

# GREYSBROOKE PRIMARY SCHOOL



## ATTENDANCE POLICY

## Greysbrooke Primary School

### Principles

Promoting positive behaviour and excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community.

The school will promote positive behaviour and good attendance through its use of curriculum and learning materials. Good attendance and behaviour by pupils will be recognised appropriately. All children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

All children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems that arise with attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent.

This attendance policy includes procedural referral agreements that are designed to promote and safeguard the welfare of pupils. Schools have a duty in law to refer any absence where they have been unable to make contact with the parent/child or have general concerns about the absence to the Education Welfare Service.

Schools are required to take an attendance register twice a day, and this shows whether the pupil is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent. If a pupil of compulsory school age is absent every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school, as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**. Only school can authorise the absence, not parents. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing.

**Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness or other unavoidable cause.**

**Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:**

- **parents keeping children off school unnecessarily**
- **truancy before or during the school day**
- **absences which have never been properly explained**
- **children who arrive at school too late to get a mark**

Parents whose children are experiencing difficulties should contact the school at an early stage and work together with the staff in resolving any problems. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school or the parent may refer the child to the Education Welfare Officer from the County Council. He/she will also try to resolve the situation with voluntary support, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, these Officers can issue Penalty Notices or use court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child.

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the EWO themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting the Local Education Authority.

## Registration

The school is required to mark the attendance register twice each day. Greysbrooke Primary School uses electronic registration. Teachers or an authorised member of support staff will mark the electronic register with a 'present' code or 'N' – see codes below. Staff in the office will check all 'N' codes and replace them if necessary before uploading to the pupil database. Classroom teachers are responsible for completing the attendance registers using the prescribed codes (shown below).

## REGISTER CODES

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT dual registration)	Approved educational activity
C	Other authorised circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e., pupil attending other establishment)	Approved education activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved educational activity
L	Late (before registration closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointment	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved educational activity
R	Religious observation	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved educational activity
W	Work experience	Approved educational activity

X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

The register will be called promptly at **8.55am** and **12.55pm** by each class teacher and a mark of 'present' or 'N' will be made during the registration period in respect of each child.

### **Lateness**

Children are able to enter their classroom from 8.45am with school officially starting at 8.55am. Pupils are expected to arrive at school on time every day. It is very disruptive to their own education, and that of others in their class, if they are late. Registration occurs between 8.55 – 9.05am and again between (12.55 – 1.05pm). Pupils are expected to attend full time once they are statutory school age. Those arriving after the registration period has closed are marked as late on the class registers. Those arriving after 9.25 am or 1.05pm with avoidable lateness are marked as having unauthorised absence for the remainder of that school session. Discretion is granted for an attendance where the child has arrived at the first reasonable opportunity after a medical appointment or where there have been genuine transport difficulties. For health and safety reasons it is important that the school knows who is in the building. Pupils arriving late should therefore report to the school office. It is important that all pupils arriving late follow this procedure.

For the same reason it is important that pupils leaving the premises legitimately (e.g. for a medical appointment), or returning to school later in the day leave with an approved adult from the main reception area; having informed the office staff that they are leaving. Parents should not take children from school unless a member of staff has been informed.

In these circumstances the child will be signed in a book held in the school office. The book is also used to record the time and reason why a child leaves school earlier than the usual end of the school day such as for a hospital appointment or a music examination.

There is no such concept as "authorised lateness"; the child is either present or unauthorised absent.

A pupil who has 10 unauthorised late marks (not necessarily consecutive) over a period of 12 school weeks (excluding school holidays) may receive a penalty warning notice and a fine.

We ask all parents to help us achieve our aim of 0% unauthorised absence. Absence request forms are available from the school office. Children with 100% attendance are rewarded with a certificate at the end of the school year.

The Department for Education collects data from schools relating to both authorised and unauthorised absences and uses it in tables to compare schools. Although we are not aware of any child being absent from school without their parents' knowledge, any unauthorised absence in published tables is seen by most people to indicate levels of truancy. It is therefore important to provide accurate information to school when your child is absent.

## Procedures

Attendance has a very high profile at Greysbrooke Primary School and is regularly discussed at assemblies and in classes. Parents are regularly reminded in newsletters and school meetings about the importance of good attendance and its links to attainment

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

If a child is absent from school parents are advised to contact school on the first day of absence, by 9.30am and give the reason. Usually absence is the result of illness. Telephone calls are an acceptable form of notification and a record is made of the call, who the caller was, the time of the call and the reason given for the absence. This information is used to inform the register coding. Alternatively, parents can email [notification@greysbrooke.staffs.sch.uk](mailto:notification@greysbrooke.staffs.sch.uk) to advise.

Should the school not be informed by parents in any way about the reason for an absence, this is followed up by a text to the parent on the first day of absence (followed by a telephone call if no response) and is dealt with by the School Office Team. This allows us to keep accurate records of authorised or unauthorised absences.

It is the school that decides how to classify absences, not the parents.

### School Strategies to Tackle Absence

Where there is an emerging pattern of a pupil's absence the school will invite parents to a meeting to discuss the reasons for the absences. Plans should be put in place with the parents and pupil to resolve any difficulties and improve the attendance within a specified time limit. It will be explained to parents that any future absences will be unauthorised unless there is clear evidence of a good reason for them. Greysbrooke Primary School may consider the implementation of a EHA (Early Help Assessment) should the need arise. A 'Safe and Well Check' may also be requested by the school.

