Arranging Education for Learners who Cannot Attend School because of Health Needs Policy

This policy is effective in Lancaster Academy, part of the Learning without Limits Academy Trust

Associated Trust and Academy Policies:	
Academy Accessibility Plan	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
Academy Attendance Policy	SEN Policy & Information Report
Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy	Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
Data Protection Policy	

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Version	Date	Author	Changes
V1.0	March 2021	KK	New Trust policy created
V1.1	August 2023	KK	Policy review. Contents added and policy format updated. Named person information moved to front sheet. Links for guidance specific to our Academies added, Section 4. LwLAT Wellbeing Statement added.
V2.0	January 2024	KK	Policy title updated from Children with Health Needs who cannot Attend School Policy. Policy updated to reflect new government guidance. Localisation of Trust template policy text added. All references to children, pupil, student or young person changed to learner. Information added at the start of a new section heading: Section 7 Working together, with a 7.2 Children. Legislation and Statutory Guidance links updated. 9.1 added, under Support for Learners. 11.6 added, under Information Sharing. Policy formally ratified at the Trust Board Meeting 25th January 2024.

V2.0a	January 2024	SA	Localised version for use at Lancaster Academy – Agreed by Simon Aldis, Chair of Governors

The named member of staff responsible for learners with healthcare needs at Lancaster Academy Name is Asifa Patel

This document is a Trust wide policy which is approved by Trustees for use in all Trust premises. It is the responsibility of individual Academies to insert information in to the document where indicated so that it is relevant to local circumstances and practice, whilst not removing any content contained within it, prior to the policy being noted by Local Governing Bodies.

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1. Aims of this Policy

1.1. The Learning without Limits Academy Trust (LwLAT) recognises that there may be times when a learner is unable to attend school due to a serious medical condition or ongoing ill health. Some learners may be admitted to hospital or placed in alternative forms of educational provision to help manage their recovery whilst maintaining their education. We believe that, wherever possible, learners should receive their education within their Academy and that we have a continuing role in a learner's education if they are not attending. All Academies within the Trust will work closely with parents and carers, the local authority, and healthcare partners to ensure that learners maintain links with their education and to reintegrate them back into school as soon as they are well enough to attend.

1.2. Lancaster Academy has adopted this policy and set out the arrangements it has put in place for its learners with health needs who cannot attend school.

2. Purpose of this Policy

2.1. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that:

- Suitable education is arranged for learners on roll who cannot attend school due to serious and ongoing health needs
- Learners, staff and parents and carers understand what the LwLAT and its Academies are responsible for when this education is being provided by the local authority
- Learners are able to re-integrate successfully back into school and that this takes place as soon as their health permits

3. Definitions

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

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

3.2. This policy does not cover self-limiting infectious diseases of childhood, e.g. measles. The Trust is aware that some learners may be unable to attend school due to the prolonged effects of COVID-19. We will continue to work with our local NHS partners, including school nurses for such cases, and follow the current guidance concerning school attendance and COVID-19.

4. Legislation and Statutory Guidance

4.1. This policy reflects the requirements of the Education Act 1996.

- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018

- Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs - Gov.uk
- Mental health and behaviour in schools
- Promoting Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Well-Being
- Supporting learners with medical conditions at school 2014
- Working together to improve school attendance
- SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years

4.2. Useful Resources

4.2.1. Guidance specific to our Academies:

- Leicester City Council; Supporting the education of learners with medical needs
- Leicestershire County Council; Education for learners with medical needs
- Healthy Schools - Pregnant Learners Guidance for schools

4.2.2. Consideration should be given to the NICE guidelines (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence), alongside the relevant professionals.

5. Scope

5.1. This policy applies to all trustees, governors, teaching, non-teaching, supply, contract staff and volunteers working in or on behalf of the Academies within, or associated with the Learning without Limits Academy Trust (LwLAT).

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

6. Who is responsible for carrying out this policy?

6.1. The CEO and the Principal of each Academy have overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework.

6.2. All members of staff are responsible for the success of this policy and must ensure that they familiarise themselves with it and act in accordance with its aims and objectives.

6.3. The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the Principal of each Academy and will remain under constant review by the Learning without Limits Academy Trust.

