

Education Division

Teaching and Learning Provision

Medical Needs Service Policy

November 2025

This policy is to be read with the following statutory guidance and legislation:

- [Arranging Education For Children Who Cannot Attend Due to Health Needs December 2023](#)
- [Working Together to Support School Attendance 2024](#)
- [Education Act 1996; Section 19](#)
- [Equality Act; 2010](#)
- [Arranging Alternative Provision - guide for LAs and schools Feb 2025](#)
- [Supporting Children When Attendance is Affected by Mental Health 2023](#)
- [Independent Schools Inspection Handbook](#)
- [School Inspection Handbook](#)
- [SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years](#)
- [Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions December 2015](#)
- [Supporting pupils with medical conditions - templates; May 2014](#)

The following East Sussex Policies and Guidance and Services:

- [Privacy notice - Children's Services: your information and you | East Sussex County Council](#)

- [East Sussex Local Offer - SEND information](#)
- [East Sussex Local Offer directory \(on 1Space\) - SEND services](#)
- [The Graduated Approach \(Assess, Plan, Do, Review\) | East Sussex Local Offer](#)
- [Health in School | East Sussex Local Offer](#)
- [Supporting the Broad Areas of Need | East Sussex Local Offer](#)
- [ESCC Attendance Guidance and Support](#)

Links for Schools Only

- [Front Door referrals | Czone](#)
- [East Sussex | Services 2 Schools Webshop](#)

East Sussex Helplines for Schools, Families, Professionals

- **Inclusion Helpline** 01273 337 660 (Mon - Fri 8:30am - 2:30pm).
- **Attendance Helpline:** 01273 481 967 (Mon - Frid 10.00am to 15.00pm).

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1. Introduction

East Sussex County Council (ESCC) wants every child to get an education. We aim to make sure all children have access to inclusive education that meets their needs.

ESCC helps all children and young people (CYP) in the county get a good education. We make sure every child can learn and reach their potential. Our Local Offer gives every CYP access to education that meets their needs.

This policy is for schools, parents/carers, young people and professionals.

CYP with health needs (physical and mental health) often find it hard to keep up in school. This can be true for those who miss a lot of school or can only go to school part-time. This guide explains how we support these children. It shows how we arrange help, who is responsible, and how we help children get back to school.

2. Role and responsibilities of East Sussex County Council

ESCC helps children who can't go to school because of illness. This is for all children in the county, no matter which school they usually go to.

The law doesn't say what 'full-time education' means. But CYP with health needs should get an education that is like they would get in school. The Teaching and Learning Provision (T&LP) provides this.

The T&LP works with other teams like TASS, which helps with attendance, and CLASS, which supports communication and autism. TLP also works with NHS services, like CAMHS and hospitals, to make health and education plans for each child.

2.1 Named Person

The law asks local authorities to have a person in charge of education for children with health needs. In East Sussex, this person is:

Chloe Cushing - TLP Service Manager

TLP.team@eastsussex.gov.uk

Tel: 01273 336888

The TLP Service Manager makes sure children with health needs get the education they need.

TLP has three areas (Wealden, Lewes and Coastal), (Eastbourne and Hailsham) and (Hastings and Rother), each of these areas has a deputy service manager (DSM) who manages the education packages until a child is well enough to return to school, at least on a part-time basis. Parents can contact the TLP Service Manager if they have any concerns.

3. Advice to Parents

Schools must support pupils with medical conditions. Parents should first contact the school to plan how their child can get a full education. Parents should also read the school's policies on medical needs, attendance, and special educational needs (SEN) which are available on the child's school website.

The [Schools Traffic Lights Advice for In-School Support for Medical Needs](#) document can help schools and parents understand the different options of support that schools may offer.

If parents are not happy with the school's support, they should talk to the school. If the issue isn't solved, they can file a formal complaint with the school.

If the child isn't attending school for reasons other than illness, parents should check the school's policies and contact the school. They can also call the Education Division Inclusion helpline on 01273 481 967 (Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 4:30pm) for advice.

