



The Fawbert & Barnard Infants' School

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE UNABLE TO ATTEND SCHOOL DUE TO IMPACT OF MEDICAL CONDITION

**This policy was adopted by the Full Governing Body of
Fawbert & Barnard Infants School at the FGB meeting
held on:
September 2023**

Review due: September 2024

Signature Date.....
Head Teacher

Signature..... Date.....
Chair of Governors/Health and Safety Governor

This Policy should be considered in conjunction with the following:

- **Accessibility Plan**
- **Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions**
- **Child Protection Policy**
- **Safeguarding Policy**
- **SEN Inclusion Policy**

1. Introduction

F&B is an inclusive school and we aim at all times to ensure that all children with medical conditions, in terms of both physical and mental health, are properly supported in school so that they can play a full and active role in school life, remain healthy and achieve their academic potential.

If there comes a time where, due to an exceptional severe physical or mental health need, a pupil cannot attend school (equally attend school at all or can only attend intermittently), this policy outlines the practice and responsibilities of both F&B and Hertfordshire Local Authority.

2. Aims

This policy is to ensure that:

- Suitable education is arranged for pupils on roll who cannot attend school due to health needs;
- Pupils, staff and parents understand what the school is responsible for when this education is being provided by the local authority.

Legislation and Guidance

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018
- DfE (2013) Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs
- DfE (2015) Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions.
- (For children with SEN) The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice.

3. The legal position

All children of compulsory school age are legally entitled to receive a suitable full-time education and local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure that all such children in their area receive education.

The DfE guidance states that in very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a reduction in educational provision to meet a young person's needs. If a child or young person is unable to access full-time education due to a diagnosed health need, schools and local authorities must follow the DfE guidance mentioned above and should refer to HCC guidance regarding reduced timetables for pupils of statutory school age found [here](#).

If Fawbert and Barnard Infants' cannot make suitable arrangements for the provision of a child unable to attend school because of medical needs, Hertfordshire Local Authority will become responsible for arranging a suitable education for these children.

The statutory guidance states that *'where a child cannot attend school because of health problems, and would not otherwise receive a suitable full-time education, the LA is responsible for arranging provision.'* These regulations can be found in the government document: Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school, published by the DfE (January 2013), found [here](#).

The Educational Support for Medical Absence (ESMA) is an educational teaching service for children with medical needs, which sits within Access and Inclusion, part of the Integrated Services for Learning (ISL) portfolio within Children's Services. ISL is a multidisciplinary service comprising of SEND Specialist Advice and Support services, Access & Inclusion Services, Educational Psychologists and SEND statutory services.

The ESMA Teaching Service complements the teaching offer by Hertfordshire schools for pupils who are temporarily unable to attend their school, due to the impact of their medical condition.

4. Definitions

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

- Physical injuries or health issues;
- Mental health problems including anxiety or emotional difficulties;
- Progressive conditions;
- Terminal illnesses;

Chronic illnesses;

Children who are unable to attend Fawbert and Barnard Infants' School may attend any of the following:

- Hospital school or Medical PRU;
- Special school within a hospital setting where education is provided to give continuity whilst the child is receiving treatment;
- Home tuition.

5. Responsibilities

The Local Authority are responsible for:

- Having a named officer with responsibility for the provision of education for pupils unable to attend school due to medical needs. Mrs Sue Bramley, ESMA Teaching Service Lead Teacher, is the designated officer;

- Providing educational support for pupils with documented medical needs unable to attend school. This education should be provided as soon as it is clear that a pupil will be absent from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative (Appendix 2);
- Coproducing the education programme and Holistic Reintegration Plan working together with school, parents, pupil, health and other professionals involved with the child, therefore addressing the needs of individual pupils in arranging provision;
- Reviewing the provision offered regularly to ensure that it continues to be appropriate for the child and that it is providing suitable education;
- Giving clear policies on the provision of education for children and young people under and over compulsory school age;
- Having a written, publicly accessible policy statement on their arrangements to comply with their legal duty towards children with additional health needs.

The School (Fawbert and Barnard Infants') are responsible for:

- Working constructively with the local authority providers, relevant agencies and parents to ensure the best outcomes for the pupil, including referral to ESMA (Appendix 1);
- Sharing information with the LA and relevant health services as requested;
- Helping to make sure that the provision offered to the pupils is as effective as possible and that the child can be reintegrated back into school successfully;
- Providing access to the wider curriculum (art, history, etc.), according to the health needs of the pupil.