7. Working Together

7.1. Parents and Carers

7.1.1. Parent and carers should:

- Contact the Academy if their child is too ill to go to school and provide relevant medical evidence if they think they will be off for more than 15 days
- Provide the Academy with sufficient and up-to-date information about their child's medical needs
- Contact the Academy if their child has to go into hospital as an in-patient
- Work in partnership with the school to ensure the best possible outcomes for their child

- Attend meetings to discuss how support for their child should be planned
- Ensure the regular and punctual attendance of their child at school where possible

7.1.2. In addition, the Academy will continue to follow attendance procedures when a learner is absent from school. This will include notifying the LwLAT Senior Education Welfare Officer.

7.2. Learners

7.2.1. We recognise that learners should be involved in decision making from the start and we will encourage engagement and commitment with decisions agreed by providing age appropriate support. This will include effective collaboration between relevant services for all learners, whether they are at home or in hospital.

7.3. Local Authority (LA)

7.3.1. It is the responsibility of the local authority to arrange suitable full-time education (or as much education as the learner's health condition allows) for learners of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would otherwise not receive suitable education. They should provide such education as soon as it is clear that a learner will be away from school for 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 learner.

7.3.2. They must ensure the education learners receive is of good quality, allows them to take appropriate qualifications, prevents them from falling behind their peers in school, and allows them to reintegrate successfully back into school as soon as possible.

7.4. The Trust Board

7.4.1. The Trust Board will ensure that:

- Arrangements for learners who cannot attend school as a result of their medical needs are in place and are effectively implemented
- A termly review of the arrangements made for learners who cannot attend school due to their medical needs
- The roles and responsibilities of those involved in the arrangements to support the needs of learners are clear and understood by all
- Robust systems are in place for dealing with health emergencies and critical incidents, for both on- and off-site activities
- Staff with responsibility for supporting learners with health needs are appropriately trained
- All schools within the LwLAT liaise with the LA support to ensure learners engage with provision

7.5. Academy Principal

7.5.1. The Academy Principal is responsible for:

- Working collaboratively with parents and carers and other professionals to develop arrangements to meet the best interests of learners

- Ensuring the arrangements put in place to meet learners' health needs are fully understood by all those involved, and acted upon and reviewed in a timely manner
- Appointing a named member of staff who is responsible for learners with healthcare needs and liaises with parents and carers, learners, the LwLAT Senior Welfare Office, the LA, key workers and others involved in the learner's care. The named member of staff responsible for learners with healthcare needs at Lancaster Academy is Asifa Patel
- Ensuring the support put in place focusses on and meets the needs of individual learners
- Arranging appropriate training for staff with responsibility for supporting learners with health needs
- Providing teachers who support learners with health needs with suitable information relating to a learner's health condition and the possible effect the condition and/or medication taken has on the learner
- Providing reports to the Trust on the effectiveness of the arrangements in place to meet the health needs of learners
- Notifying the LwLAT Senior Welfare Officer and the LA when a learner is likely to be away from the school for a significant period of time due to their health needs

7.6. The Academy

- Lancaster Academy will attempt to make arrangements to deliver suitable education for learners with health needs who cannot attend school. This may include:
- Remote learning
- Online learning
- Home tutoring
- Support for Well-Being and Mental Health
- PSHE and Staying Safe support
- Attendance at the hospital school, or
- A combination of the above

7.7. The Academy will:

- Work constructively with the local authority, providers, relevant agencies and parent and carers to ensure the best outcomes for the learner
- Share information with the local authority and relevant health services as required
- Help make sure that the provision offered to the learner is as effective as possible and that the learner can be reintegrated back into school successfully and without unnecessary delay

7.7.1. When reintegration is anticipated, work with the local authority and LwLAT Senior Welfare Officer to:

- Plan for consistent provision during and after the period of education outside the school, allowing the learner to access the same curriculum and materials that they would have used in school as far as possible
- Enable the learner to stay in touch with school life

- Create individually tailored reintegration plans for each learner returning to school
- Consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made

7.8. Role of the Named member of Staff

7.8.1. Lancaster Academy has a named member of staff. They are responsible for:

- Supporting learners who are unable to attend school because of medical needs
- Working closely with the LwLAT Senior Welfare Officer
- Actively monitoring learner progress and reintegration into school
- Supplying pupils' education providers e.g. hospital school with information about the child's capabilities, interests, progress and outcomes
- Liaising with the Principal, education providers and parents and carers to determine learners' programmes of study whilst they are absent from school
- Keeping learners informed about school events and encouraging communication with their peers
- Providing a link between learners and their parents and carers, and the LA