4. Role of Schools: Supporting Children with Medical Needs in School

Section 100 of the Children and Families Act 2014 asks schools to provide education for children with health needs if they can attend. The Department for Education (DFE) has [guidance to help schools understand this duty](#). Governors and school leaders should read this guidance.

ESCC offers a model policy for supporting pupils with medical needs, available on the [East Sussex Service 2 Schools Web Shop](#), independent schools don't have to follow this guidance but can use it to help support children with medical conditions.

The key points detailed in the guidance:

- Schools must help pupils with medical conditions join all activities, like trips and PE.
- Schools might need to make changes and write a support plan such as an Additional Needs Plan (ANP) or an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP).
- School leaders need to make sure CYP with plans are reviewed.
- They should work with professionals, parents, and the CYP to make joint plans.

Schools must also help CYP with mental health issues by making a support plan with the family and professionals. This plan should be checked regularly.

5. The TLP Offer for Children Unable to Attend School Due to Medical Need

A school can make a referral when they know a child can't attend because of a medical need and has missed 15 days or more due to illness. They can also refer

when the school become aware that the child has a planned operation. The school can send a referral through the [Education Division Front Door](#)

5.1. Education Division Front Door Referral

Parents, schools and professionals can also call the Inclusion helpline on 01273 337 660 (Monday - Friday 8:30am - 2:30pm) for non-medical barriers to school or the Attendance helpline on 01273 481 967 (Monday- Friday 10.00am to 15.00pm) to discuss attendance concerns.

Schools can talk to the area TLP deputy service manager (DSM) before sending a referral. Contact the DSM at TLP.team@eastsussex.gov.uk. If a child is already getting help from another Education Division service, the school should refer through them.

Forms must be fully completed, or they won't be processed. Schools must talk to parents before sending a referral. For help with forms, contact the TLP team. Referrals need these documents:

- Current or recent medical evidence
- Updated ANP/IHCP with adjustments (unless it is a planned operation) and plans to meet all needs.
- Attendance certificate showing 15 days of illness in the current school year.
- Learning information. KS1/KS2: Latest school report, KS3: SATs/CATS, last school report. KS4: SATs/CATs, predicted grades, last school report, subjects entered for and exam board.

5.2. T&LP Panel

The T&LP Panel reviews new referrals and open cases every week during term time. They look at the medical evidence and the school-based support plans and decide if a child needs an out of school package of education during a period of sickness to help them return to school. The T&LP team will contact the schools and parents within five working days with the referral decision. If a referral doesn't meet the requirements, one of the following options will be put in place and the parent and school will be told:

- The school will be asked to provide further information.
- The parent is contacted and asked to complete, sign and return a medical consent form. The T&LP DSM will contact the child's medical team to ask for advice about their medical need and access to school.
- The TLP referral is declined because the evidence sent by school shows that further school-based support can help the CYP stay in school due to a medical need or other need. An onward referral is made to the Local Multi-Service Group (LMSG) for school-based support or advice.

- The referral is declined as the evidence sent by school shows the reason for school absence is not medical but is for ‘other’ reasons. The T&LP will make an onward referral to the Section 19 panel who meet weekly to consider a package of temporary education for these reasons.

5.3. TLP Education Offer

The T&LP team will send the parent a letter if a child is accepted for TLP support. This letter will also include a medical consent form for parents to sign and return. A new consent form is needed for each new academic year. This consent form is needed if/when the T&LP needs to contact the CYPs medical team to ask for advice on the type and hours of education.

If a parent doesn’t return the form, the DSM may need to refer the case to the T&LP Panel. The panel will then decide whether TLP can continue providing education support without advice from the child or young person’s medical team.

The T&LP offers temporary education packages for children who can’t attend school due to health needs, focusing on helping them return to school. Each child gets a custom plan based on their current needs, which can change as their health improves.

Schools and the T&LP agree on the support plan during a meeting. CYP are entitled to full-time education, but hours may vary depending on their health. TLP may work alone or with the school. If a child gets 1:1 tuition, it might be fewer hours because the learning is more focused.

