

Children who are unable to attend their education provision due to medical needs.

Guidance for Families and Education Providers

The named officer for this guidance is Early Help and Inclusion Officer Andrea Tyler. ATyler@rutland.gov.uk

This guidance sets out Rutland County Councils' intention to ensure children who are unable to attend school/education provision, due to their physical illness or emotional and mental health difficulties, are provided with a suitable education. This applies to all children regardless of their personal circumstance or education setting. To make this possible, alternative provision will be offered by Rutland County Council to address a child's individual needs. Rutland County Council will support schools, providers, relevant agencies, the child or young person and their families parents to work together constructively in order to minimize disruption to a child's education and to achieve the best outcomes for them.

The statutory guidance from the DfE can be found here:

[Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs](#)

The guidance states that local authorities must:

Arrange a suitable full-time education (or as much education at the child's health condition allows) for children of compulsory school age, who because of illness, would otherwise not receive suitable and sufficient education. This applies whether or not the child is on the roll of a school and whatever the type of school they attend. This does not however apply to children who are electively home educated.

'Suitable' means suitable to the child's age, aptitude, ability and any special educational needs that he or she may have.

The law does not define full-time education but children with health needs should have provision which is equivalent to the education they would receive in school. If they receive one-to-one tuition, for example, the hours of face-to-face provision could be fewer as the provision is more concentrated.

Where it is advised by the appropriate health professional that full-time education would not be in the best interests of a particular child because of reasons relating to their physical or mental health, the Local Authority should provide sufficient education on the basis they consider to be in the child's best interests. Full or part-time education should still aim to achieve good academic attainment particularly in English, Maths and Science.

The guidance states that local authorities should:

- Provide such an education as soon as the child will be away from school **for 15 days or more**, whether consecutive or cumulative. They should liaise and be advised by appropriate medical professionals to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the child.
- It does not apply for common childhood illnesses (such as chickenpox or a cold) when the pupil would be likely to return to school quickly.
- Ensure that the education children receive is of good quality, (as defined in the statutory guidance [Alternative provision \(2013\)](#)), allows them to take appropriate qualifications, prevents them from falling behind their peers in school and allows them to reintegrate successfully back into their school community as soon as possible.
- Address the needs of individual children in arranging provision.
- Review the provision offered regularly to ensure it continues to be appropriate for the child and that it is providing a suitable education.

The role of Rutland County Council's Inclusion Service:

To provide temporary educational support for children who are unable to attend school for medical reasons, as defined by an appropriate medical professional.

To minimise disruption to education for children who are physically ill, injured or have emotional and mental health difficulties.

To arrange alternative provision as soon as it becomes clear that the absence will be for 15 or more school days - and should commence planning this from the sixth day of absence.

Ensure that, as far as possible, children with health needs and who are unable to attend school should receive the same breadth and quality of education as they would have experienced at school. Children should be involved in their education plan and in decisions relating to their education from the offset in appropriate ways which reflects their age and maturity. This will help ensure that the right provision is offered and encourages a child's commitment to it.

Make certain that provision provides a suitable and flexible education. Taking into account social and emotional needs, for example ensuring that pupils feel fully part of their school community, are able to stay in contact with classmates, and have access to the opportunities enjoyed by their peers and which enables children to return smoothly to school as soon as their health permits.

To liaise with schools to support the use of electronic media – such as virtual classrooms, learning platforms which can provide access to a broader curriculum.

To ensure where home/remote tutoring is used it is provided by relevant qualified teaching support. This includes tutoring providers ensuring their tutors have current DBS checks, a safeguarding policy which states that 2 references are sought for each tutor and proof of qualifications.

To put support 'around the whole family', this might include the school undertaking an early help assessment with the child and family to determine the support needed for the child and their family.

Rutland County Council's criteria for accessing educational support for children with medical needs:

To qualify for educational support from the local authority the following criteria must be met:

- The child is expected to be absent for at least 15 school days
- The child must be a pupil attending a Rutland school
- The child must be of compulsory school age
- The school should obtain a written recommendation from a health professional. Where a physical illness or injury is present this should be a hospital consultant or senior clinical medical officer. Where a child is suffering from severe emotional or psychological issues a recommendation will be sought from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). If there will be a delay in these services responding, recommendation may be sought from the GP.

Pathway and referral to seek alternative provision:

Referral will be made by the member of school staff with responsibility for children who cannot attend school because of medical needs, usually the SENCo. They should contact Rutland County Council's Inclusion service as soon as it is known that there will be 15 days of absence, (or as soon as there has been 15 days of absence) using the referral form (appendix 1), and submit it with the supporting medical evidence from the appropriate health professional to Inclusion@rutland.gov.uk

Process for Educational Support

1. Once the referral has been received, RCC's Inclusion Officer will arrange a meeting with school, parents, health professional and child (if appropriate). This meeting will be to agree the level of educational support required and how the education of all subjects will be managed; discuss current levels of attainment of the child in order to measure progress; discuss any learning needs/styles which may assist the tutor; discuss any medication that the child takes and how this may affect their learning; Discuss appropriate educational options such as alternative provision, hospital school, online learning and tuition; make plans to review each term and discuss plans for reintegration
2. Following the meeting, a package of support will be agreed and information shared with the tutor/hospital school.

