



TRCA Children with health needs who cannot attend school Policy

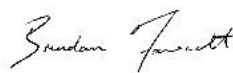
Responsible for policy:

Review:

Chair of Directors

CC3: Quality, Performance and Standards

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Contents

Definitions	3
1. Purpose	4
2. Scope	4
3. Legislation & Guidance	5
4. The responsibility of the stakeholders	5
5. Absences	7
6. Support for pupils	8
7. Monitoring arrangements.....	8
8. Links to other policies	8

Definitions

In this **Children with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School Policy**, unless the context otherwise requires, the following expressions shall have the following meanings:

- i **'The Romero Catholic Academy'** means the Company named at the beginning of this **Policy** and includes all sites upon which the Company is undertaking, from time to time, being carried out. The Romero Catholic Academy includes; **Corpus Christi, Good Shepherd, Sacred Heart, SS Peter and Paul, Saint Gregory, Saint John Fisher, Saint Patrick, Cardinal Wiseman, Shared Services Team.**
- ii **'Romero Catholic Academy'** means the Company responsible for the management of the Academy and, for all purposes, means the employer of staff at the Company.
- iii **'Board'** means the board of Directors of the Romero Catholic Academy.
- iv **'Chair'** means the Chair of the Board or the Chair of the Local Governing Body of the Academy appointed from time to time, as appropriate.
- v **'Governance Professional'** means the Governance Professional to the Board or the Governance Professional to the Local Governing Body of the Academy appointed from time to time, as appropriate.
- vi **'Chief Executive Officer (CEO)'** means the person responsible for performance of all academies and staff within the Multi Academy Company and is accountable to the Board of Directors.
- vii **'Diocesan Education Service'** means the education service provided by the diocese, which may also be known, or referred to, as the DES.
- viii **'Local Governing Body'** means the governing body of the School.
- ix **'Governing Body Representatives'** means the governors appointed and elected to the Local Governing Body.
- x **'Principal'** means the substantive Principal, who is the person with overall responsibility for the day to day management of the school.
- xi **'Pupils'** means Children (EYFS), Pupils (KS1-KS4), Students (KS5). For the purposes of the policy we will use pupil throughout.
- xii **'School'** means the school or college within The Romero Catholic Academy and includes all sites upon which the school undertaking is, from time to time, being carried out.
- xiii **'Shared Services Team'** means the staff who work in the central team across the Company (e.g. HR/ Finance)
- xiv **'Vice-Chair'** means the Vice-Chair of the Governing Body elected from time to time.
- xv **Definitions**

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

- Physical health issues.
- Physical injuries.
- Mental health problems, including anxiety.
- Emotional difficulties and Emotion Based School Avoidance.
- Progressive conditions.
- Terminal illnesses.
- Chronic illnesses.

Pupils who are unable to attend mainstream education for health reasons may attend any of the following:

- Hospital school: a special school within a hospital setting where education is provided to give continuity whilst the pupil is receiving treatment
- Home tuition: many LAs have home tuition services that act as a communication channel between schools and pupils on occasions where pupils are too ill to attend school and are receiving specialist medical treatment.
- Medical PRUs: these are LA establishments that provide education for pupils unable to attend their registered school due to their medical needs.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all pupils within The Romero Catholic Academy who are unable to attend school due to health needs continue to receive a suitable education. It aims to provide clarity on the responsibilities of schools, the local authority, and families in supporting pupils with physical or mental health conditions, whether short-term or long-term, and to promote continuity of learning and successful reintegration into school. The policy reflects the Trust's commitment to inclusive education, safeguarding, and the belief that every child should be supported to achieve their full God-given potential.

Due to the nature of their health needs, some pupils may be admitted to hospital or placed in alternative forms of education provision. We recognise that, whenever possible, pupils should receive their education within their school and the aim of the provision will be to reintegrate pupils back into school as soon as they are well enough.

We understand that we have a continuing role in a pupil's education whilst they are not in school and will work with the LA, healthcare partners and families to ensure that all pupils with medical needs receive the right level of support to enable them to maintain links with their education

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 Parent / Carers understand what the school is responsible for when this education is being provided by the local authority

2. Scope

This policy applies to all schools within The Romero Catholic Academy: Corpus Christi, Good Shepherd, Sacred Heart, SS Peter and Paul, Saint Gregory, Saint John Fisher, Saint Patrick, and Cardinal Wiseman. It is relevant to all staff, governors, parents/carers, and external partners involved in the education and care of pupils with health needs.