### Referral to the Local Authority Education Welfare Officer

If there continue to be unauthorised absences by the end of the specified time (or sooner if the pupil is failing to attend school at all), the matter will be referred to the Local Authority Education Welfare Officer. Regulations (Education Pupil Regulations 2006) require schools to inform the LA of every pupil who has been continuously absent without a good reason (i.e. the absence is unauthorised) for 20 school sessions (10 days) over a period of 12 weeks, excluding school holidays. These absences do not need to be consecutive. This may result in a Penalty Notice being served.

Parents whose children are experiencing difficulties should contact school at an early stage and work together with staff in resolving any problems. This is nearly always successful.

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the EWO themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting the Local Authority.

### **Leave of absence**

The Department for Education makes it clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. Head teachers now also determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

There is no automatic right to any leave in term time.

Staffordshire County Council understands the challenges that some parents face when booking holidays particularly during school holidays. However, the County Council believes that, in order to ensure children receive the best education and prospects, that they should be in school during term time.

Each case will be considered individually and on its own merits. Parents need, therefore, to consider very carefully before making any request for leave of absence. In considering a request, the school will take account of: -

the **exceptional** circumstances stated that have given rise to the request  
the stage of the child's education and progress and the effects of the requested absence on both elements  
the overall attendance pattern of the child  
frequency of similar requests  
whether the parent made the request in advance  
students/pupils on examination courses or due to take SATS will **not** normally be granted leave of absence.

Where parents have children in more than one school a separate request must be made to each school. The head teacher of each school will make their own decision based on the factors relating to the child at their school. However head teachers may choose to liaise with each other as part of their decision-making process.

Should the school decide to grant leave of absence, but the child **does not return to school at the time s/he was expected to** (i.e. following the expiry of the granted leave of absence period) and no information is available to the school to explain/justify the continuing absence this absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

- Should the school decide **not to grant leave of absence** and parents still take their child out of school, the absence will be recorded as **unauthorised**. This unauthorised absence may be subject to a Penalty Notice fine of £60 **per parent per child**. This fine will increase to £120 if not paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the £120 fine within the period 22 to 28 days may lead to Court proceedings.
- A parent can receive more than one Penalty Notice per academic year.

Schools are obliged to inform parents that they may be subject to a Penalty Notice if their child's absence from school is unauthorised. This is in line with Staffordshire County Council's Code of Conduct (January 2018)

The Local Authority will continue to monitor all school absences during term time and support head teachers in challenging parents who ignore the law. Generally the DfE states that parents include all those with day to day responsibility for a child.

## **Parents or Carers Responsibilities:**

- Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age attend school regularly.
- Inform school straight away if your child cannot attend and give the reason.
- Try to make routine medical, dental or other appointments outside the school day
- Ensure the school is aware of any circumstances at home that may be likely to affect their attendance
- Encourage good routines at home which promote a healthy lifestyle including enough sleep
- Talk to your child about school and let the school know if your child is worried about any issues such as difficulties with homework or friendship problems.
- Do not book holidays in term time – this will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances
- Seek advice from your G.P. if you are not sure how long to keep your child off school with an illness
- Ensure school has all your up to date contact details.
- Encourage your child to enjoy school and make the most of all the opportunities available to them.

## **Governors' responsibilities**

The governing body of a maintained school shall make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.

## **Summary**

Attendance is monitored by year group, class group and by reasons for absence. Accurate attendance returns are made to the DfE within the stipulated time frame.

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. School staff are committed to working with parents as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

Policy Reviewed: February 2021

## **Appendix 1**

### **A GUIDE FOR PARENTS**

#### **1. When does my child need to be in School?**

Your child should be at school in good time for registration. The morning register will be called promptly at 8.55am and the afternoon register at 12.55pm. Children are able to enter their classroom from 8.45am with school officially starting at 8.55am

#### **2. What happens if my child is late?**

Registration finishes at 9.05am in the morning and 1.05pm in the afternoon.

If your child arrives after 9.05am he/she will be marked as absent (unless a good reason for lateness is provided, in which case the mark will be changed to late).

If your child arrives after 1.05pm he/she will be marked absent (unless a good reason for lateness is provided, in which case the mark will be changed to late).

Pupils who arrive after registration should report to the school office to sign in with the office staff who will adjust the class register as necessary. A pupil who has 10 unauthorised late marks (not necessarily consecutive) over a period of 12 school weeks (excluding school holidays) may receive a penalty warning notice and a fine.

#### **3. Does the School need letters explaining my child's absence or will a phone call do?**

We would expect a parent to telephone the school or email [notification@greysbrooke.staffs.sch.uk](mailto:notification@greysbrooke.staffs.sch.uk) on the first day of absence. Parents can leave a message on the answering machine indicating the reasons and likely length of the absence. If you do not phone/email us, we will text you on the first day of absence, followed up with a telephone call if we do not hear from you. If telephone contact is not made, a letter explaining the absence on the first day of return to school will be required otherwise the absence will be unauthorised.

#### **4. What reasons will the school accept for absences?**

- Illness
- Emergency dental/medical appointment  
(Please make routine appointments after school or during the Holidays)
- Day of religious observance
- Family bereavement

Except in the case of illness, you should ask for permission for your child to miss school well in advance, giving full details. In cases of recurring absences through illness you may be asked to produce a medical certificate.