3. The provision allocated to the child will be arranged on a case by case basis by the team working with the child and guided by health professionals¹
4. If a tutor has been allocated, tuition will be delivered during term time. The Inclusion officer will make arrangements with the child or young person and their family for the tuition to take place at a convenient time and place. The tuition may take place at home, school, libraries, community hubs, council buildings and youth centres. If tuition takes place within the home an appropriate adult must also be present for safeguarding reasons.
5. The Inclusion Officer will arrange a review meeting. The regularity of this will vary from case to case and will be decided by the team around the child. Reviews may involve planning for reintegration; reviewing progress; planning for examinations; timetable adjustments; and transition arrangements. Each review will include a report from the tutor(s); information from health and education professionals about the continued suitability of provision and will hold the wishes and feelings of the child and family central to the discussion and plan. The review may also be supported by an Early Help practitioner, social worker or SEND Officer.
6. Successful return to a full-time education programme in school is a key driver for all involved. The Inclusion officer and other professionals will support reintegration into school. Reintegration will vary for each individual child, some children will return with minimal support, others will require a carefully monitored gradual reintegration plan.

The role of School and Education providers to support children with medical needs.

Rutland County Council's Inclusion service will maintain good links with schools recognising that schools play a big part in making sure that the provision offered to the child is as effective as possible and that the child can be reintegrated back into school successfully. In order to ensure this success schools will:

- Complete the referral form and gain supporting evidence as soon as it is known the child is medically unable to access education
- During the initial meeting, schools are to make information available about the curriculum and any work the child may miss, helping the child to keep up, rather than catch up.
- Maintain any plans in place for a child e.g. Education, Health and Care Plan and Personal Education Plan
- Schools are expected to, as far as possible provide access to the curriculum and materials that a child would have used in school.
- Ensure arrangements for examinations are made and that coursework and internal exam opportunities are not missed.
- Schools must ensure that a child remains on school roll for the entirety of the alternative provision period and is not removed from the register.
- School SENCo or Inclusion lead is normally the main point of contact. Sharing information will be necessary between colleagues in school, health, other professional and parents. Schools should make relevant information available such as assessments; professional reports; ECHPs and exam board information for GCSE age children, operating within the confidentiality and data protection framework of the school.

Schools should ensure that children can successfully remain in touch with their school community or provision while they are away. This could be through school newsletters, emails, invitations to events or internet links to lessons from their school.

Provision for Siblings

When treatment of a child's condition means they or their family have to move nearer to a hospital, and there is a sibling of compulsory school age, the local authority into whose area the family has moved should seek to ensure the sibling is offered a place, where provision is available, for example, in a local mainstream school or other appropriate setting.

¹ For example: 1 ½ hours for each core subject (English, Maths and Science) may be offered per week alongside an offer from the school to cover foundation subjects

MEDICAL NEEDS CONTACT FORM

This contact form should be completed and returned to the Early Help and Inclusion Officer at Inclusion@rutland.gov.uk

If you become concerned that a child/young person has been harmed or abused or is at risk of harm or abuse, you must follow your Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures

School:			
School representative name and role:			
School representative telephone and Email:			
Date of referral:			
Referrals must be discussed with those with parental responsibility prior to making referral, Parental consent is required	Consent gained? Y/N	Method of contact:	
		Contact date:	
Name of pupil :			Gender:
DOB:	Year Group:		UPN:
Address:			
SEND:	Y/N	EHCP:	Y/N
Open to Early Help:	Y/N	Open to Social Care:	Y/N
Current Attendance %		Unauthorised Absence %	
Name of Parent/Carer:			
Address (if different to above):			
Contact number:		Email:	
Please outline the medical reasons for this referral. Include medical services supporting the pupil. (Medical recommendation for alternative provision must be attached to this referral when it is submitted)			
Recommendation from health professional attached (referral will not be processed without this)			Y/N
FOR OFFICE USE ONLY			
Provision assigned and subjects:			
Start date:		Total hours assigned:	
Location:			
Other workers involved:			
LL Number:		PO Number:	
Review date:		Signed off:	

The local Authority will Provide an education as soon as it is clear that the child will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative.

It is the duty of the school to inform the Local Authority of this occurring in their school.

School lead completes Medical Needs Contact form, attaches medical evidence and returns to the Early help and Inclusion Officer at: Inclusion@rutland.gov.uk

Early Help and Inclusion Officer arranges a meeting **within 10 school days** between themselves, school, parents, health and pupil (if appropriate) to agree the level of educational support required, what provision will be provided and how education will be managed

School should be prepared to discuss current levels of attainment of the pupil in order to measure progress; discuss any learning needs/styles which may assist the tutor; discuss any medication that the child takes and how this may affect their learning

A package of support will be agreed and information shared with the alternative provision provider within **10 school days** of the meeting.

Student remains on role and school remains responsible for plans the student may have and in maintaining links and providing opportunities for the child to participate in school life. Exam and transition prep must also be completed

If a tutor has been allocated, tuition will be delivered during term time at an agreed location

Changes to provision/ provision still appropriate. Provision continues

Review provision with all partners – The first review being within 6 weeks of provision convened and between 6 and 12 weeks thereafter.

Reintegration planning (following advice from Health professionals) and return to school