7.9. Teachers and support staff

7.9.1. All LwLAT teachers and support staff are responsible for:

- Understanding confidentiality in respect of learners' health needs
- Designing lessons and activities, whether in school or online, in a way that allows those with health needs to participate fully and ensuring learners are not excluded from activities that they wish to take part in without a clear evidence-based reason
- Understanding their role in supporting learners with health needs and ensuring they attend the required training
- Ensuring they are aware of the needs of their learners through the appropriate and lawful sharing of the individual learner's health needs
- Ensuring they are aware of the signs, symptoms and triggers of common lifethreatening medical conditions and know what to do in an emergency
- Keeping parents and carers informed of how their child's health needs are affecting them whilst in the school

8. Managing Absences

8.1. Parent and carers are advised to contact the school on the first day their child is unable to attend due to illness.

8.2. Absences due to illness will be authorised unless the school has genuine cause for concern about the authenticity of the illness.

8.3. Lancaster Academy will provide support to learners who are absent from school because of illness for a period of less than 15 school days by liaising with the learner's parents or carers to arrange schoolwork as soon as the learner is able to cope with it or part-time education at school. The Academy will give due consideration to which aspects of the curriculum are prioritised in consultation with the learner, their family and relevant members of staff.

8.4. 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 named person with responsibility for learners with health needs will notify the LwLAT Senior Welfare Officer, and the LA, who will take responsibility for the learner and their education.

8.5. Where absences are anticipated or known in advance, the Academy will liaise with the LA to enable education provision to be provided from the start of the learner's absence.

8.6. For hospital admissions, the appointed named member of staff at the Academy will liaise with the LwLAT Senior Welfare Officer and the LA regarding the programme that should be followed while the learner is in hospital.

8.7. The Trust will provide support through its Education Welfare Team who will agree, with the LA, a plan for the learner which will allow the Academy, the LA and the provider of the learner's education to work together, and may involve the Academic Outreach Tutor.

8.8. The Academy will monitor learner attendance and mark registers to ensure it is clear whether a learner is, or should be, receiving education otherwise than at school.

8.9. Academies will only remove a learner who is unable to attend school because of additional health needs from the school roll where:

- The learner has been certified by a Medical Officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school, before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and
- Neither the learner nor their parent has indicated to the school the intention to continue to attend the school, after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.

8.10. A learner unable to attend school because of their health needs will not be removed from the Academy register without parental consent and certification from the Medical Officer, even if the LA has become responsible for the learner's education.

9. Support for learners

9.1. We recognise that all learners, regardless of setting, should receive a high standard of education.

9.2. Where a learner has a complex or long-term health issue which will prevent them from attending school for 15 days or more the Academy will discuss the learner's needs and how these may be best met with the LA, Special Education Service, LwLAT Senior Welfare Officer, relevant medical professionals, parents and carers and, where appropriate, the learner.

9.3. The LA expects all schools to support learners with health needs to attend full-time education wherever possible, or for the school to make reasonable adjustments to learners' programmes of study where medical evidence supports the need for those adjustments.

9.4. The Academy will make reasonable adjustments under learners' individual healthcare plans (IHCPs), in accordance with the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy. Where a learner's needs amount to ongoing special educational needs we will consider the need for an EHCP (Educational Healthcare Plan).

9.5. Learners admitted to hospital will receive education as determined appropriate by the medical professionals and hospital tuition team at the hospital concerned.

9.6. During a period of absence the Academy will work with the provider of the learner's education to establish and maintain regular communication and effective outcomes.

9.7. Whilst a learner is away from school, the Academy will work with the LA and the LwLAT Senior Welfare Officer to ensure the learner can successfully remain in touch with their school, phone class, home visits and Zoom calls are all utilized for this purpose.

9.8. Where appropriate, the Academy will provide the learner's education provider with relevant information, curriculum materials and resources.

9.9. To help ensure a learner with additional health needs is able to attend school following an extended period of absence, the following adaptations will be considered:

- A personalised timetable, drafted in consultation with the named staff member
- Access to additional support in school
- Online access to the curriculum from home
- Movement of lessons to more accessible rooms
- Places to rest at school
- Special exam arrangements to manage anxiety or fatigue
- Leaving lessons early to avoid corridors
- Escorted to lessons
- Access to the lift

9.10. Where a looked after learner is likely to be placed in alternative provision e.g. hospital care our designated teacher will work closely with the Virtual School Head, foster carers and social workers to consider what support a learner will need to overcome barriers to attainment and achievement, pastoral and well-being needs and to ensure that an appropriate placement is made.