TLP support may include some of the following, based on medical need:

- An initial meeting with the child and parent at home or another venue to understand needs and to plan the package of education.
- Regular Individual Education Meetings (IEM) led by the school with the family, professionals, and a member of the T&LP team.
- A T&LP mentor to support the CYP and to communicate with parents, schools and professionals.
- An ANP or IHCP reviewed each term to focus on school reintegration.
- Advice to the school on making further adjustments.
- Short-term 1:1 sessions with a TLP practitioner to help the transition.
- Live e-learning groups for core subjects at Key Stages 3 and 4.
- Group sessions at one of the TLP centres in Ringmer, Eastbourne, or Battle as part of a step-by-step return to school.
- Short-term 1:1 teaching at home or online (for CYP whose health needs do not allow them to leave home).
- Regular updates to the student’s learning plan (passport).

6. Working Together

Parents, carers, children, health services, and the local authority all need to work together to make sure children with health needs get the support they need. The regular IEM meetings will keep everyone informed.

7. Role of School

Schools support children with medical needs by:

- Referring to the T&LP when the child can't attend school.
- Organising and leading meetings.
- Lead and create a joint plan with families, the T&LP and other professionals.
- Keeping the child connected to the school community.
- Creating and following a reintegration plan, which may include changes like a flexible timetable or extra support.
- Providing Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) support for special educational needs.
- Assigning a school leader to each case.
- Handling exam arrangements.

TLP managers will hold yearly meetings with secondary school leaders to review data and cooperation. Schools will also visit the T&LP centres for quality checks on a termly basis.

8. Role of Parents

Parents and carers play a key role and share important information about their child. The T&LP asks parents to:

- Attend IEM meetings and suggest ways to help their child.
- Sign the medical consent form before support begins and on an annual basis.
- Include all services and the school in emails.
- Tell the T&LP and the school if their child can't attend a session.
- Read and agree to the TLP parent guide at the start.

9. Role of Children and Young People

The T&LP involves all children in decision-making from the start, based on their age and maturity. This helps ensure they get the right support and stay engaged. The child's input is key, and their student passport will be updated at every step.

10. Reintegration To School

The T&LP works with the school, family, and professionals to create a plan for the child to return to school. Planning starts when the T&LP support begins. If the child will be absent for a long time, the plan will take a step-by-step approach. The plan is recorded in the IEM notes or ANP/IHCP. The school must make

reasonable adjustments to support the child's return, as required by equalities law.

11. Continuation

If the child can't return to school after the planned T&LP support period, updated medical advice will be needed to continue the support.

Where the T&LP offers a package of education that it deems to be reasonably practicable for that child, it is not under a duty to provide further alternative education because the child is not taking advantage of that facility and/or the family declines to engage. If a child is not engaging with the provision offered, the TLP team will seek to understand the reasons for this by liaising with the family, school, and relevant professionals. This may include reviewing the provision to determine whether it remains suitable and reasonably practicable in light of any changes in the child's needs or circumstances. The outcome of this review will be clearly recorded and, if appropriate, the offer may be adjusted. If no medical or other barrier to engagement is identified, and the original provision remains suitable, the duty under Section 19 will be considered fulfilled

Where a child is not engaging with the provision offered by TLP, and it becomes apparent that alternative arrangements have been put in place by the parent or carer (such as private tuition or support sessions), the local authority has a duty to consider whether the education being accessed is suitable in accordance with Section 19 of the Education Act 1996. In these circumstances, the Council will carry out a suitability review using an internal checklist, in line with Department for Education and Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman guidance. The purpose of this review is to determine whether the local authority remains under a duty to provide alternative education, or whether the arrangements in place meet the necessary standard. Parents will be informed of the outcome. The Council is not under a duty to provide or fund additional education where suitable provision has already been made available but is not being accessed.

12. End of Provision

The T&LP support ends when ESCC is advised that a child is well enough to start going back to school part-time, or if there is no longer medical evidence to explain their absence. Support may also stop if the child is too unwell or there is no engagement by the child or family.

ESCC makes the final decision after talking with parents, carers, schools and health professionals.

