Copnor Primary School

Children With Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School Policy

Governing Body approval gained in January 2026 Next review January 2027
Policy proposed for adoption by Matt Johnson, Headteacher
Headteacher's signature: Chair of Committee signature:

Purpose
Some children may have health needs which mean that they are unable to attend the school's physical building for an extended period of time. This policy is based upon Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs statutory guidance.

Aim
All children, regardless of circumstance should receive a good education to enable them to shape their own futures. Therefore, alternative provision should offer good quality education on par with that of mainstream schooling, along with the support pupils need to overcome barriers to attainment. This support should meet a pupil's individual needs, including social and emotional needs, and enable them to thrive and prosper.

When is this Policy Used?
This policy is for when the school needs to provide suitable full-time education (or part-time when appropriate for the child's needs) for children who are unable to attend the school because of their health. It applies equally whether a child cannot attend school at all or can only attend intermittently.

Responsibilities
Portsmouth City Council (PCC) are responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for permanently excluded pupils,and for other children who, because of illness or other reasons, would not receive suitable education without such provision. This means that where a child cannot attend school because of health problems, and would not otherwise receive a suitable full-time education, PCC is responsible for arranging provision.

School Involvement Instead of PCC
There will be a wide range of circumstances where a child has a health need but will receive suitable education that meets their needs without the intervention of PCC for example, where the child can still attend school with some support; where the school has made arrangements to deliver suitable education outside of school for the child; or where arrangements have been made for the child to be educated in a hospital by an on-site hospital school. PCC will not become involved in such arrangements unless it had reason to think that the education being provided to the child was not suitable or, while otherwise suitable, was not full-time or for the number of hours the child could benefit from without adversely affecting their health. This might be the case where, for example, the child can attend school but only intermittently.

Involvement of PCC
In some cases, the school may feel that it is unable to support a child who is away due to health needs. Where the support for the child provided by Copnor Primary School will not meet the need of a suitable full-time education, then PCC will be consulted and steps taken in consultation with them in order to provide such education. This will be as soon as it is clear that the child will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative.

Full-Time Education
The law does not define full-time education but children with health needs should have provision which

is equivalent to the education they would receive in school. If they receive one-to-one tuition, for example, 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 particular child because of reasons relating to their physical or mental health, the school, in consultation with PCC, will ensure that part-time education is provided on a basis they consider to be in the child's best interests.

The school, with the support of PCC will aim to ensure that full and part-time education still achieve good academic attainment and progress particularly in English, Maths and Science.

Parents/Carers

The school will aim to 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 in ensuring that a child is reintegrated as soon as possible and that they support the implementation of the provision wherever possible.

Registration at the School

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) England Regulations 2006, a school can only remove a pupil who is unable to attend school because of additional health needs where the pupil has been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school.

A child unable to attend school because of health needs must not be removed from the school register without parental/carer consent and certification from the school medical officer, even if PCC has become responsible for the child's education. Continuity is important for children and knowing that they can return to their familiar surroundings and school friends can help their recovery and their educational progress.

Reintegration into School

When reintegration into school is anticipated, the school will work with PCC (and hospital school or home tuition services if appropriate) to plan for consistent provision during and after the period of education outside school. As far as possible, the child should be able to access the curriculum and materials that they would have used in school. The school will work with PCC to ensure that children can successfully remain in touch with the school while they are away. We will use resources such as school newsletters, emails, invitations to school events, the use of controllable interfaces and internet links to lessons as appropriate.

Copnor Primary School will work with PCC in order to set up an individually tailored reintegration plan for each child. This may have to include extra support to help fill any gaps arising from the child's absence.

School Nurse Involvement

It may be appropriate to involve the school nurse at this stage as they may be able to offer valuable advice. The school nurse will also want to be aware that the child is returning to school, so that they can be prepared to offer any appropriate support. The school will consider whether there is a need to make any reasonable adjustments to provide suitable access for the child.

Where the absence is likely to be lengthy, the reintegration plan may only take shape nearer to the likely date of return, to avoid putting unsuitable pressure on an ill child in the early stages of their absence. While most children will want to return to their previous schoolroutine at once, some will need gradual reintegration over a longer period and the plans will reflect this.