



HILBRE HIGH SCHOOL HUMANITIES COLLEGE

WIRRAL LOCAL AUTHORITY POLICY ON THE EDUCATION OF SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH MEDICAL NEEDS

Author:
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Full
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Introduction:

This policy sets out what the Local Authority will do to provide full time education for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would not otherwise receive a suitable education. It applies to all children of compulsory school age, whether or not they are on the roll of a school.

Legal framework for local authorities:

The Local Authority has a duty set out in Section 19 of the Education Act 1996 (a) and in the statutory guidance “Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs” (b) The Equality Act 2010 (c) is also an important part of the legal framework around children and young people with significant medical needs. ^[1]_{SEP}

The underlying principles behind this policy:

Hilbre High School is committed to ensuring that all children and young people in the borough receive a good education in order to maximise their learning potential. A fundamental part of our offer aims to ensure that all children and young people are given the opportunity of an inclusive education that meets their needs.

Children and young people who have additional medical needs are, by the very nature of their difficulties, at risk of failing to reach their true potential within an educational context. This is particularly relevant in the cases of those children and young people whose health needs prevent them from attending school for an extended period of time, or for those who are restricted by their health needs to attending school part-time or on a sporadic basis.

The aim of this policy is to set out the educational support that is available and that is accessible to children and young people with medical needs, including details of when and how alternative provision will be arranged, if required. It will also outline the roles and responsibilities of the local authority, health practitioners, schools, parents/carers and other agencies and stakeholders.

Roles and responsibilities of Wirral Local Authority:

The statutory guidance is clear that there will be a wide range of circumstances where a child has a medical 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 or where the school has made arrangements to deliver suitable education outside of school for the child.

Wirral Local Authority is responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would not receive suitable education without such provision. This duty applies to all children and young people who live in Wirral regardless of the type (d) or location (e) of the school they would normally attend and whether or not they are on the roll of a school.

The law does not define full-time education but children with medical needs should have provision which is equivalent to the education they would receive in school. Wirral Local Authority may provide one-to-one tuition, in which case the hours of face-to-face provision could be fewer as the provision is more concentrated.

Where full-time education would not be in the best interests of a child because of reasons relating to their physical or mental health, Wirral Local Authority will endeavour to provide part-

time education on a basis which is considered to be in the child's best interests. This decision will be made with reference to advice from relevant educational and medical professionals.

It is a statutory requirement that local authorities have a named person responsible for the education of children with additional health needs. In Wirral, the named person is:

The Head of Service, Wirral Home and Continuing Education Service
schooloffice@wirralhometeach.co.uk

The Head of Service is responsible, in liaison with schools and professionals, for ensuring that Wirral Children and Young Persons Department fulfils its statutory duties in relation to medical needs provision for children and young people who cannot attend school for medical reasons and, therefore, require alternative educational provision. Parents/carers can contact the Head of Service in order to discuss their child/ward's specific circumstances relating to medical needs provision. This may be particularly appropriate in instances where they feel their child/ward's medical needs are not currently being addressed.

Schools can contact the Head of Service in order to obtain support, advice and guidance in relation to medical needs provision, both generally and in relation to specific cases.

The Head of Service will also liaise with professionals and colleagues within both health and education, as appropriate, in order to ensure children with additional health needs are able to access a suitable education.

Wirral Council may seek to recoup costs incurred from the home authority in relation to medical needs provision for Looked After Children placed in Wirral by a different local authority.

- (a) <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/19>.
- (b) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-children-with-health-needs-who-cannot-attend-school/DFE-00307-2013>.
- (c) <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>.
- (d) *Inclusive of students attending academies, free schools, special schools, independent schools or maintained schools.*
- (e) *Where a child/ward is ordinarily resident in Wirral but attends school elsewhere, Wirral Council retains responsibility for arranging medical needs provision for that child/ward.*

Roles and responsibilities of referring schools:

1. Supporting children with medical needs in school:

Schools in Wirral, as in the rest of the country, (including maintained schools, maintained nursery schools, academies, alternative provision academies) are required by law to make arrangements for supporting students at their school with medical conditions. This duty is detailed in Section 100 of the Children and Families Act 2014 (f) and statutory guidance entitled Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (g) has been produced by the Department for Education in order to assist schools to understand and comply with this legislation.

