

Children with health needs that cannot attend school policy.



Lealands
High School

Jeff Hall

Lealands High School

January 2026

1. INTRODUCTION

Lealands High School policies are designed to support the school ethos, aims and vision. Lealands is a positive learning community which is fully inclusive to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

Our aims are outlined in our Home School Agreement.

Our aims:

Excellence in everything we do

- Everyone achieves success and makes excellent progress
- We all continually improve what we do and work hard
- We care about being the best we can be and getting the best out of those around us

Everyone has responsibility

- To prepare young people for life and a positive future
- To ensure that school is a safe place
- To help and support others to grow and succeed

Respect for all

- Everyone is valued for their contribution
- All are cared for and supported so that needs are met
- We recognise and celebrate the talents, gifts and uniqueness of every individual

In order to achieve these aims students, parents and the school need to work in partnership.

Our vision is to be:

*Everyone **achieves excellence**, demonstrates **respect** for all and takes **responsibility** for their own actions, while helping others to be successful.*

We strive to achieve this vision in all that we do and staff, students, parents, governors, other school stakeholders and partners are all an important part of making this happen.

1. Introduction

Lealands High School works in partnership with pupils, parents/carers, medical services, other professionals and education providers to enable children with medical needs who are unable to attend school to receive education in a hospital setting, alternative provision or at home. We will be proactive in promoting the education entitlement of pupils on roll and in securing effective provision.

This applies to pupils who are unable to attend school for reasons of sickness, injury or mental health needs where a medical practitioner considers that the child should not or cannot attend school.

This policy is based upon the statutory guidance for Local Authorities 'Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs.' (January 2013) This comes under the category of 'education otherwise' when the child remains on the school roll and is temporarily educated in a hospital setting, alternative provision or through home tuition.

The principles underlying of this policy are:

- Lealands High School recognises that children absent for medical reasons are entitled to continuity of education as far as their condition permits and acknowledges that it has a central role to play in securing and ensuring this continuity of education.
- High quality education will be provided and will be as broad and balanced as possible so that smooth reintegration is achievable.

2. 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
- Data Protection Act 2018
- DfE (2023) 'Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs'
- DfE (2015) 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Attendance policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

3. Definitions

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

- Physical health issues
- Physical injuries
- Mental health issues, including anxiety
- Emotional difficulties, emotional school based avoidance or school refusal
- Progressive conditions
- Terminal illnesses
- Chronic illnesses

Children who are unable to attend mainstream schools for health reasons may attend any of the following:

- Hospital school: a special school within a hospital setting where education is provided to give continuity whilst a child is receiving medical treatment.
- Home tuition: a tuition service that acts as a communication channel between schools and pupils on occasions when pupils are too ill to attend school and are receiving specialist medical treatment.
- Medical PRU's: Local Authority establishments that provide education for children who are unable to attend their registered school due to their specific medical needs.

4. School's Responsibility

Where a child is absent from school for medical reasons but is well enough to engage in educational tasks, the school will provide educational tasks and resources to use at home.

It is the duty of the Local Authority to 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 and we will therefore liaise with the LA when it becomes clear that a child's medical condition will prevent, or is preventing them, from being in school for 15 days or more. There will be minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the child.

Where a child is admitted to hospital but is well enough to work within the hospital school, Lealands High School will liaise with the hospital school to inform the school of curriculum areas that the pupil should be covering during their absence. Where possible, we will plan an educational programme with the service provider, taking account of the child's medical condition, treatment, effects of medication, therapeutic programmes and the duration of absence from school.

Lealands High School will aim to ensure maximum continuity of education for the pupils by providing:

- schemes of work and long term plans that are used by the school
- appropriate resources
- information relating to the pupil's ability, progress to date, assessment data and any special educational needs that the pupil may have

Where practical, the school will host termly review meetings as the pupil remains on the school roll and is therefore the school's responsibility. However, if the school is required to attend meetings off-site, this can be arranged and a member of the student support team will attend.

Where pupils have a planned admission or have recurrent admissions to hospital, the school will aim to provide a pack of work for the pupil to take into hospital with them.