#### **5. What is unacceptable?**

The school will not authorise absence for day trips, visiting relatives, shopping or birthdays etc. Only in exceptional circumstances will a holiday be authorised (a leave of absence form must be completed well in advance).

## **6. Will the school contact me if my child is absent?**

The school operates a first day response to absences: we will text you if we have not heard from you. This is because we believe it is our responsibility to ensure your child's safety as well as their regular school attendance.

If we are concerned about aspects of your child's attendance or punctuality we will contact you to discuss the best way forward.

## **7. I am thinking about sending my child on an extended absence for an overseas to visit relatives. What should I do?**

Greysbrooke Primary School will not normally authorise extended family visits overseas as these visits can take place during the school holidays. However, it is mindful that families may need to

- visit seriously ill family members
- attend a family wedding or funeral
- participate in an act of religious observance (e.g. Hajj)

In such circumstances the leave would be authorised for the date of the event / act of religious observance

## **8. What can I do to encourage my child to attend school?**

Make sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning. Ensure that he/she leaves home in the correct clothes and properly equipped. Show your child, by your interest, that you value his/her education. Your child will bring home a Reading Diary each evening. Please ensure you look at it with your child and support them with their reading or homework as necessary.

## **9. My child is trying to avoid coming to school. What should I do?**

Contact your child's class teacher immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding school for a number of reasons – difficulties with school work, bullying, friendship problems, family difficulties. It is important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend school and work together to tackle the problem.

In some cases you may find it helpful to discuss the circumstances of your child's difficulties with an Education Welfare Officer. The school may also refer you to an Education Welfare Officer who works with staff and families if difficulties with attendance arise.

## Appendix 2

# Children Missing Education March 2019

## Introduction

1. All professionals working with children, as well as the wider community can help by remaining vigilant to children's safety and wellbeing. The law states that all children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.
2. Children missing education (CME) are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at school.
3. Although the focus of this document is on the policy around CME in Staffordshire, the work should be seen within the wider context of the LA in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children living within the county boundaries.
4. The Department for Education guidance "Children Missing Education Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities September 2016" sets out the key principles to enable local authorities in England to implement their legal duty under section [436A of the Education Act 1996](#) to make arrangements to identify, as far as it is possible to do so, children missing education (CME). This document is followed by the Local Authority in its delivery of the above duties.
5. If you know of any child who is not receiving an education, or you know of a child who has gone missing from a school, or are in any doubt please contact:

Children Missing Education,  
Staffordshire County Council,  
Families First,  
Faraday Road,  
Stafford  
ST16 3NQ

Telephone: 01785 278999 or 895966

Email: [cme.referrals@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:cme.referrals@staffordshire.gov.uk)

6. If you are concerned about a child's safety i.e.
  - o you have a serious concern about the safety of a child
  - o you think a child is being harmed or is at risk of being harmed
  - o you are worried that a child is living in circumstances where they are treated badly and not cared for properly

You **must** contact First Response on: 0800 13 13 126

Office hours: 8.30 am to 5.00 pm Monday to Thursday; and 8.30 am to 4.30 pm Friday

Email: [firstr@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:firstr@staffordshire.gov.uk)

7. The [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#) places a duty on local authorities in England and Wales to make arrangements to identify children and young people of compulsory school age missing education in their area.
8. The DFE documents Keeping “Children Safe in Education 2018” and “Working Together to Safeguard Children - A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children”, originally published in March 2010, and revised in 2013, 2015 and 2018 says:

"There is a Children Missing Education (CME) named point of contact in every Local Authority. Every practitioner working with a child has a responsibility to inform their CME contact if they know or suspect that a child is not receiving education. To help local agencies and professionals find children who are missing from education and identify those that are at risk of going missing from education, guidance was issued in July 2004, identifying and maintaining contact with children missing, or at risk of going missing, from education."

## Context

1. This policy is intended to inform LA staff, schools, headteachers, governing bodies, other agencies and the public about how we minimise and prevent CME. It relates primarily to children who are of compulsory school age who do not currently have a school place, or their educational provision is unknown.

2. The DFE defines CME as:

‘All children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise (e.g. privately or in an alternative provision) and who have been out of any educational provision for a substantial period (usually four weeks or more)’

This definition is adopted in this CME Policy, with an understanding that EHE is a valid alternative provision.

3. Staffordshire County Council acknowledges that it is a key responsibility of the LA to promote the educational achievement of all children resident within the county or attending schools within the county. The best way to promote these outcomes for children is to ensure that as far as possible children of compulsory school age are either enrolled with an educational provider or are being EHE.
4. The [Children Act 2004](#) places a duty on all agencies to work together to promote the welfare of children and to share information appropriately. This principle underpins SCC’s policy on CME, and there is an expectation that all agencies and professionals will work together to ensure that children are participating in education, whether at an educational provision or at home.
5. There are certain points at which children are most at risk of becoming missing from education, and the most common reasons for this include:
  - Children not registered by parents/carers at school when they achieve compulsory school age.
  - Children not registered at school for the start of high school (Year 7).