The keys points detailed in the statutory guidance indicate that:

- Students at school with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education.
- Governing bodies must ensure that arrangements are in place in schools to support students at school with medical conditions.

- Governing bodies should ensure that school leaders consult health and social care professionals, students and parents/carers to ensure that the needs of children with medical conditions are effectively supported.

The statutory guidance also indicates that schools should develop a policy for supporting students with medical conditions and that there should be a named person who is responsible for the practical implementation of this policy within each school.

(f) <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/section/100/enacted>

(g) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions>

2. Supporting children who cannot attend school:

Children who are unable to attend school because of health needs should be able to access suitable and flexible education appropriate to their needs. The nature of the provision must be responsive to the demands of what may be a changing health status.

Schools can do a lot to support the education of children with health needs and the sharing of information between schools, health services and LAs is important.

Schools can also play a big part in making sure that the provision offered to the child is as effective as possible and that the child can be reintegrated back into school successfully. Parents/carers also have a vital role to play and LAs should encourage schools to have a publicly accessible policy that sets out how schools will support children with health needs.

It is good practice for schools to have a named person who can be contacted by the LA and by parents/carers.

Provision in Wirral:

Referrals to the Home and Continuing Education Service:

Schools should make appropriate referrals to the Home and Continuing Education Service for students of statutory school age who are unable to attend school due to health reasons where it is clear that the student will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative.

- In these circumstances schools should complete the school referral form (Appendix 1).
- Schools are responsible for ensuring that a medical referral accompanies the school referral (Appendix 2).

Parents/carers are best placed to liaise between their child/ward's Paediatrician, NHS consultant, CAMHS psychiatrist, senior CAMHS psychologist or therapist and the school. However, the medical referral can be made directly to the Home Education Service by the doctor/senior CAMHS psychologist or therapist.

The medical referral should confirm why the student is unable to attend school and state approximately how long home education is likely to be needed.

Statutory guidance states that evidence should be such as that provided by a consultant, however, in order to avoid delays the Wirral Home and Continuing Education Service will accept evidence from a GP if the young person is to be referred to a specialist clinician (h). GP only referrals will initially be considered as an interim referral in order to avoid delays, but must be

further supported by specialist evidence in order for provision/support to continue, usual timescale 6 weeks.

The medical evidence should also confirm how much 1:1 tuition or group tuition the student is well enough to receive. Failure to provide the appropriate evidence could delay the referral process and the consideration of support being withdrawn.

(h) Evidence from a consultant will still be required in this instance

Students with Myalgic Encephalopathy(ME)/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS):

For students diagnosed with Myalgic Encephalopathy (ME)/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS) the consultant's referral/letter should specify the programme the student should be following. This may include, for example, periods of school attendance, periods of rest and periods of 1:1 tuition at home.

Ensuring children in Wirral with medical needs have a good education:

In relatively straightforward medical cases, such as operations to correct Perthe's disease, a home visit is made to discuss provision with the parents/carers and to complete a risk assessment (see Appendix 3). Teaching staff are then allocated and teaching starts.

In complex medical or CAMHS referrals, a decision is made on about the referral following receipt of the school and medical referral forms. This includes considering the interventions schools have put in place to support the student in school and the expected outcomes expected of home education.

The Home Education Service will arrange a planning meeting to confirm arrangements which are to be put in place.

The student's main school should liaise with the parents/carers and student. Parents/carers and students will normally be invited to attend these meetings.

Where support is agreed, Home Education Service teachers will oversee the provision for students in alternative suitable venues, or, where appropriate, in the student's home. Before it is agreed that teaching can take place in the home, it will be necessary to carry out appropriate risk assessments (Appendix 3).

Where a student is taught at home, it is essential for there to be a responsible adult in the house for the entire time the teacher is present.

The student must remain on their main school roll. They must not be de-registered without prior discussion with and agreement from the student's parents/carers.

Review meetings will be arranged review at appropriately spaced intervals. It is expected that these meetings would normally take place approximately every half term. When appropriate, the forum for these meetings could be a TAF meeting or other school based reviews. This reduces the necessity for families to attend multiple meetings at a time when they are likely to have medical/treatment appointments.

