

High Tunstall College of Science



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Students with Additional Health Needs Attendance Policy

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Stakeholder Consulted	- Admissions and Safeguarding Committee
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Responsibility for Review	- Assistant Headteacher – Student Engagement, the Designated Safeguarding Lead & Attendance SSO

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Statement of intent

High Tunstall College of Science aims to support the LA and ensure that all children who are unable to attend college due to medical needs, and who would not receive suitable education without such provision, continue to have access to as much education as their medical condition allows, including physical education, and as many school trips to enable them to reach their full potential.

Due to the nature of their health needs, some children may be admitted to hospital or placed in alternative forms of education provision. We recognise that, whenever possible, students should receive their education within college and the aim of the provision will be to reintegrate students back into college as soon as they are well enough.

We understand that we have a continuing role in a student's education whilst they are not attending the college and will work with the LA, healthcare partners and families to ensure that all children with medical needs receive the right level of support to enable them to maintain links with their education.

1. **[Updated]** Legal framework

1.1. **[Updated]** 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
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- DfE (2015) 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions'
- DfE (2022) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- **[Updated]** DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education 2024'
- **[Updated]** DfE (2023) 'Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs'.

1.2. This policy operates in conjunction with the following college policies:

- Attendance Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy (Local Authority)
- Data Protection Policy
- **[New]** Remote Learning Policy
- **[New]** Information Security Policy
- Records Management Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Supporting students with medical conditions.

2. Local Authority duties

2.1. For the purpose of this policy, the LA's duties when students are unable to attend college due to health needs are outlined below. These duties have been included to differentiate the responsibilities that lie with the college and those that will be carried out by the LA. The college is not responsible for ensuring that the LA meets its responsibilities – the college's responsibilities are outlined in the 'Roles and responsibilities' section of this policy.

2.2. The LA must arrange suitable full-time education for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would not receive suitable education without such provision. The college has a duty to support the LA in doing so.

2.3. In line with the statutory guidance, the LA should:

- Provide such education as soon as it is clear that a student will be away from college for fifteen (15) days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative. They should liaise with the appropriate medical professionals to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the student.
- Ensure the education students receive is of good quality, allows them to take appropriate qualifications, prevents them from falling behind their peers in college, and allows them to reintegrate successfully back into college as soon as possible.
- Address the needs of individual students in arranging provision.
- Have a named officer responsible for the education of children with additional health needs and ensure parents know who this is.
- Have a written, publicly accessible policy statement on their arrangements to comply with their legal duty towards children with additional health needs.
- Review the provision offered regularly to ensure that it continues to be appropriate for the child and that it is providing suitable education.
- Give clear policies on the provision of education for children and young people under and over compulsory school age.
- Maintain good links with the schools & colleges in its area and put systems in place to promote co-operation between them when children cannot attend due to ill health.

2.4. In line with the statutory guidance, the LA should not:

- Have processes or policies in place which prevent a child from getting the right type of provision and a good education.
- Withhold or reduce the provision, or type of provision, for a child because of how much it will cost.
- Have policies based upon the percentage of time a child is able to attend college rather than whether the child is receiving a suitable education during that attendance.
- Have lists of health conditions which dictate whether or not they will arrange education for children or inflexible policies which result in children going without suitable full-time education (or as much education as their health condition allows them to participate in).

3. Definitions

3.1. “**Children with health needs**” are children who are unable to attend college as a result of their medical needs may include those with:

- Physical health issues
- Physical injuries
- Mental health problems, including anxiety issues
- Emotional difficulties or college refusal
- Progressive conditions
- Terminal illnesses
- Chronic illnesses.

3.2. Children who are unable to attend mainstream education 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 the child is receiving treatment.

Home tuition: many LAs have home tuition services that act as a communication channel between schools and students on occasions where students are too ill to attend college and are receiving specialist medical treatment.

Medical PRUs: these are LA establishments that provide education for children unable to attend their registered school due to their medical needs.

For the purpose of this policy, “school-based support” in relation to supporting pupils with additional health needs may include:

- Day-to-day support offered at school where the pupil is able to attend as normal
- Support given to pupils who are absent from school because of illness for a period of less than fifteen (15) school days, whether consecutive or cumulative
- Any educational or extra-curricular provision as requested by the LA as part of its arrangements for pupils who cannot attend school full-time, e.g., where the pupil attends school part-time as an arranged part of their full-time education provision
- As part of their reintegration into normal school attendance following a period of absence or part-time attendance due to health needs.