- Frequent house moves, periods of homelessness or time spent in refuges.
  - Family breakdown.
  - Parents “withdrawing” children from school for an invalid reason.
  - Schools off-rolling pupils without the correct checks and procedures being followed.
  - Exclusion (lawful and unlawful).
  - Children whose educational status is unknown, and it is therefore not possible to identify whether the child is receiving a suitable education.
6. Certain groups of children are more likely to be affected by the factors listed above and include:
- Children in Public Care (Looked After Children).
  - Children who have been the subject of a Child Protection Plan.
  - Refugees and asylum seekers.
  - Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families.
  - Children who have experienced domestic violence or other adverse family circumstances.
  - Children with special educational needs.
  - Migrant families.
  - Children who have had attendance difficulties.
7. The cost of children missing out on education can be very high – to themselves, their families and society as a whole. Children who do not engage in education are unlikely to gain any formal qualifications, and a fragmented educational history can result in low levels of functional literacy and numeracy in adult life.
8. Missing out on learning is also linked to other problems in later life including:
- Unemployment.
  - Homelessness.
  - Criminal and anti-social behaviour.
  - Involvement in prostitution and the sex trade.
  - Substance abuse.

- Teenage parenthood.
- Mental health and self-esteem issues.
- Physical health issues (including those linked to poverty).
- Forced marriage.

## The duty of the local authority

1. As an LA, we have a duty under [s436A of the Education Act 1996](#) to establish (so far as it is possible to do so) the identities of children in our area who are of compulsory school age but who are not registered pupils at a school or receiving some other form of suitable education.

We therefore must identify all children within our area and ensure that they are either registered pupils at a maintained, non-maintained or independent school, or that they are receiving another form of suitable education. Part of this duty therefore requires us to have details of those pupils registered at all schools who are ordinarily resident within Staffordshire.

2. SCC has a duty to act in accordance with the aforementioned Statutory Guidance for local authorities in England to identify children not receiving a suitable education, published in November 2013. This requires us to “put in place arrangements for joint working and information sharing with other local authorities and relevant partner agencies that come into contact with children and families”.

The guidance makes clear that such “partner agencies” will include all types of education providers both maintained and independent schools, and local authorities are recommended to maintain a database of all school age children, along with how they are being educated.

3. As outlined above, the obligation under [s436A of the Education Act 1996](#) to make arrangements to identify children who are not receiving a suitable education includes a duty under [s437 of the same Act](#) to intervene if it appears that a child is not receiving a suitable education. Local authorities also have a duty under [s175 of the Education Act 2002](#) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children through their educational obligations.
4. In relation to the LA’s duties around Promoting the Education of Looked After Children (DfE Statutory Guidance July 2014), as a corporate parent we do not tolerate drift and delay where children the LA looks after are without an education placement that is appropriate to their assessed needs. This includes using our powers of direction in a timely way rather than because of protracted negotiation.
5. CME works with the Virtual School and a range of professionals to ensure that there are effective arrangements in place to support the education of looked after children. This includes ensuring that there is timely communication and effective cooperation with other local authorities in relation to education placement changes, school admissions, achievement and exclusions.

6. Where there are concerns that children are at risk of becoming involved in violent extremist activity, in consultation with the schools these will be referred to the Police Prevent Team in partnership with the Education Safeguarding Advice Service.

## The role of schools

1. It is understandable and appropriate that schools should be concerned about revealing personal information about pupils. However, all information held by SCC is processed in accordance with the [Data Protection Act 1998](#). Under Paragraph 5(c) of Schedule 2 to the Act, personal information can be disclosed where necessary for the exercise of any function given to any person under an enactment. [As noted in 3](#), SCC has a duty to ensure that children within its boundaries are being appropriately educated, and it is necessary for this function that we obtain this information.
2. When a child is expected to join a school and does not arrive, for the first 10 school days the school should make their own enquiries. This should include trying to contact the parents/carers by telephone or letter. School may also wish to contact the School Admissions Team to establish if the child has been registered elsewhere.
3. For absence of between 10 and 20 school days, schools may request EWW support (if eligible) to establish the reason for the unknown absence and lack of information. The request must include a record of the reasonable enquiries made so far (see CME “Reasonable enquiries” for more details).
4. If after 20 school days (four school weeks) the child has not been located, the school should complete and submit a CME Referral Form to [cme.referrals@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:cme.referrals@staffordshire.gov.uk) and it is at this point that the Headteacher should take the child off the school roll.
5. If a child is absent, or fails to return from an agreed holiday, the school should follow their normal procedures for investigating the absence, using “Reasonable Enquiries” (see [CME webpage](#)).
6. If a child is absent from school because they are believed to have moved away, school are still required to keep the pupil on roll whilst making reasonable enquiries, and only remove from roll after 20 school days have elapsed. It is at this point that a referral to CME should be made.
7. When the school and EWW have investigated, but not located the child and 20 school days have elapsed, schools should follow the procedure outlined in 4.4.
8. If there is a concern regarding the immediate safety of the child First Response must be contacted (see 1.4). Dependent on the level of concern, the Education Safeguarding Advice Service can also be consulted by emailing [esas@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:esas@staffordshire.gov.uk) or telephoning 0800 13 13 126 (option 3).
9. It is the decision of the Headteacher of the school as to when to remove a child from roll; however, deletions from a school roll can usually be made after four school weeks (20 school days) continuous absence where all reasonable attempts have been made to trace a

child and the CME team have been notified. In these circumstances the child's details should also be uploaded onto the Teachernet s2s lost pupils' database.