The school will liaise closely with staff at any provision that is providing education for any pupil who is on the school's roll but is unable to attend school due to a medical reason.

The Governing Body is 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 the 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.
- Approving and reviewing this policy on an annual basis.

The Headteacher/ SENCo is responsible for:

- Working with governors to ensure compliance with relevant statutory duties when supporting pupils with health needs.
- Working collaboratively with parents and other professionals to develop arrangements that meet the best interests of the children.
- Ensuring the arrangements that are put in place to meet the pupil's health needs are fully understood by all those involved and are acted upon.
- Appointing a named member of staff who is responsible for pupils with healthcare needs and who liaises with parents, the L.A, key workers and any other involved in the care of the pupil. The appointed person at Lealands High School is the Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator (SENDCo), Mr Jeff Hall
- Ensuring the support that is put in place focuses on the needs of the individual pupil.
- Ensuring that there is appropriate training for staff with responsibility for supporting pupils with health needs.
- Providing reports to the Governing Body on the effectiveness of the arrangements in place to meet the health needs of pupils.
- Ensuring that the LA is notified when a pupil is likely to be away from the school for a significant period of time due to their health needs.

The SENDCo is the appointed named person and is responsible for:

- Providing teachers who are supporting pupils with health needs with suitable information relating to the pupil's health condition and the possible effect of the condition and/or medication 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.
- Supporting pupils who are unable to attend school because of medical needs.
- Actively monitoring pupil progress and reintegration into school.
- Supplying education providers with information about the pupil's academic progress and attainment.
- Liaising with the headteacher, education providers and parents / carers to determine pupils' programmes of study whilst absent from school.
- Keeping pupils informed about school events and encouraging communication with their peers.
- Providing a link between pupils and their parents / carers, and the LA.

Teachers and support staff are responsible for:

- 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. Google Classroom or other online/ remote teaching programmes may be used to support the child's learning.

- 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 / Carers informed of how their child's health needs are affecting them whilst in the school.

Parents / Carers are expected to:

- Ensure the regular and punctual attendance of their child at the school where possible.
- Work in partnership with the school to ensure the best possible outcomes for their child.
- Notify the school of the reason for any of their child's absences without delay.
- Provide the school with sufficient and up-to-date information about their child's medical needs.
- Attend meetings to discuss how support for their child should be planned.

4. Managing Absences

- Parents / Carers are advised to contact the school on the first day their child is unable to attend due to illness.
- Absences due to illness will be authorised unless the school has genuine cause for concern about the authenticity of the illness. Parents/ carers may be asked to provide evidence that medical advice has been sought.
- The school will provide support to pupils who are absent from school because of illness for a period of less than 15 school days by liaising with the pupil's parents / carers to arrange schoolwork as soon as the pupil is able to cope with it or part-time education at school.
- The school will give due consideration to which aspects of the curriculum are prioritised in consultation with the pupil, their family and relevant members of staff.
- For periods of absence that are expected to last for 15 or more school days, either in one absence or over the course of a school year, the SENDCo will notify the LA, who will take responsibility for the pupil and their education. He will make a Medical Referral to iapteam@luton.gov.uk Where absences are anticipated or known in advance, the school will liaise with the LA to enable education provision to be provided from the start of the pupil's absence.
- When a referral is made a paediatrician's signature is required or that of a CAMHS clinician if the pupil is suffering from a mental health condition. A General Practitioner's referral is not acceptable. When this medical evidence has been supplied, a Hub Allocation Meeting referral form is completed by the School's SENDCO and returned to IAP team. If agreed, medical tuition will be provided for an initial 6-week period when the case will be reviewed.

- For hospital admissions, the SENDCo / Assistant SENCo will liaise with the LA regarding the programme that should be followed while the pupil is in hospital.
- The LA will set up a plan for the pupil which will allow the school, the LA and the provider of the pupil's education to work together.
- The school will monitor pupil attendance and keep registers to ensure it is clear whether a pupil is, or should be, receiving education otherwise than at school.
- A pupil unable to attend school because of their health needs will not be removed from the school register without parental consent and certification from the medical officer, even if the LA has become responsible for the pupil's education.