“**LA-arranged education**”, for the purpose of this policy, is defined as education provision arranged by the LA where the pupil cannot attend school full time due to medical reasons for a period of fifteen (15) school days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative.

4. **[Updated]** Roles and responsibilities

4.1. **[Updated]** The governing body is responsible for:

- Ensuring there is a schedule of regular updates on the arrangements made for students who cannot attend the school due to their medical needs
- Ensuring arrangements for students who cannot attend college as a result of their medical needs are in place and are effectively implemented
- Ensuring the termly review of the arrangements made for students who cannot attend college due to their medical needs
- Ensuring the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the arrangements to support the needs of students 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 robust systems are in place for dealing with health emergencies and critical incidents where a student with health needs is able to, or partially able to, attend college and/or extra-curricular activities
- **[Updated]** Ensuring a suitable member of staff is assigned responsibility for the education of students with additional health needs to be a point of contact for the LA and parents
- Ensuring staff with responsibility for supporting students with health needs are appropriately trained
- Approving and reviewing this policy on an annual basis.

4.2. The headteacher is responsible for:

- Working with the governing body to ensure compliance with the relevant statutory duties when supporting students with health needs
- Working collaboratively with the LA, parents and other professionals to develop arrangements to meet the best interests of children
- Ensuring the arrangements put in place to meet students' health needs are fully understood by all those involved and acted upon
- Appointing a named member of staff who is responsible for students with healthcare needs and liaises with parents, students, the LA, key workers and others involved in the student's care
- Ensuring the support put in place focusses on and meets the needs of individual students

- Arranging appropriate training for staff with responsibility for supporting students with health needs
- Providing teachers who support students with health needs with suitable information relating to a student's health condition and the possible effect the condition and/or medication taken has on the student
- Providing annual reports to the governing body on the effectiveness of the arrangements in place to meet the health needs of students
- Notifying the LA when a student is likely to be away from the college for a significant period of time due to their health needs.

4.3. **[Updated]** The Assistant Headteacher – Student Engagement, The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Attendance Student Support Officer are responsible for:

- The management of any students registered at the college who are unable to fully attend school because of their health needs
- Dealing with students who are unable to attend college because of medical needs
- Actively monitoring student progress and reintegration into college
- Supplying students' LA-arranged education providers with information about the child's capabilities, progress and outcomes
- Liaising with headteacher, LA-arranged education providers and parents to determine students' programmes of study whilst they are absent from college
- Keeping students informed about college events and encouraging communication with their peers
- Keeping students who are being educated by LA-arranged education providers informed about college events and encouraging communication with their peers
- Providing a link between students and their parents, and the LA, where necessary.

4.4. Teachers and support staff are responsible for:

- Understanding confidentiality in respect of students' health needs
- Designing lessons and activities in a way that allows those with health needs to participate fully and ensuring students are not excluded from activities that they wish to take part in without a clear evidence-based reason
- Understanding their role in supporting students with health needs and ensuring they attend the required training

- Ensuring they are aware of the needs of their students through the appropriate and lawful sharing of the individual student'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 college.

4.5. Parents are expected to:

- Ensure where a college-based provision is in place, the regular and punctual attendance of their child at the college where possible
- Work in partnership with the college, the LA or LA-arranged provision to ensure the best possible outcomes for their child
- Notify the college, or relevant education provider, of the reason for any of their child's absences without delay
- Provide the college with sufficient and up-to-date information about their child's medical needs
- Attend meetings to discuss how college-based support, including reintegration, for their child should be planned.

5. **[Updated]** Managing absences

- 5.1. Parents are advised to contact the college on the first day their child is unable to attend due to illness.
- 5.2. Absences due to illness will be authorised unless the college has genuine cause for concern about the authenticity of the illness then medical evidence will be requested.
- 5.3. The college will provide support to students who are absent from college because of illness for a period of less than fifteen (15) college days by liaising with the student's parents to arrange college work as soon as the student is able to cope with it or part-time education at college. The college will give due consideration to which aspects of the curriculum are prioritised in consultation with the student, their family and relevant members of staff.
- 5.4. For periods of absence that are expected to last for fifteen (15) or more college days, either in one (1) absence or over the course of a school year, the Designated Safeguarding Lead /Attendance Student Support Officer will notify the LA, who will take responsibility for the student and their education, if it is deemed medically necessary to do so.
- 5.5. Where absences are anticipated or known in advance, the college will liaise with the LA to enable education provision to be provided from the start of the student's absence.