9.11. Lancaster Academy will regularly review the educational provision for a learner alongside the local authority and relevant agencies.

10. Reintegration

10.1. When a learner is considered well enough to return to school, the Academy will develop a tailored reintegration plan in collaboration with the LA.

10.2. The Academy will work with the LA and LwLAT Senior Welfare Officer when reintegration into school is anticipated to plan for consistent provision during and after the period of education outside school.

10.3. As far as possible, the learner will be able to access the curriculum and materials that they would have used in school.

10.4. If appropriate, the school nurse will be involved in the development of the leaner's reintegration plan and informed of the timeline of the plan by the appointed named member of staff, to ensure they can prepare to offer any appropriate support to the learner.

10.5. The Academy will consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made to provide suitable access to the Academy and the curriculum for the learner.

10.6. For longer absences, the reintegration plan will be developed near to the learner's likely date of return, to avoid putting unnecessary pressure on an ill learner or their parents or carers in the early stages of their absence.

10.7. We are aware that some learners will need gradual reintegration over a long period of time and will always consult with the learner, their parents or carers and key staff about concerns, medical issues, timing and the preferred pace of return.

10.8. 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 learner
- 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

10.9. The Academy will ensure a welcoming environment and encourage learners and staff to be positive and proactive during the reintegration period.

10.10. Following reintegration, the Academy will support the LA in seeking feedback from the learner regarding the effectiveness of the process.

11. Information sharing

11.1. It is essential that all information about learners with health needs is kept up-to-date.

11.2. To protect confidentiality, all information-sharing techniques, will be agreed with the learner and their parent or carer in advance of being used.

11.3. 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 agreed Academy procedures.

11.4. Parents and carers will be made aware of their own rights and responsibilities regarding confidentiality and information sharing. To help achieve this, the Academy will:

- Ensure this policy and other relevant policies are easily available and accessible
- Provide the learner and their parent/carer with a copy of the policy on information sharing
- Ask parent or carers 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 learners with health needs

11.5. When a learner is discharged from hospital or is returning from other education provision, the Academy will ensure the appropriate information is received to allow for a smooth return to school. The named member of staff will liaise with the hospital or other tuition service as appropriate.

11.6. If parents are concerned about the support provided by the Academy they should contact the school directly. If this does not resolve the issue parents should follow the LwLAT complaints procedure.

12. Training

12.1. Staff will be trained in a timely manner to assist with a learner's return to school.

12.2. Once a learner's return date has been confirmed, staff will be provided with relevant training before the learner's anticipated return.

12.3. Healthcare professionals should be involved in identifying and agreeing with the school the type and level of training required.

12.4. Training will be sufficient to ensure staff are confident in their ability to support learners with additional health needs.

12.5. Parents or carers of learners with additional health needs may provide specific advice but will not be the sole trainer of staff.

13. Examinations and Assessments

13.1. The named member of staff at the Academy will liaise with subject staff and any alternative providers regarding access arrangements for examinations and assessments.

13.2. Relevant assessment information will be sought where necessary

13.3. Awarding bodies may make special arrangements for learners with permanent or long-term disabilities and learning difficulties, or temporary disabilities and illnesses. Applications for such arrangements will be submitted by schools, or the LA if more appropriate, as early as possible and in line with JCQ regulations.

14. Record keeping

14.1. In accordance with the Supporting Learners with Medical Conditions Policy, written records will be kept of all medicines administered to learners and,

14.2. Record keeping will follow school procedures and be maintained on CPOMS (Child Protection Online Management System).

15. LwLAT Wellbeing Statement

15.1. The Trust will always put the effective education of our learners at the heart of any decision that we make. In doing so, we recognise that the requirement to adhere to policies and procedures may be time consuming and can impact on workload. For this reason the Trust and its Academies will always endeavour to support staff when policies and procedures are being actioned.

16. Review of this Policy

16.1. The LwLAT Trust Board has overall responsibility for the adoption, review and amendments of this policy. The Trust Board will review this policy yearly, or earlier if necessary, to comply with statutory DfE updates and amendments.