5. Support for Pupils

- 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, parents and, where appropriate, the pupil.
- The LA expects the school to support pupils with health needs to attend full-time education wherever possible, or for the school to make reasonable adjustments to pupils' programmes of study where medical evidence supports the need for those adjustments.
- The school will make reasonable adjustments under pupils' individual healthcare plans (IHCPs), in accordance with the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy.
- Pupils admitted to hospital will receive education as determined appropriate by the medical professionals and hospital tuition team at the hospital concerned.
- 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.
- Whilst a pupil is away from school, the school will work with the LA to ensure the pupil can successfully remain in touch with their school using the following methods:
 - School newsletters
 - Emails
 - Invitations to school events
 - Cards or letters from peers and staff
- Where appropriate, the school will provide the pupil's education provider with relevant information, curriculum materials and resources.
- The school expects to receive regular reports and assessment of pupil progress from the education provider during the pupil's absence and evidence of the work that has been completed upon the pupil's return to school.
- 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 personalised or part-time timetable, drafted in consultation with the SENDCo.
- Access to additional support in school
- Online access to the curriculum from home via Google Classroom
- Movement of lessons to more accessible rooms
- Places to rest at school
- Special exam arrangements to manage anxiety or fatigue

6. Reintegration into the School

- When a pupil is considered well enough to return to school, the school will develop a tailored reintegration plan in collaboration with relevant professionals, pupil and parents / carers.
- If appropriate, the school nurse will be involved in the development of the pupil's reintegration plan and informed of the timeline of the plan by the SENDCo, to ensure they can prepare to offer any appropriate support to the pupil.
- The school will ensure that the pupils and staff who have maintained contact with the pupil who has been absent will play a significant role in helping the pupil to settle back into school.
- The school will consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made to provide suitable access to the school and the curriculum for the pupil.
- The school will accept part-time attendance where pupils are medically unable to cope with a full day, until the pupil is able to attend full-time. This arrangement will be included in the Reintegration plan.
- The school will make arrangements for pupils with mobility difficulties to return to school, taking account health and safety issues, organising risk assessments and seeking advice, if necessary, of lifting and handling procedures. The impact on staff will be taken into account and additional support may be required.
- For longer absences, the reintegration plan will be developed near to the pupil's likely date of return, to avoid putting unnecessary pressure on an ill pupil or their parents in the early stages of their absence.
- The school is aware that some pupils will need gradual reintegration over a long period of time and will always consult with the pupil, their parents and key staff about concerns, medical issues, timing and the preferred pace of return.
- The reintegration plan will include:

The date for planned reintegration, once known.

Details of regular meetings to discuss reintegration.

Details of the named member of staff who has responsibility for the pupil.

Clearly stated responsibilities and the rights of all those involved.

Details of social contacts, including the involvement of peers and mentors during the transition period.

A programme of small goals leading up to reintegration.
Review procedures.

- The school will ensure a welcoming environment is developed and encourage pupils and staff to be positive and proactive during the reintegration period.
- Following reintegration, if the school is required to, it will support the LA in seeking feedback from the pupil regarding the effectiveness of the process.

7. GCSE Examinations

- If a student is unable to complete examinations at school, arrangements will be made for them to sit their exams off site in line with JCQ guidelines following the school's examination policy.
- The SENCo has responsibility of coordinating the offsite arrangements. Staff at school will liaise with parents / carers, professionals and the LA to make the necessary arrangements.
- An examination plan will be completed prior to the examinations starting and shared with parents / carers, professionals and the LA.

Policy Implementation

The school's Governing Body is responsible for the implementation, review and evaluation of this policy. It will be consulted during the review of this policy. This policy is freely available to all staff, parents/carers and service partners. This policy was written by SLT and in consultation with staff at Lealands High School. It will be evaluated by the above. It will be reviewed in January 2027 or before, if procedures change.