

POLICY:

Children with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School

Review

Approved by:	Board of Directors	Date:	July 2024
Last Review Date:	July 2024	Next Review Date:	July 2025

Responsibilities

School Senior Staff	Implementation at school level
Governors	Check school compliance with policy and report breaches or concerns to Directors
Directors	Review and approve the policy

Material Changes Since the Last Review

Section: Throughout	Name change from Kennet School Academies Trust to Equinox Learning Trust
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The Equinox Learning Trust recognises that, whenever possible, pupils should receive their education in school, but where the child's health needs require them to engage in alternative forms of education provision, our intent is to reintegrate pupils back into school as soon as they are well enough.

We are committed to working together with pupils, families, health care providers and the local authority to ensure that pupils with medical needs can access the right level of support to maintain their education.

1) Aims

The Trust aims to ensure that:

- suitable education is arranged for pupils on roll who cannot attend school due to health needs
- equal access to education for all is promoted in each of our schools
- pupils, staff and parents understand what the school is responsible for when this education is being provided by the local authority.

2) Legislation & Guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of the [Education Act 1996](#), [Education Equality Act \(2010\)](#), Department for Education (2013) '[Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs](#)' and Department for Education (2015) '[Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions](#)'.

It is based on guidance provided in the Medical Tuition Service (MTS) School Admissions Policy West Berkshire, dated 2018 and complies with the Trust's funding agreement and articles of association.

3) Definitions

Children who are unable to attend school as a result of their medical needs may include those who are:

- physically unwell
- injured
- mentally unwell.

4) Roles & Responsibilities

4.1 The responsibilities of Kennet Schools Academies Trust

Initially the home school will attempt to make arrangements to deliver suitable education for children with health needs who cannot attend school. Each school in the Trust has a named member of staff who is responsible for overseeing the plan for individual pupils. In the secondary school, this will be the Deputy Headteacher who may delegate tasks to the pupils' Head of House or the Assistant Head (Inclusion). In primary schools the SENCO will fulfill this role.

The school will provide personalised plans to ensure:

- ① support is in place for pupils who are:
 - reintegrating into school after a period of illness or injury
 - frequently absent from school for short periods of time due to the nature of their chronic illness or following a course of treatment.
- ① support is in place for pupils who are unable to attend school because of medical needs. The named person will liaise with subject teachers to ensure appropriate work is sent home or sent to hospital schools where this is relevant
- ① pupils are informed about school events through newsletters, emails, invitations to school events or share internet links; and encourage communication with their peers
- ① pupils feel supported in their learning and individual plans have been assessed to meet their needs accordingly, and this will be reviewed regularly
- ① pupils are closely monitored when they return to school after an extended period of absence, and make sure effective support is in place to help settle them back into school life and learning. This will include whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made
- ① All avenues of support should be explored to support the assessment of pupils prior to moving onto the next step.

Should a pupil require additional support beyond the school, the named member of staff will:

- ❶ make the appropriate referral to the Medical Tuition Service (MTS) and/or other external agencies in consultation with the parents/carers. During any period that a pupil has access to external provision, they remain on the home school roll, and the school retains overall responsibility for their education
- ❷ where MTS is used, liaise with MTS to organise an initial meeting with the pupil and parents to discuss plans, share relevant information including the proposed timescale for reintegration – this should always be fixed in the initial stage of setting this support up. The school lead will also chair, complete and distribute the required paperwork for the initial meeting
- ❸ work constructively with MTS and/or virtual learning providers to plan and implement individual learning plans whilst pupils are absent from school to ensure the best outcomes for pupils and they have access to curriculum materials;
- ❹ provide a link between the pupil and their parents, virtual learning provider and/or MTS
- ❺ actively monitor pupil progress and work collaboratively to carefully plan for successful reintegration to school.

4.2 The Responsibilities of West Berkshire Local Authority

If the school cannot make suitable arrangements, the local authority will become responsible for arranging suitable, full-time education (or as much education as the child's health condition allows) for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would otherwise not receive suitable education.

The school will make a referral to the West Berkshire MTS to provide education according to the following criteria:

- ❶ those with medical/mental health needs as a primary need who are or will be absent from school for more than 15 working days (consecutive or cumulative absence due to the same illness) with medical evidence to support, where appropriate
- ❷ pupils who have complex other needs but also have a secondary medical/mental health need which is diagnosed as temporary and treatable
- pupils who have accessed CAMHs but whose illness prevents them from attending their home school. The MTS will consider referral for a short-term reintegration on a case-by-case basis.

MTS is a transitional option to support reintegration path for the pupil back into school.

4.3 The Responsibilities of Parents/Carers

Parents and carers will be expected to:

- ❶ ensure the regular and punctual attendance of their child at the school, where possible
- ❷ fulfil their part of the home school agreement and support their child in the education and reintegration process.

5) Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Trust and approved by the Board of Directors.

6) Links to Other Policies

This policy works alongside other Trust policies:

- ❶ Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions
- ❷ Accessibility Plan.