10. There is statutory guidance governing when schools can delete children from their admissions register. These are outlined in Regulation 8 of the [Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#).
11. When a child is deleted from the school's admissions register, the school must update their school management information system and clearly indicate the date and the reason for removal from roll. On the "i" tab next to "Reason for Leaving" the new school's name should be given together with its seven-digit school identifier number (schools in England and Wales) or the school name and locality (schools in Scotland, Northern Ireland, Isle of Man, Channel Islands, Gibraltar or Armed Forces Schools abroad).
12. When a pupil leaves a school for a known destination, the school should upload the child's records to s2s – a secure national database. This generates an email to the receiving school which then downloads the information.
13. In February 2018 all schools in Staffordshire were issued with "Deregistration Guidance". This is a quick reference sheet which lists all the reasons why a pupil can be taken off roll. Schools are asked to refer to this guidance (see [CME webpage](#)) and notify the LA accordingly depending on the reason.
14. When a pupil is taken off roll due to their having been admitted to a new school, the school the pupil is leaving should complete an OR.1 (off-rolling) form which they should then send to [schools.capitadatateam@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:schools.capitadatateam@staffordshire.gov.uk).

This will then ensure that the pupil is recorded as being at the new school and will avoid unnecessary investigation.

15. Where a pupil leaves a school without a known destination, (which will have been referred to CME see 4.4.) the school should also upload the child's records to the secure area of s2s known as the Lost Pupils Database. Any school then admitting the child without previous school history can request their LA to search the Lost Pupils Database for the child's records.
16. For those pupils mentioned in 4.14 above, the "Reason for Leaving" on the school's management information system should be amended to show "Unknown Destination". The Common Transfer File must also be completed, and coded XXXXXXXX (destination unknown) or MMMMMMMM (moved to independent sector or out of England and Wales). It can then be uploaded onto s2s in the normal way. These records are securely stored in an area of s2s known as the Lost Pupils Database. If a file is rejected, schools should recode the file MMMMMMMM.
17. **Important** – Please note that new Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities was issued by the DFE in September 2016. This makes specific reference to schools' responsibilities around CME and sets out the correct reporting mechanisms to ensure that these often-vulnerable children are accurately monitored.

18. Schools should pay particular attention to the section entitled “School Responsibilities” regarding notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity for those children who move onto and off school rolls at non-standard transition points. Please also give regard to the section entitled “Making reasonable enquiries”.
19. All relevant documentation is available on the [CME webpage](#), however if schools have any queries they should contact the CME team for advice.

## Elective home education

1. If a parent wishes to EHE his/her school educated child, the school must deregister the child at the point written notification is received from the parent stating that the child is now in receipt of home education. Deletion from the admissions register should take place as soon as such notification is received, and schools should follow the aforementioned “Deregistration guidance”.
2. Schools **must** inform the EHE team when a pupil has been removed from their roll to be home educated. They should do this by forwarding a copy of the parent’s written correspondence (this can be a letter or email) together with a completed School Exit Form to the Elective Home Education team at [electivehomeeducation@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:electivehomeeducation@staffordshire.gov.uk).

It is imperative that this is done at the time of removal from the school roll because unless the EHE team are notified, the pupil will remain the safeguarding responsibility of the school.

3. Information is cross-referenced at regular half-termly liaison meetings between CME and EHE, to ensure that home educating families are identified, contacted and support is offered.
4. If the EHE team has concerns that the child is not being provided with a suitable education, then the matter will be referred to an Education Welfare Worker. If the EWW is not able to establish that a “suitable education” is being provided, they may seek a legal remedy, i.e. a School Attendance Order (DFE “School Attendance – Statutory guidance and departmental advice”, August 2013).
5. EHE legislation currently states that the only obligation for parents to notify anybody is at the point they withdraw their child from school (see 5.1). This is when they must give written notification to the Headteacher of the school. If a family has never enrolled their child in a school, there is no obligation to notify the LA.
6. If the LA has reason to believe that a child is not receiving a suitable education, there is an expectation that this will be investigated. In the case of children previously unknown to the LA this may simply be confirmation that the child is being EHE rather than missing education.

## Related legislation and useful links

- [Children Act 2004](#)
- [Children Missing Education – DfE Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities](#)

- [Education Act 1996](#)
- [Education Act 1996 s436A](#)
- [Education Act 1996 s437](#)
- [Education Act 2002](#)
- [Education Act 2002 s175](#)
- [Education \(Pupil Registration\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 Regulation 8](#)
- [Every Child Matters 2003](#)
- [Families First](#)
- [Local Authority Attendance guidance](#)
- [Local Authority Elective Home Education guidance](#)
- [Local Authority School Admissions guidance](#)
- [Promoting the Education of Looked After Children – Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities, DFE July 2014](#)
- [School Attendance Order](#)
- [Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board](#)
- [Teachernet s2s lost pupils database](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children - 2018](#)

## Appendix 3

# Children who are missing Education due to Health/Medical Needs

## Protocol and Good Practice Guidance

This document sets out the protocol and good practice guidance for Education Providers, in respect of Staffordshire resident pupils, to support decision making in relation to children not able to attend school due to health needs who are of compulsory school age.

