered to individual children, stating what, how and how much was administered, when and by whom. Any side effects of the medication to be administered at school should be noted; and if medication is for any reason not given a record must be kept and the parent informed;
- A record of all allergies of the child must be maintained;
- When no longer required, medicines will be returned to the parent by the special school nurse to arrange for safe disposal. Sharps boxes will always be used for the disposal of needles and other sharps.

Liability and indemnity

Governing bodies of maintained schools and management committees of PRUs should:

- ensure that the appropriate level of insurance is in place and appropriately reflects the level of risk (please see annex B for further details).
- Proprietors of academies should ensure that either the appropriate level of insurance is in place or that the academy is a member of the Department for Education's Risk Protection Arrangements (RPA), a scheme provided specifically for academies. It is important that the school policy sets out the details of the school's insurance arrangements which cover staff providing support to pupils with medical conditions. Insurance policies should be accessible to staff providing such support.
- Insurance policies should provide liability cover relating to the administration of medication, but individual cover may need to be arranged for any healthcare procedures. The level and ambit of cover required must be ascertained directly from the relevant insurers. Any requirements of the insurance, such as the need for staff to be trained, should be made clear and complied with.
- In the event of a claim alleging negligence by a member of staff, civil actions are likely to be brought against the employer.

Day trips, residential visits and sporting activities

Reasonable adjustments will be made to encourage pupils with medical conditions to participate in school trips and visits, or in sporting activities. Teachers will be aware of how a child's medical condition will impact on their participation, but there should be enough flexibility for all children to participate according to their own abilities. The schools will make arrangements for the inclusion of pupils in such activities unless evidence from a clinician such as a GP or consultant states that this is not possible.

Home to school transport for pupils requiring special arrangements

Governing bodies may want the school's policy to refer to home-to-school transport – this is the responsibility of local authorities, who may find it helpful to be aware of a pupil's individual healthcare plan and what it contains, especially in respect of emergency situations. This may be helpful in developing transport healthcare plans for pupils with life-threatening conditions. In addition:

- Where pupils have life threatening conditions, specific health care plans should be carried on vehicles. Individual transport health care plans will need input from the school and the responsible medical practitioner for the pupil

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concerned. The care plans should specify the steps to be taken to support the normal care of the pupil as well as the appropriate responses to emergency situations.

- Schools should make every effort to provide relevant information they hold regarding pupils' transport needs to the Local Authority Passenger Transport Team so that risks to pupils are minimised during home to school transport, particularly if any needs change.
- For these pupils, all drivers and passenger assistants should have basic first aid training. Additionally trained healthcare professionals may be required to support some pupils with complex medical needs.
- Some pupils are at risk of severe allergic reactions. These risks can be minimised by not allowing anyone to eat on vehicles and ensuring details of any allergy are made apparent to the Passenger Transport Team before transport begins.
- It should be ensured each vehicle used for home to school transport has some form of communication by which to summon help in an emergency.

Unacceptable practice

Although school staff should use their discretion and judge each case on its merits with reference to the child's individual healthcare plan, it is not generally acceptable practice to:

- assume that every child with the same condition requires the same treatment;
- ignore the views of the child or their parents;
- send children with medical conditions home frequently or prevent them from staying for normal school activities including lunch;
- penalise children for their attendance record if their absences are related to their medical condition e.g. hospital appointments;
- prevent pupils from drinking, eating or taking toilet or other breaks whenever they need to in order to manage their medical condition effectively;
- require parents, or otherwise make them feel obliged to attend school to administer medication or provide medical support to their child, including with toileting issues. No parent should have to give up working because the school is failing to support their child's medical needs;
- prevent or create unnecessary barriers to children participating in any aspect of school life, including school trips, e.g. requiring parents to accompany the child.

Complaints

Should parents be dissatisfied with the support provided to their child they should discuss their concerns directly with the school. If for whatever reason this doesn't



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resolve the issue, they may make a formal complaint via the school's complaints procedure accessible on the school's website www.redgates.croydon.sch.uk

Supporting pupils through periods of absence from school

For some pupils, their health condition will require them to have an extended period of time out of school. The school will do all that it can to ensure that such children are supported through their period of absence from school and sensitively re-integrated once they are well enough to attend.

