



TOWNLEY
— EST 1937 —
GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Children with medical needs who cannot attend school

Townley Grammar School aims to support all students who cannot attend school due to medical needs and who would not receive suitable education without such provision to continue to have access to as much education as their medical condition allows to enable them to reach their full potential. Due to their health needs, some children may be admitted to the hospital or placed in alternative education provision. We recognise that, whenever possible, students should receive their education within their school, and the provision will aim to reintegrate students back into school as soon as they are well enough. We understand that we have a continuing role in a student's education whilst they are not attending the school and will work with the LA, healthcare partners and families to ensure that all students with medical needs receive the right level of support to enable them to maintain links with their education.

Legal Framework

- This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:
- Data Protection Act (2018)
- 'Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs' (DfE, 2013)
- 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions' (DfE, 2015)
- Education Act (1996)
- Equality Act (2010)
- SEN Code of Practice (2015)

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Attendance Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Supporting Children with Medical Needs
- Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy
- Access Arrangements Policy
- Accessibility Report

Definitions

Children who are unable to attend school because of their medical needs may include those with:

- Physical health difficulties.
- Physical injuries.
- Mental health problems, including anxiety issues. Emotional difficulties or school refusal.
- Progressive conditions.
- Terminal illnesses.
- Chronic illnesses.

Children 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 while the child receives treatment.
- Home tuition: many LAs have home tuition services that communicate between schools and students when students are too ill to attend school and receive specialist medical treatment.
- Medical PRUs: LA establishments provide education for children unable to attend their registered school due to their medical needs.

Local Authority (LA) Duties

The LA must arrange suitable full-time education for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would not receive suitable education without such provision. Townley Grammar School must support the LA in doing so when necessary.

The LA should:

- Provide such education as soon as it is clear that a student will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative. They should liaise with the appropriate medical professionals to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the pupil.
- Ensure the education students receive is of good quality, allows them to take appropriate qualifications, prevents them from falling behind their peers in school, and enables them to reintegrate successfully back into school as soon as possible.
- Address the needs of individual students in arranging provision.
- Have a named officer responsible for the education of children with additional health needs and ensure parents know who this is.
- Have a written, publicly accessible policy statement on their arrangements to comply with their legal duty towards children with additional health needs.
- Review the provision offered regularly to ensure that it continues to be appropriate for the child and provides a suitable education.
- Give clear policies on educating children and young people under and over compulsory school age.

The LA should not:

- Have processes or policies that prevent a child from getting the right provision and a good education.
- Withhold or reduce the provision, or type of provision, for a child because of how much it will cost.
- Have policies based on the percentage of time a child can attend school rather than whether the child is receiving a suitable education during that attendance.
- Have lists of health conditions that dictate whether or not they will arrange education for children or inflexible policies that result in children going without suitable full-time education (or as much education as their health condition allows them to participate in).

Roles and Responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for:

- Ensuring arrangements for students who cannot attend school due to their medical needs are in place and are effectively implemented.
- Ensuring the termly review of the arrangements made for students 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 students 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 responsible for supporting students with health needs are appropriately trained.
- Approving and reviewing this policy on an annual basis.

The SENDCo is responsible for:

- Working with the Governing Board to ensure compliance with the relevant statutory duties when supporting students with health needs.
- Working collaboratively with parents and other professionals to develop arrangements to meet the needs of children.
- Ensuring the arrangements to meet students' health needs are fully understood and acted upon by everyone involved.
- Liaising with parents/carers, students, the LA, key workers, health professionals, and others involved in the pupil's care.
- Ensuring the support put in place focuses on and meets the needs of individual students.
- Arranging appropriate training for staff responsible for supporting students with health needs.
- Providing teachers who support students with health needs with suitable information relating to a student's health condition and the possible effect the condition and/or medication taken has on the student.
- Notifying the LA when a student is likely to be away from the school for a significant period due to their health needs.
- Actively monitoring student progress and reintegration into school.
- Supplying students' education providers with information about the child's capabilities, progress, and outcomes.

The School Nurse is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the relevant staff and counselling team appropriately support students who cannot attend school because of medical needs.
- Make reasonable adjustments for the student's needs on returning to the school.
- Keeping students informed about school events and encouraging communication with their peers.
- Providing a link between students, their parents/carers and the LA, where applicable.

Teachers and support staff are responsible for:

- Understanding confidentiality in respect of students' health needs.
- Designing lessons and activities to allow those with health needs to participate fully and ensure students are not excluded from activities they wish to participate in without a clear evidence-based reason.
- Understanding their role in supporting students with health needs and ensuring they attend the required training.
- Ensuring they are aware of the needs of their students through the appropriate sharing of the individual student's health needs.
- Keeping parents/carers informed of how their child's health needs affect them in school.

Parents/Carers are expected to:

- Ensure their child's regular and punctual attendance at the school where possible.
- Work with the school to ensure the best possible outcomes for their child.
- Notify the school of the reason for their child's absences without delay.
- Provide the school with sufficient and up-to-date information about their child's medical needs. Attend meetings to discuss how support for their child should be planned.