When reintegration is anticipated, working with the LA to:

- Plan for consistent provision during and after the period of education outside the school, allowing the pupil to access the same curriculum, materials, activities and resources on the school website that they would have used in school;
- Create individually tailored reintegration plans for each child returning to school;
- Consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made.

The Governing Body and Headteacher are responsible for:

- Ensuring arrangements for pupils who cannot attend school as a result of their medical needs are in place and are effectively implemented;
- Ensuring the termly review of arrangements made for pupils 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 pupils 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 with responsibility for supporting pupils with health needs are appropriately trained;
- The Headteacher is responsible for pupils with healthcare needs and liaises with parents, the LA, key workers and others involved in the pupil's care.

- Providing teachers who support pupils with health needs the suitable information relating to a pupil's health condition and the possible effect the condition and/or medication taken has on the pupil;
- Notifying the LA when a pupil is likely to be away from the school for a significant period of time due to their health needs.

Teachers and Support Staff are responsible for:

- Dealing with pupils who are unable to attend school because of medical needs
- Actively monitoring pupil progress and reintegration into school;
- Supplying pupils; education providers with information about the child's capabilities
- Liaising with the Headteacher, education providers with information about the child's capabilities, progress and outcomes;
- Understanding confidentiality in respect of pupils' health needs;
- Designing lessons and activities in a way that allows those with health needs to participate fully and ensuring pupils are not excluded from activities that they wish to take part in without a clear evidence-based reason;
- Understanding their role in supporting pupils with health needs and ensuring they attend the required training;
- Ensuring they are aware of the needs of their pupils through the appropriate and lawful sharing of the individual pupil's health needs;
- Ensuring they are aware of the signs, symptoms and triggers of common life-threatening medical conditions and know what to do in an emergency. Keeping parents informed of how their child's health needs are affecting them whilst in the school.

Parents/ carers are responsible for:

- Seeking advice from a qualified health professional when non-attendance to school develops (for children with mental health issues, a mental health practitioner);
- Seek medical guidance around reasonable adjustments that the school should consider, alongside strategies to support;
- Share health advice with the school to assist them with their support plan or individual health care plan;
- Provide current medical guidance when requested by school;
- Provide early communication to school, if a problem arises or help is needed;
- Attend necessary meetings with school and relevant professionals;
- Put into practice recommended techniques given by health, to support their child to return to school when health needs permit;
- Reinforce with their child, the value of a return to school;
- Ensure that their child is ready for and attends all provision offered;
- Ensuring that an adult is present while the pupil attends their ESMA Teaching Service lessons;
- Safeguarding their child when they are not receiving education.

Pupil responsibilities

1. Be ready to maintain communication with the identified link teacher from school;
2. Be ready to engage with the agreed Holistic Reintegration Plan;
3. Be prepared to work with the professionals to develop skills to communicate their views and concerns;
4. Be ready to take steps needed to commence the return to school.

6. Absences

- All absences will initially be considered under the school attendance policy.
- As per the attendance policy, parents must contact the school on the first day their child is unable to attend due to illness;
- School will record the pupil's absence from school for sessions when he/ she is not in attendance as authorised absence if there is supporting medical evidence (register Code C);
- Absences due to illness will be authorised unless the school has genuine cause for concern about the authenticity of the illness, in which case the school may request additional evidence for the absence;
- If the school is made aware that a pupil will have extended authorised absence on medical grounds, then a referral to the ESMA Teaching Service (on behalf of Hertfordshire County Council) will be made;
- If a referral to the ESMA Teaching Service is successful, then school would be required to amend their register code from 'C' to 'B' for the time the pupil is receiving support for their education from the ESMA Teaching Service. *Referrals to the ESMA Teaching Service should be made only when the school has authorised absence on medical grounds.*
- If the pupil does not access the ESMA Teaching Service support, then the school should record attendance as unauthorised, unless parent or health provides additional supporting evidence and the headteacher decides to authorise the absence based on this evidence.

7. Support for Pupils

Under reasonable adjustments (Equalities Act. 2010) and best practice, the school will ensure it is anticipatory, and adjustments are put in place beforehand to prevent a pupil experiencing disadvantage.

Where a pupil has a complex or long term health issue, the school will...