The policy covers:

- Pupils unable to attend school due to physical or mental health conditions
- Roles and responsibilities of school staff, the local authority, and families
- Arrangements for remote learning, hospital education, and home tuition
- Procedures for monitoring attendance, planning reintegration, and ensuring safeguarding
- Coordination with healthcare professionals and education providers

3. Legislation & Guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of **Section 19 of the Education Act 1996**, which places a duty on local authorities to arrange suitable full-time education (or part-time if appropriate) for pupils of compulsory school age who, due to illness, exclusion, or other reasons, would not otherwise receive suitable education.

It is also informed by the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- **Equality Act 2010** – Ensures that pupils with health needs are not discriminated against and receive reasonable adjustments.
- **Data Protection Act 2018** – Governs the handling of sensitive health and educational data.
- **Children and Families Act 2014**, particularly **Section 100** – Requires schools to plan to support pupils with medical conditions.
- **SEND Code of Practice (2015, updated 2024)** – Provides statutory guidance on identifying and supporting pupils with SEND, including those with health-related barriers to education.
- **DfE (2023) Statutory Guidance: Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school** – Outlines expectations for local authorities and schools in ensuring continuity of education.
- **DfE (2015) Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions** – Sets out responsibilities for schools in supporting pupils with medical needs.
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE)** – Emphasises multi-agency collaboration to protect vulnerable children, including those with health needs.
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE)** – Highlights the safeguarding responsibilities of schools, including for pupils with medical conditions.
- **Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (DfE, 2018)** – Offers guidance on supporting pupils whose mental health affects attendance.
- **Providing Remote Education (DfE, 2023)** – Non-statutory guidance on maintaining educational access during periods of absence.
- **Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE, 2023)** – Encourages proactive approaches to attendance, including for pupils with health-related barriers.

This policy also reflects guidance provided by our local authority and complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

4. The responsibility of the stakeholders

4.1 If the school decides:

- Initially, the school will attempt to decide to deliver suitable education for pupils with health needs who cannot attend school. The individual circumstances will be considered.
- Arrangements will be coordinated and monitored by the school SENCO, with work being set by the class teacher. In most instances, work will be made available via Microsoft Teams and other online learning tools (see Remote Learning Policy) alongside paper versions.
- Parents/carers will be contacted by email and/or telephone as appropriate to plan. If the pupil is under the care of a hospital and attending provision through a hospital school, the school will liaise directly with tutors via email. While the pupil is away from school, they will be able to maintain communication with their classmates through online learning platforms.

- When pupils are ready to reintegrate to school, a reintegration meeting will be held by a member of SLT with the parent and pupil and an appropriate timetable agreed to transition the pupil back into the school routine.

4.2 If the local authority decides:

If the school can't make suitable arrangements, the local authority will become responsible for arranging suitable education for these pupils.

In cases where the local authority decides, the school will:

- Work constructively with the local authority, providers, relevant agencies and Parent / Carers to ensure the best outcomes for the pupil
- Share information with the local authority and relevant health services as required
- Help make sure that the provision offered to the pupil is as effective as possible and that the pupil can be reintegrated back into school successfully

When reintegration is anticipated, the school will work with the local authority to:

- Plan for consistent provision during and after the period of education outside the school, allowing the pupil to access the same curriculum and materials that they would have used in school as far as possible;
- Enable the pupil to stay in touch with school life (e.g. through newsletters, emails, invitations to school events or internet links to lessons from their school);
- Create individually tailored reintegration plans for each pupil returning to school;
- Consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made.

4.3 The Local Governing Board and Principal are responsible for:

- Ensuring arrangements for pupils who cannot attend school because of their medical needs are in place and are effectively implemented.
- Ensuring the termly review of the arrangements made for pupils who cannot attend school due to their medical needs.
- Ensuring the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the arrangements to support the needs of pupils are clear and understood by all.
- Ensuring robust systems are in place for dealing with health emergencies and critical incidents, for both on- and off-site activities.
- Ensuring staff with responsibility for supporting pupils with health needs are appropriately trained.
- Appointing a named member of staff who is responsible for pupils with healthcare needs and liaises with Parent / Carers, pupils, the LA, key workers and others involved in the pupil's care.
- Providing teachers who support pupils with health needs with suitable information relating to a pupil's health condition and the possible effect the condition and/or medication taken has on the pupil.
- Notifying the LA when a pupil is likely to be away from the school for a significant period of time due to their health needs.