It is important to link with other agencies in order to support the student's educational opportunities.

(i) Where support is agreed, there is an expectation that all parties will engage with and

contribute to the plan.

Roles and responsibilities:

For students in F2 to Year 10, their school's role is to:

- Remain responsible for the safeguarding of the student.
- Host and chair regular review meetings (approximately half termly), produce action plans and distribute notes of these meetings and produce appropriate medical evidence for continuing support.
- Provide materials for an appropriate programme of work and work plans.
- Maintain a plan, such as an Individual Education Plan, which records progress made towards a return to school.
- Ensure all staff are kept informed.
- Provide the student's academic attainment levels including any relevant examination requirements.
- Make arrangements for SATs.
- Assess BTEC portfolio work.
- Facilitate career interviews.
- Provide a named contact who can liaise (usually the SENCO).
- Provide a suitable working area within the school, where necessary.
- Be active in the monitoring of progress and the reintegration into school, using key staff to facilitate the reintegration into school.
- Ensure that students who are unable to attend school are kept informed about school social events, are able to participate, for example, in homework clubs, study support and other activities.
- Encourage and facilitate liaison with peers, for example, through visits and videos.

The student's role is to:

- Engage and co-operate with the staff from Wirral Home Education Service.
- Be prepared to communicate their views.
- Engage with other agencies as appropriate.
- Prepare for reintegration as soon as possible.

The parents'/carers' role is to:

- Produce appropriate medical evidence and commit to a plan of reintegration.
- Be willing to work together with all concerned.
- Provide early communication if a problem arises or help is needed.
- Attend necessary meetings.
- Reinforce with their child/ward the value of a return to school.

During Years F2 to Year 10, the Home Education Service team role is to:

- Liaise with the named person in school.
- Liaise, where appropriate, with outside agencies.
- Be sensitive to the needs of the child/ward and family.
- Provide a flexible teaching programme.
- Provide regular reports on the student's progress and achievements.
- Provide an opportunity for the student to comment on their report.
- Ensure appropriate work and any other relevant material is returned to school.
- Work with the mainstream school and the Education Welfare service, where appropriate,

- to ensure good attendance whilst with the provider.
- Attend review meetings.
- Help set up an appropriate reintegration programme at the earliest opportunity as soon as the student is ready to return to school.

Health Service's role is to:

- Offer medical treatment and advice, where appropriate.

Other involved agencies role is to:

- Work with others, for the benefit of the student.
- Attend review meetings if possible.
- Provide written reports where necessary.
- Give appropriate advice and support.

At Year 11:

In Year 11, by agreement with the Headteacher of the student's main school and the student's parents/carers, the student is transferred onto the Local Authority Alternative Provision roll.

The Pupil Funding Elements are then transferred into the Home Education Service budget. The Home Education Service then becomes responsible for the student's:

- safeguarding;
- attendance;
- examination entry and results, and
- transition into Post-16 provision.

Students who are not of compulsory school age:

Wirral Council will not normally provide support for students who are under or over compulsory school age. Post-16 students who have previously been in receipt of home education or an EHCP and have an appropriate medical referral may be considered for continued support from the Home Education Service on an individual basis.

Hospital in-patients:

Wirral Council provide support through Wirral Hospitals' School for children and young people who are in-patients at Arrowse Park Hospital.

Reintegration:

The aim of the provision from the Home Education Service team is to reintegrate students back into school at the earliest opportunity as soon as they are well enough. A phased reintegration programme will be planned following discussion with the child/ward or young person, parent/carer, school, relevant health professional(s) and other involved agencies, as appropriate.

It should be recognised that it is likely that some students, eg. those suffering from significant mental ill-health, will need a very gradual reintegration into school. Reintegration that is done too quickly and/or without thorough planning is unlikely to be successful.

In some cases, it may not be possible for the child to return to school on a full-time basis

initially. Arrangements for reintegration (or any future education arrangements) will need to take into account any on-going health needs or disabilities they may have.

Complaints:

Contact the Senior SEND Manager, Hamilton Buildings, Conway Street, Birkenhead, CH41 6JE