- 5.6. **[Updated]** For planned hospital admissions, the Designated Safeguarding Lead /Attendance Student Support Officer will liaise with the LA and the hospital education provider as early as possible to discuss the likely admission date and expected length. Plans will be made, where possible, for the educational programme to be followed while the student is in hospital.
- 5.7. The LA will set up a personal education plan (PEP) for the student which will allow the college, the LA and the provider of the student's education to work together.
- 5.8. The college will monitor student attendance and mark registers to ensure it is clear whether a student is, or should be, receiving education otherwise than at college.
- 5.9. The college will only remove a student who is unable to attend college because of additional health needs from the college roll where:
 - The student has been certified by a medical professional that the student is unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend college, before ceasing to be of compulsory school age; and
 - Neither the student nor their parent has indicated to the college the intention to continue to attend the college, after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
- 5.10. A student unable to attend college because of their health needs will not be removed from the college register without parental consent and certification from a medical professional, even if the LA has become responsible for the student's education.
- 5.11. **[New]** Staff will be alert to the fact that missing education can put students at risk of harm and may be an indicator of a safeguarding issue. Concerns will be handled in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Children Missing from Education Policy. Staff will also be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for students with additional health needs.
- 5.12. **[New]** The college will provide to the LA, at agreed intervals, the full name and address of any students who are not attending college regularly, including if this is due to any additional health needs.

6. **[Updated]** Support for students

- 6.1. Where a student has a complex or long-term health issue, the college will discuss the student's needs and how these may be best met with the LA, relevant medical professionals, parents and, where appropriate, the student.

- 6.2. **[New]** Students with continuing health needs will have an IHP which is subject to regular review and assessment. Where a student's needs amount to ongoing SEND, an EHC plan may be more appropriate to meet their long-term needs. Where a student has an EHC plan and an IHP, both plans will be reviewed alongside each other.
- 6.3. **[New]** Medical evidence will be used where available to best understand a student's needs and identify the most suitable provision. Where specific medical evidence is not readily available, the college will consider liaising with other medical practitioners and other sources of evidence to ensure appropriate provision can be arranged as soon as possible.
- 6.4. The LA expects the college to support students with health needs to attend full-time education wherever possible, or for the college to make reasonable adjustments to students' programmes of study where medical evidence supports the need for those adjustments.
- 6.5. The college will make reasonable adjustments under students' individual healthcare plans (IHCPs).
- 6.6. Students admitted to hospital will receive education as determined appropriate by the medical professionals and hospital tuition team at the hospital concerned.
- 6.7. During a period of absence, the college will work with the provider of the student's education to establish and maintain regular communication and effective outcomes.
- 6.8. **[New]** The use of digital resources will be considered to support learning and complement face-to-face education, where appropriate. Digital resources will only be used in accordance with the student's needs. Staff will follow procedures set out in the Remote Education Policy.
- 6.9. Whilst a student is away from college, the college will work with the LA to ensure the student can successfully remain in touch with the college using the following methods:
 - Website
 - Emails
 - Invitations to college events
 - Cards or letters from peers and staff
 - Home visits
 - Regular telephone contact
 - Teams.
- 6.10. **[Updated]** Where appropriate, the college will provide the student's education provider with relevant information, curriculum materials and resources. The college will strive to achieve effective collaboration

between relevant services to ensure continuity of provision and consistency of curriculum.

- 6.11. **[New]** Provision for students will support their individual needs to overcome barriers to attainment and achievement, giving equal consideration to their pastoral needs to allow them to prosper in the education system. Consideration will be given to the student's personal, social and emotional needs to allow them to feel fully included in the college community, maintain contacts with classmates and have access to the same opportunities.
- 6.12. To help ensure a student with additional health needs is able to attend college following an extended period of absence, the following adaptations will be considered:
- A personalised or part-time timetable, drafted in consultation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead / Attendance Student Support Officer
 - Access to additional support in college
 - Online access to the curriculum from home where available via Teams
 - Movement of lessons to more accessible rooms where possible
 - Places to rest at college
 - Special exam arrangements to manage anxiety or fatigue.
- 6.13. **[New]** The college will ensure that students are involved in decision-making as much as possible, in accordance with the student's age and maturity, to help ensure that the right provision is offered and encourage their commitment and engagement.
- 6.14. **[New]** Alongside the LA, the provision offered to a student will be regularly reviewed by the college to ensure it continues to be appropriate for the student's needs and that suitable education is being provided. The review process will seek input from:
- The student
 - Parents
 - Relevant agencies and medical practitioners, where possible
 - The LA SEND team, where the student has an EHC plan.