4.4 The SENCo is responsible for:

- Dealing with pupils who are unable to attend school because of medical needs.
- Actively monitoring pupil progress and reintegration into school.
- Supplying pupils' education providers with information about the pupil's capabilities, progress and outcomes.
- Liaising with the Principal, education providers and Parent / Carers to determine pupils' programmes of study whilst they are absent from school.
- The Romero Attendance team will provide a link between pupils and their Parent / Carers, and the LA.

4.5 Teachers and Support Staff are responsible for:

- Understanding confidentiality in respect of pupils' health needs.
- Designing lessons and activities in a way that allows those with health needs to participate fully and ensuring pupils are not excluded from activities that they wish to take part in without a clear evidence-based reason.
- Understanding their role in supporting pupils with health needs and ensuring they attend the required training.
- Ensuring they are aware of the needs of their pupils through the appropriate and lawful sharing of the individual pupil's health needs.
- Ensuring they are aware of the signs, symptoms and triggers of common life-threatening medical conditions and know what to do in an emergency. Keeping Parent / Carers informed of how their child's health needs are affecting them whilst in the school.
- Planning and supporting with the delivery of remote lessons for pupils who can not attend school as a result of medical needs.

5. Absences

- Parent / Carers are advised to contact the school on the first day their child is unable to attend due to illness.
- Absences due to illness will be authorised unless the school has genuine cause for concern about the authenticity of the illness.
- The school will provide support to pupils who are absent from school because of illness for a period of less than 15 school days by liaising with the pupil's Parent / Carers to arrange schoolwork as soon as the pupil is able to cope with it or part-time education at school. The school will give due consideration to which aspects of the curriculum are prioritised in consultation with the pupil, their family and relevant members of staff.
- For periods of absence that are expected to last for 15 or more school days, either in one absence or over the course of a school year, the named person with responsibility for pupils with health (Romero Attendance Team) will notify the LA, who will take responsibility for the pupil and their education.
- Where absences are anticipated or known in advance, the school will liaise with the LA to enable education provision to be provided from the start of the pupil's absence.
- For hospital admissions, the appointed named member of staff will liaise with the LA regarding the programme that should be followed while the pupil is in hospital.
- The LA will set up a personal education plan (PEP) for the pupil which will allow the school, the LA and the provider of the pupil's education together.
- The school will monitor pupil attendance and mark registers to ensure it is clear whether a pupil is, or should be, receiving education otherwise than at school.
- The school will only remove a pupil who is unable to attend school because of additional health needs from the school roll where: The pupil has been certified by the school's medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school, before ceasing to be of compulsory school age; and neither the pupil nor their Parent/ Carer has indicated to the school the intention to continue to attend the school, after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
- A pupil unable to attend school because of their health needs will not be removed from the school register without parental consent and certification from the school's medical officer, even if the LA has become responsible for the pupil's education.

6. Support for pupils

- Where a pupil has a complex or long-term health issue, the school will discuss the pupil's needs and how these may be best met with the LA, relevant medical professionals, Parent / Carers and, where appropriate, the pupil. The LA expects the school to support pupils with health needs to attend full-time education wherever possible, or for the school to make reasonable adjustments to pupils' programmes of study where medical evidence supports the need for those adjustments.
- The school will make reasonable adjustments under pupils' Educational Health Care Plans (EHCPs), in accordance with the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy.
- Pupils admitted to hospital will receive education as determined appropriate by the medical professionals and hospital tuition team at the hospital concerned.
- During a period of absence, the school will work with the provider of the pupil's education to establish and maintain regular communication and effective outcomes.
- Whilst a pupil is away from school, the school will work with the LA to ensure the pupil can successfully remain in touch with their school using the following methods: School newsletters, Emails, Invitations to school events, cards or letters from peers and staff.
- Where appropriate, the school will provide the pupil's education provider with relevant information, curriculum materials and resources.
- To help ensure a pupil with additional health needs is able to attend school following an extended period of absence, the following adaptations will be considered:
 - A personalised or part-time timetable, drafted in consultation with the named staff member.
 - Access to additional support in school.
 - Online access to the curriculum from home.
 - Movement of lessons to more accessible rooms.
 - Places to rest at school.
 - Special exam arrangements to manage anxiety or fatigue.

7. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by Core Committee 3, Quality, Performance and Standards

8. Links to other policies

The Children with health needs who cannot attend school policy is linked to our:

- TRCA Faith and Remote Learning Policy
- TRCA Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- TRCA Supporting Pupils With Medical Needs Policy
- TRCA Attendance and Leave of Absence Policy