- Discuss the pupil's needs and how these may be best met with the LA, relevant medical professionals and parents;
- Make reasonable adjustments under pupils' individual medical (or SEN) care plans, in accordance with the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy;
- 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 (including providing relevant information, curriculum materials and resources where appropriate);
- Provide a named contact from the school to aid communication with other parties, to attend reintegration meetings and keep contact with the pupil;
- Identify a senior member of staff, able to make decisions, to host and chair regular review meetings (normally every 6 weeks), record, share action plans and distribute agreed actions of these meetings;
- Provide support for the pupil's educational, social and emotional needs, including a pastoral link, who will remain in regular contact with the child. This person will be proactive in supporting the pupil to still feel part of the school community, whilst they are not well enough to attend school;
- Inform all relevant staff who need to be aware of the child's condition and the support required;
- Be proactive in supporting the reintegration of the pupil back to school, as soon as they are well enough. Provide a suitable working area within the school for the pupil to access tuition to enable reintegration.
- Provide updated medical evidence to continue with the complementary teaching support from the ESMA Teaching Service.
- Where a pupil is unable to take their exams within the school setting, it is the school's responsibility to organise those exams, secure an invigilator and locate a safe venue;

To help ensure a pupil with additional health needs is able to attend school following an extended period of absence, the following adaptations will be considered:

A part-time timetable; Access to on-line 'Activities To Do At Home' liaising with the Class Teacher; Joining class story time virtually; Places to rest at school; Making reasonable adjustments within the classroom to ensure they continue learning; Provide access to rest periods, or additional support to assist the pupil in catching up with lessons; Contacting health professionals to determine how much education is manageable for the pupil in relation to their health needs.

8. Monitoring arrangements

Reviewed annually and approved by the Governing Body.

Appendix 1- ESMA Teaching Service - Entry and Exit Criteria

Entry criteria

ESMA threshold

- Pupil of statutory school age resident in Hertfordshire with a medical condition impacting on their ability to access the school.
- A Care/Treatment Plan is required from the medical practitioner working with the pupil, e.g. CAMHS; Consultant; Pediatrician.
- The school and medical evidence should specify the **impact** the medical condition has on the pupil's ability to access education in school (i.e. how many hours of education is the pupil able to access).
- The school support plan identifying the reasonable adjustments with evidence of regular reviews.
- [Hertfordshire Service Request form](#) completed with parents and ISL Baseline form.
- Confirmation of parental consent.

School's checklist for referral

- Referrals via the [Hertfordshire Service Request form](#) and the [ISL Baseline form](#) to the relevant ESMA Teaching Service ISL geographical area.
- Referrals must have a signed parental consent and supporting medical evidence from a health professional working with the young person.
- If pupil is attending on a reduced timetable, school should submit the agreed reintegration plan (HCC guidance on reduced timetables found [here](#)).
- The first 15 working days of absence remains school's responsibility to provide and mark schoolwork for the pupil.
- The school should continue to provide access to the wider curriculum (art, history, etc.), according to the health needs of the pupil.
- The school must provide details of the school's support plan (Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle).
- For pupils who have long term or recurrent illness, the school must submit the current treatment plan and the named medical contact.
- The ESMA Teaching Service requires the school to send a termly medical update to enable the support from the service to continue.
- For pupils receiving additional funding through either an EHCP, or Local High Needs Funding and/or pupil premium, the school should state in the reintegration plan how this funding is being used.

ESMA teaching service - exit criteria Pupil reintegrating to current school or transitioning to a new school

Pupil recovered from illness and no longer requires support from the ESMA Teaching Service.

Pupil is able to attend majority (50%) of the agreed timetable co-produced with school, parents, pupil, the ESMA Teaching Service, health and other professionals.

ESMA teaching service support

- No further support required from the ESMA Teaching Service and school to continue to increase attendance in line with the HCC guidance on reduced timetable and agreed reintegration plan.
- All stakeholders informed of the ESMA Teaching Service referral closure at reintegration review meeting.

Pupil too ill to engage with education

Health professional reports that pupil is too ill to access education/ESMA Teaching Service lessons

ESMA teaching service support

- Multi-agency meeting arranged with pupil, parents/carers, school and professionals involved to review suitability of provision and identify amendments to reintegration plan.
- Following health advice, the ESMA Teaching Service support will be put on hold for six weeks and will cease if pupil's health has not improved.
- School will continue to liaise with the ESMA Teaching Service lead and all stakeholders should continue to monitor and review in line with health advice to identify suitable next steps for educational access.