7. **[Updated]** Reintegration

- 7.1. When a student is considered well enough to return to college, the college will develop a tailored reintegration plan in collaboration with the LA.
- 7.2. **[New]** During a lengthy absence, a reintegration plan will be developed near to the likely date of return to avoid putting unsuitable pressure on an ill student in the early stages of their absence.
- 7.3. The college will work with the LA when reintegration into college is anticipated to plan for consistent provision during and after the period of education outside college.
- 7.4. As far as possible, the child will be able to access the curriculum and materials that they would have used in college.
- 7.5. If appropriate, the school nurse will be involved in the development of the student's reintegration plan and informed of the timeline of the plan by the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Attendance Student Support Officer, to ensure they can prepare to offer any appropriate support to the student.
- 7.6. The college will consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made to provide suitable access to the college and the curriculum for the student.
- 7.7. For longer absences, the reintegration plan will be developed near to the student's likely date of return, to avoid putting unnecessary pressure on an ill student or their parents in the early stages of their absence.
- 7.8. The college is aware that some students will need gradual reintegration over a long period of time and will always consult with the student, their parents and key staff about concerns, medical issues, timing and the preferred pace of return.
- 7.9. 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 student
 - 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
 - Follow up procedures.

- 7.10. The college will ensure a welcoming environment is developed and encourage students and staff to be positive and proactive during the reintegration period.
- 7.11. Following reintegration, the college will support the LA in seeking feedback from the student regarding the effectiveness of the process.

8. Information sharing

- 8.1. It is essential that all information about students with health needs is kept up to date.
- 8.2. To protect confidentiality, all information-sharing techniques, e.g. staff noticeboards, will be agreed with the student and their parent in advance of being used.
- 8.3. All teachers, TAs, supply and support staff will be provided with access to relevant information, including high-risk health needs, first aiders and emergency procedures, via the staff handbook as well as individual medical plans.
- 8.4. Parents will be made aware of their own rights and responsibilities regarding confidentiality and information sharing. To help achieve this, the college will:
 - Ensure this policy and other relevant policies are easily available and accessible
 - Provide the student and their parents with a copy of the policy on information sharing
 - Ask parents to sign a consent form which clearly details the organisations and individuals that their child's health information will be shared with and which methods of sharing will be used
 - Consider how friendship groups and peers may be able to assist students with health needs.
- 8.5. When a student is discharged from hospital or is returning from other education provision, the college will ensure the appropriate information is received to allow for a smooth return to the college. Designated Safeguarding Lead/Attendance Student Support Officer will liaise with the hospital or other tuition service as appropriate.

9. Record keeping

- 9.1. Written records will be kept of all medicines administered to students.
- 9.2. Proper record keeping protects both staff and students and provides evidence that agreed procedures have been followed.
- 9.3. All records will be maintained in line with the Information Security Policy & Records Management Policy.

10. Training

- 10.1. Healthcare professionals should be involved in identifying and agreeing with the college the type and level of training required. Training will be sufficient to ensure staff are confident in their ability to support students with additional health needs.
- 10.2. Staff will be trained in a timely manner to assist with a student's return to college.
- 10.3. Once a student's return date has been confirmed, staff will be provided with relevant training before the student's anticipated return.
- 10.4. Parents of students with additional health needs may provide specific advice but will not be the sole trainer of staff.

11. Examinations and assessments

- 11.1. Designated Safeguarding Lead/Attendance Student Support Officer will liaise with the alternative provision provider over planning and examination course requirements where appropriate.
- 11.2. Relevant assessment information will be provided to the alternative provision provider if required.
- 11.3. Awarding bodies may make special arrangements for students with permanent or long-term disabilities and learning difficulties, or temporary disabilities and illnesses. Applications for such arrangements will be submitted by the college, or LA if more appropriate, as early as possible.

12. **[Updated]** Monitoring and review

- 12.1. This policy will be reviewed by the Assistant Headteacher – Student Engagement, the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Attendance Student Support Officer on an annual basis.
- 12.2. Any changes to the policy will be clearly communicated to all members of staff involved in supporting students with additional health needs, and to parents and students themselves.
- 12.3. The next scheduled review date for this policy is November 2025.