If there are any concerns or queries – either general or related to individual cases – please contact the Local Support Team who will be happy to advise.

Authors: Karl Hobson, County Manager Targeted services

[Karl.hobson@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Karl.hobson@staffordshire.gov.uk)

Lesley Calverley, Senior Commissioning Manager – SEND

[Lesley.calverley@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Lesley.calverley@staffordshire.gov.uk)

Last Updated: December 2018

Date of Review: September 2020

Staffordshire Local Offer:

<https://www.staffordshireconnects.info/kb5/staffordshire/directory/results.page?resulttype=documents>

[Email: send.tippingst@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:send.tippingst@staffordshire.gov.uk)

# Protocol for Children who are missing Education due to health/medical needs

## Roles and Responsibilities

1. Section 100 of the Children and Families Act 2014 places a duty on governing bodies of maintained schools, proprietors of academies and management committees of PRUs to make arrangements for supporting pupils at their school with medical conditions.
2. In meeting the duty, the governing body, proprietor or management committee must have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State under this section. Section 100 came into force on 1 September 2014.
3. The governing body should ensure that the school's policy clearly identifies the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the arrangements they make to support all pupils at school with medical conditions.
4. Key points:
  - a. Pupils at school with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education.
  - b. Governing bodies must ensure that arrangements are in place in schools to support pupils at school with medical conditions.
  - c. Governing bodies should ensure that school leaders consult health and social care professionals, pupils and parent/carers to ensure that the needs of children with medical conditions are effectively supported.
5. This protocol should be read in conjunction with the following document: Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs, statutory guidance for local authorities, published in January 2013.  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-children-with-health-needs-who-cannot-attend-school>
6. Local authorities are responsible for arranging suitable full-time education otherwise than at school for children who reside in Staffordshire, who cannot attend school because of illness or other reasons and who therefore would not receive suitable education without such provision. This applies whether or not the child is on the roll of a school and whatever the type of school they attend. It applies to children who are pupils in academies, free schools, special schools and independent schools as well as those in maintained schools.
7. 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.

8. 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, LAs should provide part-time education on a basis they consider to be in the child's best interests. Full and part-time education should still aim to achieve good academic attainment particularly in English, Maths and Science.
9. **Local authorities must:**
- a. Arrange suitable full-time education (or as much education as the child's health condition allows) for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would otherwise not receive suitable education.
10. **Local authorities should:**
- a. Provide such education as soon as it is clear that the child will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative<sup>1</sup>. They should liaise with appropriate medical professionals<sup>2</sup> to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision<sup>3</sup> for the child.
  - b. Ensure that the education they receive is of good quality, as defined in the DfE's statutory guidance Alternative Provision (2013)<sup>4</sup>, allows them to take appropriate qualifications, prevents them from slipping behind their peers in school and allows them to reintegrate successfully back into school as soon as possible.
  - c. Address the needs of individual pupils in arranging provision. 'Hard and fast' rules are inappropriate: they may limit the offer of education to pupils with a given condition and prevent their access to the right level of educational support which they are well enough to receive. Strict rules that limit the offer of education a child receives may also breach statutory requirements.
11. **Local authorities should not:**
- a. Withhold or reduce the provision, or type of provision, for a child because of how much it will cost (meeting the child's needs and providing a good education must be the determining factors).
  - b. Have policies based upon the percentage of time a child is able to attend school rather than whether the child is receiving a suitable education during that attendance.
  - c. Have lists of health conditions which dictate whether or not they will arrange education for children or inflexible policies which result in children going without suitable full-time education (or as much education as their health condition allows them to participate in).

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<sup>1</sup> Over the course of one academic year and is attributable to one illness or condition

<sup>2</sup> Medical professionals include – School nurses, GP, consultant and/or CAHMS

<sup>3</sup> Full time or as full-time as the CYP's condition allows and suitable for their age ability, aptitude and any SEND they may have

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/alternative-provision>

## Primary and Secondary Aged Pupils

12. The Staffordshire PRU Headteachers can support and facilitate schools by providing specialist knowledge and understanding of how a school can support and maintain the learners' pathways in education.
13. The pupil's home school leads the process however a PRU on request can contribute to this process through:
  - a. Attendance at meetings between professionals, pupil and parents/carers.
  - b. Supporting the Leadership Teams of the schools as they then undertake future meetings, inter link with external professionals etc.
  - c. Researching and gathering relevant information, suitable interventions and learning pathways for the school to deliver and the pupil to access.
  - d. Supporting any transition from one setting to another setting; the increase in learning opportunities and hours; and moving forward with a clear Individual Learning Plan.
  - e. Participating and reviewing the progress on a regular basis with clearly defined outcomes and new expectations of future action planning with a clear strategic overview.
14. We recommend that schools initiate an Early Help Assessment<sup>5</sup> (EHA). The outcome of the EHA may require support and advice from Local Support Teams and Health professionals. This in turn will then inform an accurate and agreed personalised care plan. Support may be offered by the School Nurse, GP, CAMHS or other medical professional. Please be mindful that parental consent and knowledge is vital and that the views of the young person should also be taken into account.
15. Both the school and the local authority must consider what reasonable adjustments need to be made in order to ensure that CYP are not disadvantaged in their access to education, as well as ensuring that they are not directly or indirectly discriminated against. Some children with medical conditions may be considered to be disabled under the definition set out in the Equality Act 2010<sup>6</sup>. Where this is the case governing bodies and management committees must comply with their duties under that Act. Therefore, although the CYP's needs may principally be medical, they may have special educational needs as well, because the medical issues mean that their ability to access education has been profoundly affected. This may be to the extent that, despite their intellectual abilities, they are unable to access education at the same rate

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.staffscb.org.uk/Professionals/Thresholds-and-CAF/Thresholds-and-Early-Help.aspx>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance> <https://www.gov.uk/definition-of-disability-under-equality-act-2010>

as before and therefore need to realistically take a lot longer to complete courses of study, and that may require an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)<sup>7</sup>.