Managing Absences

Parents are advised to contact the school on the first day their child cannot 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 students who are absent from school because of illness (confirmed by a medical or specialist mental health professional) for a period of less than 15 school days by liaising with the student's parents to arrange schoolwork as soon as the student can cope with it or part-time education at school. The school will consider which aspects of the curriculum are prioritised in consultation with the student, their family and relevant staff members.

Attendance Officers monitor absence patterns, and the Student Hub Coordinator and the Assistant Headteacher oversee attendance.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or SENDCo will be notified if there are concerns about a pupil's attendance (for example, for periods of absence that last 15 or more school days, either in one absence or over the course of the school year). They will inform the LA, who will take responsibility for the student and their education if appropriate. 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 staff member will liaise with the hospital school regarding the programme that should be followed while the student is in the hospital. The school will monitor student attendance and mark registers to ensure it is clear whether a student is, or should be, receiving education outside of school.

Support for students

Where a student has a complex or long-term health issue, the school will discuss the student's needs and how these may be best met with the LA, relevant medical professionals, parents/carers and, where appropriate, the student. The LA expects the school to support students with health needs to attend full-time education wherever possible or to make reasonable adjustments to students' programmes of study where medical evidence supports the need for those adjustments. The school will make reasonable adjustments under students' individual healthcare plans (IHCPs), reviewed annually in accordance with the First Aid Policy. Students admitted to the 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 student is away from school, the school will work with the LA to ensure the student 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, including the tutor, Learning Manager and Assistant Learning Manager.
- Where appropriate, the school will provide the pupil's education provider with relevant information, curriculum materials and resources.

To help ensure a student with additional health needs can 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.
- Exam arrangements to manage anxiety or fatigue in accordance with the JCQ Regulations

Reintegration

When a student is considered well enough to return to school, the school will develop a tailored reintegration plan. As far as possible, the student can access the curriculum and materials they would have used in school. If appropriate, the school nurse will be involved in developing the pupil's reintegration plan and informed of the plan's timeline by the appointed named member of staff to ensure they can prepare to offer any appropriate support to the student and provide relevant staff training. The school will consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made to provide suitable access to the school and the curriculum for the pupil. For longer absences, the reintegration plan will be developed near the student's likely return date to avoid putting unnecessary pressure on an ill student or their parents/carers in the early stages of their absence.

The school is aware that some students will need gradual reintegration over a long period and will always consult with the student, their parents/carers and key staff about concerns, medical issues, timing and the preferred pace of return.

The reintegration plan will include:

- The date for planned reintegration, once known.
- Details of regular meetings to discuss reintegration.
- Details of the named staff member responsible for the pupil.
- Clearly stated responsibilities and the rights of all those involved.
- Details of social contacts, including the involvement of peers and mentors during the transition period.
- A programme of small goals leading up to reintegration.
- Follow-up procedures.

The school will ensure a welcoming environment is developed and encourage students and staff to be positive and proactive during the reintegration period.

Information Sharing

All information about students with health needs must be kept up-to-date. To protect confidentiality, all information-sharing techniques will be agreed upon with the student and their parents/carers before being used. All teachers, supply and associate staff will be provided access to relevant information via the agreed procedures, including high-risk health needs, first aiders and emergency procedures. Parents/carers will be informed of their rights and responsibilities regarding confidentiality and information sharing.

To help achieve this, the school will:

- Ensure this policy and other relevant policies are easily available and accessible.
- Consider how friendship groups and peers may be able to assist students with health needs.
- When a student is discharged from the hospital or is returning from other education provision, the school will ensure the appropriate information is received to allow for a smooth return to the school.
- The named staff member will liaise with the hospital or other tuition service as appropriate.

Record Keeping

In accordance with Townley Grammar School's First Aid Policy, written records of all medicines administered to students will be kept. Detailed record-keeping protects staff and students and provides evidence that agreed procedures have been followed. All records will align with the School's Privacy Notice and Data Protection Policy.

Training

Staff will be trained promptly to assist with a student's return to school. Once a student's return date has been confirmed, staff will be provided with relevant training before the student's anticipated return. Healthcare professionals should be involved in identifying and agreeing with the school on the type and level of training required. Training will be sufficient to ensure staff are confident in their ability to support students with additional health needs. Parents of students with additional health needs may provide specific advice but will not be the sole trainer of staff.

Examinations and Assessments

The named staff member will liaise with the alternative provision provider over planning and examination course requirements where appropriate, in line with JCQ guidance.

Relevant assessment information will be provided to the alternative provision provider if required. Awarding bodies may make special arrangements for students with permanent or long-term disabilities, learning difficulties, or temporary disabilities and illnesses.

Applications for such arrangements will be submitted by the school as early as possible by the Examinations Officer in discussion with the nursing team, SENDCo, Pastoral Team, and Deputy Headteacher.