Federation of St James the Great and St John's Catholic Primary Schools

'To do our best for God, for other people and for ourselves' 'To love and serve one another'

Policy for Children with Health Needs who Cannot Attend School

At St James the Great and St John's Catholic Primary Schools, we aim to ensure that all children, receive a good education to enable them to shape their own futures. Where children are unable to attend school because of their health, the schools will follow Department for Education Guidance and work with Southwark Local Authority who have the responsibility to arrange suitable full-time education (or part-time when appropriate for the child's needs) for children who are unable to attend a mainstream or special school because of their health.

Due to the nature of their health needs, some children may be admitted to hospital or placed in alternative forms of education provision. However, we recognise that, whenever possible, pupils should receive their education within their school and the aim of the provision offered whilst they are unable to do so, 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 the school and will work with the LA, healthcare partners and families to ensure that all children 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:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- Children and Families Act 2014 (Section 100 – pupils with medical conditions)
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- Data Protection Act 2018
- DfE (2023) "Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs
- DfE (2013) 'Arranging Alternative Provision'
- DfE (2015) 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Accessibility policy and plan

The Role of the School

The school will take an active role in supporting pupils with health needs who are unable to attend school, including those experiencing mental health difficulties.

This includes:

- Maintaining regular contact with the pupil and their family to monitor wellbeing and engagement

- Working closely with the Local Authority, healthcare professionals (including CAMHS where appropriate), and other agencies
- Providing access to suitable education, including differentiated work and support to enable continued learning
- Using a range of approaches, including online and remote learning, to ensure pupils can access education where face-to-face provision is not possible
- Ensuring that remote education is used to complement, and not replace, high-quality teaching, unless a pupil's health needs make this necessary
- Supporting pupils experiencing mental health-related absence, recognising that these needs may fluctuate and require a flexible, graduated response
- Promoting a gradual and supported reintegration into school, including part-time timetables where appropriate and in the best interests of the pupil
- Ensuring the pupil remains on roll (unless a formal change is agreed)

The school will ensure that all provision is flexible and responsive to the pupil's changing physical and mental health needs.

The role of the Local Authority

The Local Authority is responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for children who, because of illness or other reasons, would not receive suitable education without such provision. There will however, 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 the Local Authority, 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, we would not expect the Local Authority to become involved in such arrangements. This is 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.

Expectations of the Local Authority

Where the Local Authority is involved in arranging provision, the expectation from the schools is that the LA will:

- 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.
- 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. They should liaise with appropriate medical professionals to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the child.
- The alternative education should begin as soon as possible, and at the latest by the 6th day of the child's absence from school.
- Ensure that the education children receive is of good quality and allows them to take appropriate external tests, prevents them from slipping behind their peers in school and allows them to reintegrate successfully back into school as soon as possible.
- Address the needs of individual children in arranging provision

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, part-time education will be provided 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. The nature of the provision must be responsive to the demands of what may be a changing health status.

Where appropriate the use of electronic media – such as learning platforms, links to online lessons and explanations, videos, age-appropriate texts etc, can provide access to a broader curriculum. This should generally be used to complement face-to-face education, rather than as sole provision (though in some cases, the child's health needs may make it advisable to use only virtual education for a time).

It is essential to ensure that teachers who provide education for children with health needs receive suitable training and support and are kept aware of curriculum developments. They should also be given suitable information relating to a child's health condition, and the possible effect the condition and/or medication taken has on the child.

A personal education plan, which should ensure that the schools, the Local Authority, hospital school or other provider can work together will be drawn up.

Effective collaboration will be ensured between all relevant services (LAs, CAMHS, NHS, schools and, where relevant, school nurses) in delivering effective education for children with additional health needs.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

Policy implemented: March 2021 **Date reviewed**: May 2025 and April 2026 **Due for review**: May 2027