13. Pupils with SEND

Children with special needs or disabilities who miss school for health reasons may need their plan reviewed. Schools should use the ESCC Matrix to find ways to support these children, even if they don't have a diagnosed condition.

14. Hospital in-patients

Children may go to the hospital for physical or mental health needs. From the start of their hospital stay, hospital staff, the T&LP, and the child's school must work together to keep their education going. This helps the child stay on track with their learning. Schools should refer the child to the T&LP when they are admitted to hospital to help plan for their return.

Children in hospital usually learn at the hospital's school. Sometimes, children are placed in specialist hospitals outside East Sussex. These hospitals often have their own schools. ESCC is responsible for their education while they are in hospital and when they return home.

If a child is in a private hospital, the T&LP needs proof of the stay and attendance records to handle education costs. The hospital school must work with the child's home school and the T&LP to plan their learning and return to school. Parents and schools can contact the T&LP Service Manager for help.

Some children need to stay in hospital because of their mental health. If this happens under Section 3 of the Mental Health Act, they have the right to extra help and support when they leave hospital (this is called Section 117 support). The T&LP team and ESCC Social Care team meet every month to plan education and social care support together for these children.

15. Children with Complex and Long-Term Medical Needs

Some children have long-term or complex health needs that can be unpredictable. In these cases, the school, parents, child, and other professionals will meet to decide the best way to support the child. This support may involve school, the T&LP, work experience, or other education providers.

If the child's medical needs become ongoing special needs, everyone may discuss creating an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Not all medical needs require an EHCP.

Some complex health needs may count as a disability under the law. The T&LP ensures no discrimination against disabled children and works to provide equal opportunities for all.

16. Children with life-limiting and terminal illness

ESCC will provide education as long as parents, carers, and medical staff agree it's needed. If the child and their family decide to stop education, this will be respected if supported by medical advice.

17. Elective Home Education

Parents who choose to home educate (EHE) are responsible for their child's education, so the T&LP support isn't available. If a child with medical needs wants

to return to school, parents can talk to the EHE team about a referral to the T&LP. The school health service also supports EHE children.

18. Early Years and Post-16

The T&LP supports children aged 5 to 16. If a Year 12 student repeats Year 11 for medical reasons, the T&LP may offer support.

Early Years: Some pre-school children with medical issues may need help to access early years funding. The Early Years team reviews each case. Contact EYEE@eastsussex.gov.uk for help.

Post-16: Post-16 schools have guidance on supporting students with health needs. This includes making healthcare plans. You can ask for this information.

The [Youth Employability Service \(YES\)](#) supports young people aged 16yrs-18yrs not in college or training to help them plan their future.

9. Pregnant Pupils

Pregnant young people should stay in school as long as possible. Pregnancy isn't an illness, so a referral to the T&LP usually isn't needed. If they are too unwell, a referral can be made. They will stay enrolled in school. If they are under school leaving age, they should return with any needed support, like help with breastfeeding. The school needs the baby's due date for a referral.

10. TLP eLearning traded service

Schools can buy TLP e-learning for children who don't meet TLP criteria through the East Sussex Services to Schools Web shop. This includes:

- Key Stage 3 and 4 subjects
- Core subjects
- Ability level classes
- Small groups
- Access from school, hospital, or home
- Live lessons
- Access to recorded lessons
- Affordable pricing

11. Children We Care For Service

The Virtual School leads the education plans for these children and young people. If a child is too unwell to attend school, the T&LP can provide education packages to meet their medical needs.

The T&LP will work closely with the Virtual School, the home school, and any other support services involved.

12. Siblings

Under Section 19 Of the Education Act, ESCC will offer education provision to a sibling of compulsory school age if a family move near a hospital within East Sussex to receive medical care.

13. Removing a Child from the School Register

In line with the 2006 regulations schools can only remove a child from the roll of their school due to medical need if a medical officer says the child won't be able to return before finishing compulsory school age.

14. Funding

Alternative provision for children with medical needs is funded by the local authority's high needs budget. If a child on the roll of a school needs alternative provision, the school and ESCC may transfer some funding to the alternative provision. This funding stops when the child returns to their school or is no longer on the school roll.