16. LAs are mindful of CYP with medical conditions which mean they cannot attend schools for periods of time and therefore impact upon a school's published national attendance figures. However, schools could in parallel present attendance figures which are calculated excluding CYP with medical conditions and then present case studies to Governing bodies, management committees or Ofsted in support.
17. With the support of the pupil's school pastoral provision and local agencies, the pupil can be expected to attend school on a more regular basis, remaining on the roll of the pupil's school. If provision for education is deemed appropriate at home, there would need to be a clear phased reintegration plan of when the pupil is able to transition back to full time education within their school.
18. When a pupil is on a reduced timetable with a reintegration plan in place, periods in which the pupil is receiving approved supervised education can be marked on the register with the code "B". All other periods of absence should be marked either with the "I" or "C" code. Please note if the pupil is on a reduced timetable **the Education Provider must inform the Local Authority** of this via the Children Missing out on Education Portal when in place and prior to this, through the data snapshot requests issued every half term by the Local Authority via the school e-bag.
19. Education Providers may refer a Staffordshire resident pupil of compulsory school age to the Local Authority, where additional financial support, from the High Needs Block (HNB) is required. The Authority will take into account, when agreeing additional HNB funding, the total cost of the education offer including the pupil's age weighted pupil unit (AWPU) and the notional SEND budget (£6,000).
20. To alert the Local Authority of a request for HNB funding support, the pupil must first be referred to the Education Targeted Services via an email to [educationcoreoffer@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:educationcoreoffer@staffordshire.gov.uk). This email must include details of the pupil, attendance, medical evidence, EHA, reintegration plan and costings of education provision provided during period of absence by the Education Provider as a minimum.
21. The guidance states that under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, a school can only remove a pupil who is unable to attend the school due to health needs from the roll where:

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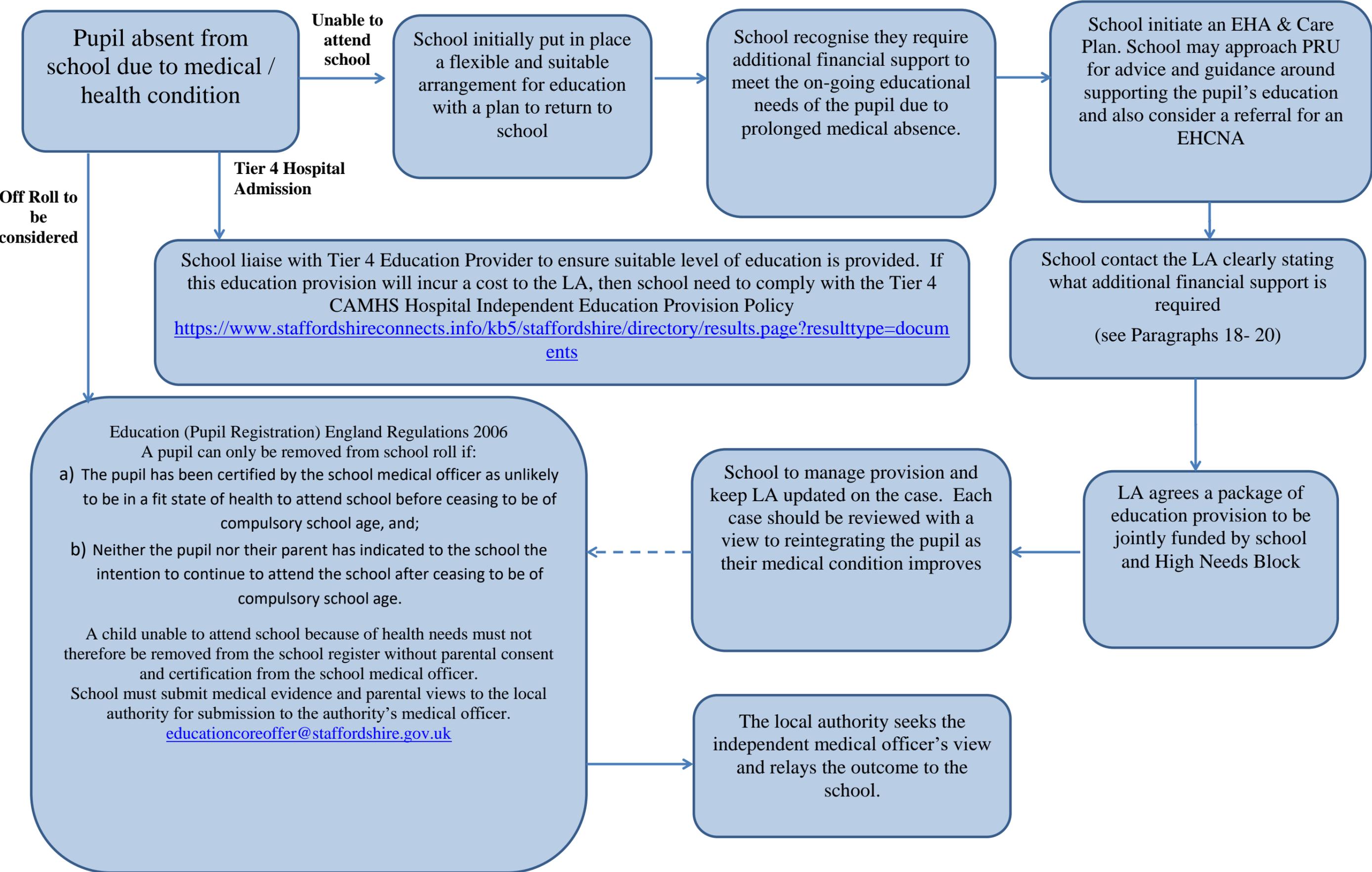
<sup>7</sup> <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/education/welfareservice/SpecialEducationalNeeds/Education-Health-and-Care-Assessments/EHC-Assessments.aspx>

