

MERE SCHOOL

Policy for Access to Education for Children with medical needs at Mere School

Introduction

Most pupils at some time have an illness which may prevent them from attending school. For the majority this will be short term. For pupils who have long term or recurrent illness, access to school may be limited. The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) has produced statutory guidance, 'Access to Education for Children and Young People with Medical Needs', with regard to pupils who may be absent for more than 15 school days because of medical need. This policy statement has been written to comply with such guidance.

Mere School seeks to maintain a high quality, continuing education for those pupils on roll who have medical needs and are unable to attend school as a result.

Mere School will work closely with the Local Authority (LA), health professionals and other agencies to ensure that their pupils receive access to appropriate educational provision when they are not able to attend school.

Management Responsibility

The designated member of staff with responsibility for pupils with medical needs at Mere School is Mrs. Bundy. Her role is to provide a link between the school, family, the LA and other agencies.

Continuing Provision for Pupils with Medical Needs

When Mere School becomes aware that a pupil will be absent from school for more than 15 school days because of their medical need, the designated member of staff will notify the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) as soon as possible. This will assist the LA with continuity of educational provision.

The designated member of staff will provide the EWO with such information as is required to make a referral to an appropriate education provider. Parental consent will be obtained before information regarding the pupil is passed to the EWO.

The designated member of staff will be responsible for liaising with the LA education provider and will ensure that information is given regarding the pupil's ability, progress and work programmes. Wherever possible, work and materials will be provided for the pupil in accordance with their peers.

In cases of long-term or recurrent absence the designated member of staff will participate in the development of a Personal Education Plan (PEP) for the pupil. This will be written in conjunction with the LA, the parents and the pupil.

Monitoring and Recording of Absence

All pupils who are unable to attend school for more than 15 school days due to medical needs will be regularly monitored and reviewed by the designated member of staff together with LA representatives. Ongoing medical advice will be taken into account at all times.

Absence will be recorded on the register as medical (e.g. code I) **only when** appropriate medical advice has been received. When a pupil commences education with an alternative education provider the absence will be recorded as educated off site (e.g. code B).

This is in accordance with the LA attendance policy.

Pupils absent for medical reasons will not be removed from the school roll unless advice is received from the School Medical Officer stating they will not be fit to return to school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age. Parents will be fully consulted and their consent sought if their child is to be removed from the school roll in these circumstances.

Pupils with Long-Term or Recurring Absence

Some pupils will be away from school long-term or with recurrent bouts of illness. In these cases the designated member of staff will liaise with the LA to ensure that alternative education provision is put in place as soon as possible. The school will have responsibility for ensuring that the education provider has all information regarding work programmes and curriculum plans. It is acknowledged that continuity of education is important for these pupils. For pupils whose learning progress is being severely affected by long-term absence the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) will be advised and consideration will be given as to whether Statutory Assessment of Special Educational needs should commence.

Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need

These pupils may be able to access alternative educational provision through the LA – sometimes with assistance from specialist teaching services. The SENCo will notify the Central SEN Services if a pupil with a Statement of SEN is going to be absent from school through medical need.

The school will retain responsibility for co-ordinating the Annual Review meetings and for inviting the appropriate people to such reviews.

Reintegration

For pupils who have been absent from school it may be necessary to have a staged reintegration plan. The designated member of staff will co-ordinate the initial meeting to instigate a plan, together with the LA, parent and pupil and any health professionals who may need to be involved.

The reintegration will be monitored and reviewed regularly with all parties to ensure success.

Contact between School/Pupil

Mere School is committed to ensuring that, even if a pupil is absent for medical reasons they should retain contact with the school.

After consultation with the pupil, and taking into account their wishes in relation to the level of contact, the designated member of staff will put a plan into place to ensure contact is maintained.

Mere School has the following modes of contact available:

newsletters to be sent home,
peer group home visits,
visits by members of staff,
inclusion in trips and social events, and
contact with peers and members of staff via e-mail.

Public Examinations

Wherever possible pupils will be entered for public examinations. Mere School will endeavour to work with other education providers to ensure that coursework is completed and that sufficient educational input is made to enable each pupil to reach their full potential.

In some cases the school may make special arrangements with Awarding Bodies for pupils who are unable to attend school because of their medical need.

As the time for public examinations nears pupils and parents will be fully consulted with by the designated member of staff so that their wishes may be taken into consideration.

Specialist Learning Centre

The Specialist Learning Centre works closely with the designated member of staff with responsibility for pupils with medical needs. The SLC manager will liaise closely with pupils attending the centre over all medical issues from cluster schools.

The Role of the Designated Member of Staff

- 1 Ensure pupils views are taken into account.
- 2 Make referrals to EWO in respect of medical absence where appropriate.
- 3 Maintain a list of those young people who are absent due to medical needs.
- 4 Ensure all young people with long term or recurrent absence have a PEP.
- 5 Ensure all young people requiring medication and/or with chronic conditions, but who attend school regularly have a Health Care Plan.
- 6 Keep key staff, eg class teacher, DHT, Senco etc informed of progress.
- 7 Contribute to re-integration packages for young people returning to school following a period of medical absence.
- 8 Co-ordinate PEP and Health Care Plan reviews.
- 9 Liaise with key agencies, eg alternative education providers, health services and provide information about curriculum/work as requested.
- 10 Promote links between home and school, by ensuring those young people not accessing school are informed of social events taking place, and where possible are included in these, and by encouraging regular contact with class mates.

Summer Term 2009

Review: Summer Term 2012