Pupil non-engaging with the ESMA Teaching Service lessons

ESMA teaching service support

- Multi-agency meeting arranged with pupil, parents/carers, school and professionals involved to review suitability of provision and identify amendments to reintegration plan.
- If attendance continues to be a concern and health professionals state that the reintegration plan is accessible, then school's non-attendance process should follow.
- The ESMA Teaching Service educational support will cease.

Pupil refusing to access physical/mental health services

ESMA teaching service support

- Multi-agency meeting arranged with pupil, parents/carers, school and professionals involved to review suitability of provision and identify amendments to reintegration plan.
- The ESMA Teaching Service Lead to signpost to other support available in the local area.
- If attendance continues to be a concern and health professionals state that the reintegration plan is accessible, then school's non-attendance process should follow.
- The ESMA Teaching Service will continue to be involved for the next 12 weeks following the reintegration review meeting. If updated medical evidence is not received within this period, the case will be closed.

Pupil moves out of Hertfordshire

ESMA teaching service action

- The ESMA Teaching Service to close case and update system (EYES)

Appendix 2 – The ESMA Teaching Service – Graduated Support Provision

Universal

Needs can be met in school with minimal additional support

Absent or anticipated absence from school due to medical reasons supported by evidence from Universal Services such as GP; not in receipt of health treatment and/or limited reasonable adjustments.

- Advice to schools on implementing reasonable adjustments in line with Statutory Guidance supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (DfE, Dec 2015).
- Advice regarding in-school support mechanisms and strategies to deliver the school curriculum.

Universal Plus

The child/young person has health needs but can access school with some reasonable adjustments

Absent or anticipated absence from school due to medical reasons supported by evidence from Universal Services such as GP; not in receipt of health treatment but with some evidence of reasonable adjustments.

- Signposting schools to additional support available i.e. DSPLs, charities.
- Piece of time limited guidance to school and pupil from ESMA Senior Teacher to inform the school's support arrangements.

Targeted

The child/young person's medical condition may require additional teaching support at specific times.

Absent or anticipated absence from school due to medical reasons supported by evidence from [NHS Tier 3 Services](#) such as Consultant e.g. a hospital admittance for long stay (five days or more) or recurrent periods of absence.

- Real time online teaching (18.5 hours weekly for Y5-Y11 via [Acorn Digital Learning](#)) in the core subjects (English, Maths & Science). Small virtual classes providing interaction with peers and teachers, building confidence in a safe and secured environment where learning and progress is continually monitored.
- Telepresence robot AV1 Robot (25 hours) reconnects primary or secondary school age pupils with school and their social life by providing full time access to school and peers. The ESMA Teaching Service has ensured the safeguarding and GDPR

compliance of this tool. Further details can be obtained from the ESMA Teaching Service Lead.

Targeted Plus

The child/young person may have severe difficulties with the ability to access school regularly due to identified health needs (physical/ mental health)

Absent or anticipated absence from school due to medical reasons supported by evidence from [NHS Tier 3](#) Services such as PALMS e.g. Absence or anticipated absence due to oncology, pregnancy and motherhood (pending medical advice).

- Online and/or face-to-face group teaching by ESMA Teacher in the core subjects (English, Maths, Science).
- Allocation of hours dependent on health needs of pupil.
- Focused teaching programme to aid reintegration following recuperation.
- Identified teaching support agreed if young person is unable to attend school due to medical issues related to pregnancy /motherhood. This may be from 29 weeks of pregnancy. Support for maximum 18 working weeks.

Specialist

The child/young person has profound non-school attendance due to severe health needs (physical/mental health)

Absent or anticipated absence from school due to medical reasons supported by evidence from [NHS Tier 3](#) Services such as CAMHS.

- Online and/or face-to-face 1:1 tuition by ESMA Teacher in the core subjects (English, Maths, Science).
- Allocation of hours dependent on health needs of pupil.

Annex 3 - Service Level Agreement between Herts Schools and the ESMA Teaching Service

Effective collaboration between all relevant services (CAMHS, NHS, schools, HCC and parents) is essential to delivering effective education for children with additional health needs. This Agreement confirms the support arrangements for pupils referred to the ESMA Teaching Service who are temporarily unable to attend their school, due to the impact of their medical condition. Reintegration to school is the ESMA Teaching Service key target. The ESMA Teaching Service is not a registered exam centre.

The ESMA teaching service purpose

The ESMA Teaching Service purpose is to enable students to feel connected with their peers, included in their school and supported in their learning.