RPT Children with health needs who cannot attend school policy

With reference to:
Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
Children and Families Act 2014
Working together to safeguard children 2023
Supporting Pupils at school with Medical Conditions – 2015
Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2026
Working together to improve school attendance (updated September 2024) 2024
Education Act 1996

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1. Our Mission

Our mission is for every child and young person to be successful in their future lives. To achieve this, we must champion the unique potential of every pupil. We believe that an excellent education, underpinned with opportunities to love, learn and laugh, is transformative, and we are committed to this motto.

We take into account pupils' varied life experiences and needs, providing equal opportunities for all pupils, whatever their age, disability, race, religion or belief, gender/gender identity or socio-economic background, to ensure that every child really does matter.

Aims

This policy aims to ensure that:

- Suitable education is arranged for pupils on roll who cannot attend school due to health needs (including both physical and mental health conditions).
- Pupils, staff and parents understand what the school is responsible for when this education is being provided outside of school.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of:

- *Education Act 1996*
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026*
- Working together to safeguard children 2023
- Working together to improve school attendance (updated September 2024) 2024
- Data Protection Act and UK GDPR

It is based on the following DfE guidance:

- Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs 2013
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school updated 2017

This policy should be read alongside the Trust's:

- Attendance Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy
- Data Protection Policy

It also draws on guidance from our local authority.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Responsibilities of the Trust

At RPT, we aim to ensure that all children, regardless of circumstance or setting, receive a high-quality education to enable them to shape their own futures.

Where children are unable to attend school because of their health:

- The school will follow DfE guidance and work with local authorities, who have a statutory duty to arrange suitable full-time education (or part-time when appropriate to the child's needs).
- "Full-time" education will be provided unless this is not in the best interests of the child's health.
- Where the child can attend school with additional support, or suitable arrangements are made by the school (e.g. remote learning, hospital school), the local authority would not normally be expected to intervene unless the education is unsuitable or insufficient.
- The school will ensure that appropriate safeguarding, data protection, and equality duties are met at all times

Key responsibilities:

- The Headteacher holds overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with this policy.
- The DSL will coordinate communication between school, families, medical professionals and the local authority.

4. If the School Makes Arrangements

Initially, the school will attempt to make arrangements to deliver suitable education for children with health needs who cannot attend school.

This may involve:

- Making early contact with families and health professionals to establish the child's medical needs and barriers to attendance.
- Agreeing and setting up appropriate arrangements (e.g. providing appropriately differentiated learning through remote education where this is suitable for the pupil's health needs, facilitating hospital education, or providing in-school support linked to an EHCP or Individual Health Care Plan).
- Ongoing monitoring and review with families, health professionals and staff to ensure provision remains suitable.
- Ensuring that personal data is held securely and shared only when necessary, in line with UK GDPR and Data Protection Act

- Planning for reintegration back into school at the earliest opportunity, with adjustments made as needed.

Absence due to verified medical need will normally be recorded using the appropriate authorised attendance code in line with DfE attendance guidance.

5. If the Local Authority Makes Arrangements

If the school cannot make suitable arrangements, the local authority becomes responsible.

In such cases, the school will:

- Work constructively with the local authority, providers, health professionals and families to secure the best outcomes.
- Share relevant safeguarding, attendance and medical information in line with statutory requirements and data protection law.
- Support effective provision by ensuring continuity of curriculum and learning.
- Facilitate reintegration by:
    - Planning for consistent provision before, during and after external arrangements.
    - Enabling pupils to stay in touch with school life (e.g. newsletters, virtual check-ins, invitations to events).
    - Creating tailored reintegration plans in collaboration with families, health services and the local authority.
    - Considering reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010.

- The school will continue to monitor educational progress and maintain regular communication with the pupil and family throughout any period of alternative provision.

6. Safeguarding and Attendance

- Safeguarding responsibilities remain in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026* and *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023*.
- The school will monitor attendance in line with *Working together to improve school attendance (updated September 2024) 2024*, ensuring children with health needs are not disadvantaged or at risk of becoming “missing education”.
- The DSL will maintain oversight of pupils receiving education away from the school site, ensuring appropriate safeguarding arrangements remain in place. Any welfare concerns arising from reduced attendance, remote education or alternative provision will be managed in accordance with the Trust's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Attendance support for pupils with health needs will follow the Trust's Attendance Policy, recognising that medical absence should be managed

through supportive intervention, reasonable adjustments and multi-agency working rather than punitive measures.

- Reintegration into school will be planned collaboratively with the pupil, family, health professionals and other agencies to ensure a successful return to full-time education wherever possible.

7. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved annually by the Trust Board or sooner where changes in legislation or statutory guidance require.