The school's co-ordinator for children with medical needs will take an active and continuing role in their educational, social and emotional progress. The school will at all times aim to work in partnership with parents to ensure the best possible outcomes and a return to school as soon as possible. Remote learning activities are accessible on the school website, and are updated regularly.

Where a child's health condition requires an extended period of absence from school, the school may need to seek the assistance of the Springboard Service. Staff at the service, including hospital tutors, will support pupils who are temporarily unable to attend classes on a full time basis. These pupils may be:

- (a) Children who have been deemed by a medical practitioner as being too ill to attend the school for more than 15 days or who have conditions which lead to recurrent absences from school which becomes significant in the longer term.
- (b) Pupils with mental health problems who are unable to attend school.

Some children with medical conditions may be disabled. Where this is the case the governing body will comply with their duties under the Equality Act 2010. Some may also have special educational needs (SEN) and a statement, or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan which brings together health and social care needs, as well as their special educational provision.

The aim of Springboard will be to support the school in its work to reintegrate pupils into full time education at the earliest possible opportunity. In the greatest number of cases this means a return to mainstream education.

The school will continue to maintain a contact with a pupil who is unwell and not attending and will contribute to their academic and reintegration plans in order that they may enjoy a continuous level of education and support from the school during their period of absence. This may include providing to Springboard relevant information about the child, helping to maintain contact with parents, assisting with



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and guiding the work of the child and providing emotional support at the level of teacher and peer involvement. The school will do all that it can to maintain links with appropriate agencies including Springboard, the Educational Welfare Service, and the Educational Psychology Service. Reintegration back into school will be properly supported so that children with medical conditions fully engage with learning and do not fall behind when they are unable to attend.

Finally, the school will do all that it can to fully implement Croydon's policy on the education of children and young people with medical needs.

This policy will be reviewed regularly and will be accessible to parents/carers via the school website www.redgates.croydon.sch.uk



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Annex A: model process for developing individual healthcare plans

1. Child diagnosed or child due to start at Red Gates
2. Parent or healthcare professional informs school
3. Special school nurse carries out health needs assessment with parents which will inform the HCP if required
4. Deputy Head co-ordinates meeting with special school nurse to agree HCP. Special school nurse writes HCP
5. HCP sent to parents for agreement and signing
6. School staff training needs identified
7. Special school nurse delivers training and staff signed off as competent
8. HCP implemented and circulated to all relevant staff
9. HCP reviewed annually in September or when condition changes. Parent or special school nurse to initiate when condition changes

Annex B: Delivery of interventions to meet pupil's medical needs: Insurance and liability

Teachers and teaching assistants may be involved in the delivery of certain medical interventions, where it has been deemed suitable for delivery by a member of the school team.

Services such as the Special School Nursing Team deliver training and support so teaching staff can deliver medical interventions including:

- Suctioning
- Tracheostomy care
- Oxygen administration
- Cough assist and chest physiotherapy/ postural support
- Seizures
- Medication Administration
- Elimination - Intermittent Catheterisation
- Enteral (tube) Feeding

To ensure schools feel confident in such circumstances, the Council and the CCG have sought advice from the Council's internal insurance team, to gain assurance for all our staff in whatever actions they carry out within their role.

Insurance in Croydon LA maintained schools

Croydon Council maintains employer liability insurance cover for all members of staff, which includes the staff at LA maintained schools. LA schools are billed on an annual basis for their element of cover. All special schools are currently also insured through this process, whereas Academies are not. The council's insurance team have confirmed that employees are covered for actions they undertake on behalf of the council/school, unless they deliberately undertook a negligent act or acted in an unreasonable manner.

The underwriter for the Council and School's insurance has advised that the liability policy would provide cover for members of staff administering medicine to pupils, orally, topically, by injection or by tube, and the application of appliances or dressings, and any other 'non-invasive' medical procedures.

Schools and staff need to be aware of the following:

1. Staff would need to be fully trained (for example by the Special School Nurse Team) before undertaking a medical intervention,
2. Parental consent would need to be gained in writing,



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3. Records of staff training and parental consent must be kept on file by the school for insurance purposes.

If any schools would like to contact the Council's Insurance Team directly for any further clarification around insurance, their contact details are insuranceteam@croydon.gov.uk