

Policy document on the education of children/young people with medical needs

Section 19 of the 1996 Education Act states that LEAs have a duty to:

'Make arrangements for the provision of suitable education at school or otherwise than at school for those children of compulsory school age who, by reason of illness, may not for any period receive suitable education unless such arrangements are made for them'.

Introduction and purpose of the policy

Durham County Council is committed to promoting inclusion, equality of opportunity and continuity of education for pupils with medical needs. Strategic planning for the development of provision for pupils with medical needs is included in the EDP, the BSP and the Social Inclusion strategy.

This policy applies to pupils who are temporarily unable to attend school because of illness, injury, pregnancy, anxiety and identified mental health problems. The purpose of this policy is to confirm Durham County Council's statutory duties in accordance with:

- Section 19 of the 1996 Education Act
- 'Access to Education for Children and Young People with Medical Needs', DfES, 2001.

Shared Roles and Responsibilities

Ensuring access to education for pupils with medical needs is the responsibility of the LEA and schools.

The LEA is responsible for ensuring that:

- there is a named LEA officer with responsibility for the co-ordination of educational provision for young people who are unable to attend school because of medical needs
- pupils with medical needs are not at home or in hospital without access to education for more than 15 working days (pupils with recurrent illness should have access, as far as possible, from day one)
- procedures are in place for ensuring early identification of pupils' needs
- pupils receive a minimum entitlement of 5 hours teaching per week
- there is close liaison between pupils, their families, their schools, and other agencies.

The named LEA officer is:

Kath Tansey, Co-ordinator, LSS Home & Hospital Support Service, Broom Cottages Primary and Nursery School, Ferryhill, County Durham DL17 8AN. Tel: 01740 652217 Fax: 01740 657792
email: kath.tansey@durham.gov.uk

The LEA commissions the LSS Home & Hospital Support Service to provide:

- advice/information to pupils, parents/carers, schools and other agencies about such pupils
- direct teaching, where appropriate, at home, in hospital, in small groups or through support towards reintegration into school.

Schools have a responsibility to:

- have a clear policy and a named person responsible for pupils who are unable to attend school because of medical needs
- notify Home & Hospital Support Service if a pupil is, or is likely to be, absent from school because of medical needs for more than fifteen working days
- provide Home & Hospital Support Service with information about a pupil's capabilities, progress, programmes of work and resources
- work in partnership with Home & Hospital Support Service to monitor provision, review progress and support reintegration into school
- take into account parents' and pupils' views.

County Durham's range of provision for pupils with medical needs

All pupils who are unable to attend school because of medical needs remain on the roll of their school and the Home & Hospital Support Service consults with each pupil's school to ensure appropriate programmes of study are followed.

Pupils educated in small groups attend for 5 half-days per week e.g. in hospital, pregnant schoolgirl groups and GAP (Group for Anxious Pupils).

Pupils educated individually i.e. at home or receiving support towards reintegration are offered a minimum entitlement of 5 hours teaching per week. Whether pupils can access the minimum entitlement or an increased level of provision will depend upon the state of their health.

The minimum entitlement may be increased if a pupil:

- is at Key Stage 4 and studying for 5 or more GCSEs/GNVQs or other accredited courses
- has a statement of SEN or a summative audit band of D, E or F
- requires limited (1 term) increased support to facilitate the completion of reintegration.

All pupils receiving direct support from the Home & Hospital Support Service are entitled to regular reviews. Return to school is planned and supported according to each pupil's individual needs.

A training and development plan is established annually, which reflects National, County Council, Service and individual priorities. A system of performance management is in place, which enables the Service to define service standards, targets and outcomes as well as building in timescales for their review.

Further details, including management/organisational and budget information are available in the LSS document, 'Information for Schools and Other Agencies'.

Referral

Referral to the Home & Hospital Support Service may be from the LEA, health or other agencies as well as and schools or parents. Referrals can be made as soon as it is anticipated that a pupil is likely to be absent from school for more than 15 working days because of medical or identified mental health problems. The Service will seek and respond to medical information and advice.

Working in Partnership with Parents/Carers and Pupils and Other Agencies

The Home & Hospital Support Service works in collaboration with each referred pupil's family, school, CAMHS and Child Health professionals, other relevant agencies and other LEAs to maintain educational provision for pupils with medical needs.

Parents hold key information and have a critical role to play in their child's education. They have unique knowledge and experience to contribute to the shared view of a pupil's needs and the best way of supporting them. All parents/carers are consulted by one of the Home & Hospital Support Service's advisory team before teaching begins and are offered clear information about the Service. Parents are involved in their child's educational programme and the review process that monitors progress.

Pupils are entitled to receive and make known information, to express an opinion, and to have that opinion taken into account in any matters affecting them. Pupils are encouraged to participate in review meetings.

A Connexions Personal Adviser is located within the Home & Hospital Support Service to work with identified pupils aged 13+ who are receiving support from the Service.

Monitoring and evaluation

The Home & Hospital Support Service maintains and collates pupil data, parental and pupil views and produces a summative end of year report. Supervision and performance management reviews are an integral monitoring tool. The LEA monitors and evaluates the progress of EDP activities at regular intervals.