HERON ACADEMY

Children with health needs who cannot attend school policy

Responsible post holder	Head Teacher
Approved by	Melanie Hall-Judd
Approved on	Sep 2025
Review Date	Sep 2027

At Heron Academy, we aim to ensure that all children, regardless of circumstance or setting receive a good education to enable them to shape their own futures. Where children are unable to attend school because of their health, the school will follow Department of Education Guidance and work with Lambeth Local Authority who have the responsibility to arrange suitable full-time education (or part-time when appropriate for the child's needs) for children who are unable to attend school because of their health.

The Local Authority is responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for children who – because of illness or other reasons – would not receive suitable education without such provision. There will however, be a wide range of circumstances where a child has a health need but will receive suitable education that meets their needs without the intervention of the Local Authority, for example, where the child can still attend school with some support. Where the school has made arrangements to deliver suitable education outside of school for the child; or where arrangements have been made for the child to be educated in a hospital by an on-site hospital school, we would not expect the Local Authority to become involved in such arrangements unless it had reason to think that the education being provided to the child was not suitable or, while otherwise suitable, was not full-time or for the number of hours the child could benefit from without adversely affecting their health. This might be the case where, for example, the child can attend school but only intermittently.

Expectations of the Local Authority

Where the Local Authority is involved in arranging provision, the expectation from the school is that the LA will

- 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.

- Provide such education as soon as it is clear that the child will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative. They should liaise with appropriate medical professionals to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the child.

- Ensure that the education children receive is of good quality and allows them to take appropriate external tests, prevents them from slipping behind their peers in school and allows them to reintegrate successfully back into school as soon as possible.

- Address the needs of individual children in arranging provision. 'Hard and fast' rules are inappropriate: they may limit the offer of education to children with a given condition and prevent their access to the right level of educational support which they are well enough to receive. Strict rules that limit the offer of education a child receives may also breach statutory requirements.

- Where full-time education would not be in the best interests of a particular child because of reasons relating to their physical or mental health, provide part-time education on a basis they consider to be in the child's best interests. Full and part-time education should still aim to achieve good academic attainment particularly in English, Maths and Science. The nature of the provision must be responsive to the demands of what may be a changing health status.

- Where appropriate, use electronic media – such as 'virtual classrooms', learning platforms and so on – to provide access to a broader curriculum, but this should generally be used to

complement face-to-face education, rather than as sole provision (though in some cases, the child's health needs may make it advisable to use only virtual education for a time).

- ensure that teachers who provide education for children with health needs receive suitable training and support and are kept aware of curriculum developments. They should also be given suitable information relating to a child's health condition, and the possible effect the condition and/or medication taken has on the child.

- Set up a personal education plan, which should ensure that the school, the Local Authority, hospital school or other provider can work together.

- Ensure effective collaboration between all relevant services (LAs, CAMHS, NHS, school and, where relevant, school nurses) in delivering effective education for children with additional health needs.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed on a two-year cycle.