

Health Needs Education Service

Admissions/Referral Policy



Introduction

For those pupils too unwell to attend school, the key to successfully maintaining continuity of education is for the local authority and schools to have clear strategies and timely support available.

It is recognised nationally in Statutory Guidance that pupils who continue in education during their illness and recuperation are likely to recover more quickly with the minimum possible adverse effect on their educational and life outcomes.

The Health Needs Education Service in Kent (HNES) was set up in 2006 with multi agency agreed criteria to ensure county wide consistency, and to prevent children from 'falling through the net'.

Criteria: The Disability Discrimination Act and Health/Medical Needs.

Pupils with health needs which prevent them attending their home school may be considered disabled in terms of the Disability Discrimination Act (examples of this might include those with epilepsy, diabetes, brain injury, or degenerative neuro muscular conditions)

The school therefore needs to have regard to the duty imposed by the Act to make reasonable adjustments for the inclusion of such pupils and anticipatory planning should be part of the school's Disability Equality Scheme

Only after such consideration and reasonable adjustments have been made should the school consider referral to the Health Needs Education Service for provision of continuity of education as follows.

- Pupils whose mental health needs are at Tier 3 (CAMHS).
- Pupils whose physical health is evidenced by a hospital (paediatrician, consultant or registrar) to be too unwell to attend school. This applies to pupils whose cases are managed by hospitals within Kent as well as in more specialist hospitals in London and across the country.
- Pupils whose illness has reduced their school attendance to less than 50%
- Pupils post 16 will be considered where schools will make a fresh referral and can provide renewed medical evidence to repeat a year

Pathway to Support

When a school becomes aware that a pupil is unwell and their attendance has ceased or reduced to 50% or less, they have a duty to provide work to the pupil at home for 15 schools days. During that time and if the illness is going to last longer, the school can apply to the HNES for an appropriately agreed package of support which might include the following types of support:

- Home Tuition.
- Attendance at a base or satellite.
- Individual tuition in school.
- A combination/bespoke package as agreed by all parties.

All of the support programmes will include how the home school will maintain links with the pupil and their family to facilitate a successful reintegration.

While supported by the HNES, pupils will be dual rolled so any absence will be born by the Service and not the school's attendance figures.

Pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need (SEN)

Where pupils with Statements of SEN develop additional health needs, the school will need to call an interim review meeting to agree the referral.

Admissions Process

The school collects evidence from Health colleagues as described on the referral form (available on the HNES website or by direct request from the Service)

The school discusses the referral with parents/carers and young person, including reflecting their views in and obtaining their signature on, the documentation

The form is signed by the school Headteacher and sent to the relevant Service Headteacher (East Kent or West Kent) as indicated on the form

The referral is discussed at the weekly referral meetings attended by the Health Needs Service Headteachers and the Service Manager

The referring school is informed of the decision by post within 3 working days and usually by email

N.B. Transport is arranged by the Head Teachers of the Centres

Exceptions – Pupils who are inpatients at Woodland House (Tier 4) are automatically admitted to Oakfields, the education centre attached to the hospital.

Pupils who are inpatients at out of county Tier 4 provision are also automatically eligible for support (home or base tuition) on their discharge back to Tier 3 Services in Kent.

Exit Strategies

- Advice from Health professionals in collaboration with the HNES, home school, young person and parents will determine the appropriate time and pace of re-integration.
- The package and process will be agreed by all parties and regularly reviewed.
- The home school to provide support as needed.

When pupils are returning from Tier 4 (hospital provision in or out of county) and remain too unwell to return to school, the home school needs to complete the referral form. The provision will support the home school as needed.

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