- a. The pupil has been certified by the school medical officer<sup>8</sup> as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school, before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and
  - b. Neither the pupil nor their parent has indicated to the school the intention to continue to attend the school, after ceasing to be of compulsory school age
22. A child unable to attend school because of health needs must not, therefore, be removed from the school register without parental consent and certification from the school medical officer, even if the local authority (LA) has become responsible for the child's education as a result of the pupil being absent from school for 15 or more days. 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.
23. The key aspect here is the involvement of a "school medical officer". Advice from the DfE has stated that "... *the school medical officer is a medical officer employed by the LA. All schools, including academies, will have access to the LA medical officer*". If a medical officer is not in place then this function will be provided through the LA by a qualified medical specialist with knowledge and experience of the conditions affecting the child, and who is not involved directly in treating or caring for the child in question. The LA appointed medical officer will require the school to share with them all the medical information they have and as stated in paragraph 21(b) above that neither the parent/carer and pupil wish to continue to attend school.
24. The LA appointed medical officer will review the evidence presented by the school and provide written information to state clearly that the child will or will not be well enough to return to school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
25. When the Education Provider has gathered the evidence as explained in paragraph 21 above this must be forwarded to the local authority using the email address [educationcoreoffer@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:educationcoreoffer@staffordshire.gov.uk) in order to be presented by the LA to the school medical officer for sign-off. The outcome of this will then be communicated to the school, only at this point can a pupil be removed from the school roll.

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<sup>8</sup> If a medical officer is not in place then the certification must be provided by a qualified medical specialist with knowledge and experience of the conditions affecting the child, and who is not involved directly in treating or caring for the child in question. S/he must provide written information to state clearly that the child will not be well enough to return to school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age

# Compulsory School Age Pupils not able to attend School due to Health/Medical Needs



Pupil absent from school due to medical / health condition

Unable to attend school

School initially put in place a flexible and suitable arrangement for education with a plan to return to school

School recognise they require additional financial support to meet the on-going educational needs of the pupil due to prolonged medical absence.

School initiate an EHA & Care Plan. School may approach PRU for advice and guidance around supporting the pupil's education and also consider a referral for an EHCNA

Tier 4 Hospital Admission

School liaise with Tier 4 Education Provider to ensure suitable level of education is provided. If this education provision will incur a cost to the LA, then school need to comply with the Tier 4 CAMHS Hospital Independent Education Provision Policy  
<https://www.staffordshireconnects.info/kb5/staffordshire/directory/results.page?resulttype=documents>

School contact the LA clearly stating what additional financial support is required (see Paragraphs 18- 20)

Off Roll to be considered

Education (Pupil Registration) England Regulations 2006  
A pupil can only be removed from school roll if:  
a) The pupil has been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and;  
b) Neither the pupil nor their parent has indicated to the school the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.  
  
A child unable to attend school because of health needs must not therefore be removed from the school register without parental consent and certification from the school medical officer.  
School must submit medical evidence and parental views to the local authority for submission to the authority's medical officer.  
[educationcoreoffer@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:educationcoreoffer@staffordshire.gov.uk)

School to manage provision and keep LA updated on the case. Each case should be reviewed with a view to reintegrating the pupil as their medical condition improves

LA agrees a package of education provision to be jointly funded by school and High Needs Block

The local authority seeks the independent medical officer's view and relays the outcome to the school.

## **RELEVANT READING LIST**

1. SUPPORTING PUPILS AT SCHOOL WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS AT SCHOOL;  
DfE Published September 2014 and Updated December 2015; Ref DfE-00393-2014;  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3>
2. EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH HEALTH NEEDS WHO CANNOT ATTEND SCHOOL;  
DfE January 2013 (Published May 2013); Ref: DfE-00307-2013;  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-children-with-health-needs-who-cannot-attend-school>
3. KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN EDUCATION;  
DfE July 2015; Ref DFE-00129-2015;  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>
4. ALTERNATIVE PROVISION;  
DfE January 2013; Ref DfE-300-2013  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/alternative-provision>

In each of these DfE documents there is STATUTORY guidance and NON-STATUTORY advice. It is essential that all professionals are clear about these terms and the implications.