



Manchester
Communication
Primary
Academy

Manchester Communication Primary Academy

MCPA Children Who Cannot Attend School Because of Health Needs

(Updated in line with DfE 2023 guidance and Manchester City
Council Section 19 Policy 2026)

MCPA Policy for children who are unable to attend due health needs.

Introduction

Manchester Communication Primary Academy is committed to ensuring that every child, regardless of their health needs, continues to feel part of our school community and receives the education, care and support they need to thrive. When a child is unable to attend school due to physical or mental health needs, we work closely with families, medical professionals and Manchester City Council to ensure that suitable education is arranged and that the child remains connected to their learning, their peers and their school identity.

Our approach reflects both national statutory guidance (*Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs*, DfE 2023) and Manchester City Council's Section 19 Policy (2026). We aim to provide flexible, personalised support that meets each child's needs and enables them to return to school as soon as they are well enough.

Aims

We aim to:

- Support children with health needs to access as much education as their condition allows.
- Maintain strong communication between school, home and professionals so children feel connected and supported.
- Provide high-quality learning opportunities that prevent children from falling behind their peers.
- Work collaboratively with Manchester City Council to ensure statutory duties are met and that Section 19 provision is arranged when needed.
- Plan reintegration carefully and sensitively, ensuring children feel safe, confident and ready to return.

Named People Responsible for Implementation

- Alex Reed – Head Teacher
- Joe Beaumont – Deputy Head Teacher
- Alice Hall – SENDCo

These staff lead communication with families, the local authority, medical professionals and alternative provision services.

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Legal and Local Authority Context

National Duties (DfE 2023)

Local authorities must arrange suitable full-time education (or as much as the child's health allows) for children of compulsory school age who cannot attend school due to illness. Education should begin as soon as possible and no later than the sixth day of absence once it is clear the child will be away for 15 days or more (cumulative or consecutive).

Manchester City Council Section 19 Duties (2026)

Manchester City Council must consider Section 19 provision when a child of compulsory school age is unable to access their educational setting due to illness, exclusion or other reasons. The Council commissions:

- Hospital School
- Manchester PRU
- Educational tuition
- Remote learning
- Outreach support

Schools must notify the Council when a child has 15 days of illness (cumulative or consecutive) and submit a sickness return to the Attendance Team.

Definitions

Children unable to attend school due to health needs may include those with:

- Physical health conditions
- Injuries
- Mental health needs (including anxiety, EBSA)
- Emotional difficulties
- Progressive or chronic conditions
- Terminal illness

Provision may include:

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- Hospital School
- Home tuition
- Remote learning
- Manchester PRU
- Outreach support
- Externally brokered provision such as off-site tutors or mentors.
- EV1 Robot

Roles and Responsibilities

Governors

Governors ensure:

- Statutory duties are met.
- Policies are reviewed annually.
- Staff are trained appropriately.
- Systems for managing medical needs and emergencies are robust.

Head Teacher

The Head Teacher ensures:

- Compliance with statutory guidance and Manchester Section 19 policy.
- Collaboration with families, medical professionals and the local authority.
- Staff understand arrangements for supporting pupils with health needs.
- A named staff member coordinates provision.
- Timely notification to Manchester City Council when Section 19 thresholds are met.
- Staff are insured and trained appropriately.

Inclusion Lead / SENDCo

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The Inclusion Lead/SENDCo:

- Monitors pupil progress and reintegration.
- Liaises with Manchester City Council, Hospital School, PRU and outreach teams.
- Coordinates Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs).
- Ensures reasonable adjustments are planned in advance (anticipatory duty).
- Follows Manchester's EBSA pathway and Planning for Change toolkit.
- Requests early annual reviews for pupils with EHCPs when needs change.

Teachers and Support Staff

Staff must:

- Understand confidentiality and safeguarding.
- Provide inclusive learning opportunities and remote learning where needed.
- Know signs and symptoms of medical conditions and emergency procedures.
- Maintain communication with parents about how health needs affect learning.
- Implement reasonable adjustments (e.g., reduced timetables, safe spaces, flexible transitions).

Parents

Parents should:

- Provide up-to-date medical information.
- Work in partnership with school and attend meetings.
- Supply prescribed medication clearly labelled.
- Support their child's engagement with remote learning.
- Notify school promptly of absences.

Pupils

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Pupils should:

- Share how their condition affects them.
- Contribute to their IHP and reintegration plan.
- Engage with learning as much as they are able.

School Nurse / Medical Professionals

They will:

- Notify school of medical conditions requiring support.
- Provide training and guidance.
- Liaise with school and the local authority.

Managing Absences

Absences under 15 days

School will:

- Provide remote learning via paper resources.
- Prioritise key curriculum areas.
- Maintain communication with families.

Absences of 15 days or more

School must:

- Notify Manchester City Council Attendance Team via sickness return.
- Request a Section 19 referral form if appropriate.
- Provide detailed information including medical evidence, SEND needs, reasonable adjustments and previous support.

Section 19 Panel

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- Meets every two weeks.
- Chaired by Manchester Hospital School Headteacher.
- Includes LA officers, health professionals and school leaders.
- Determines whether Section 19 provision is required.

Hospital Admissions

School will liaise with:

- Hospital School
- Manchester City Council
- Medical professionals

A Personal Education Plan (PEP) will be created.

Support for Pupils

Adaptations may include:

- Part-time timetable
- Safe spaces and rest areas
- Remote learning
- Additional pastoral support
- Movement of lessons
- Exam access arrangements (JCQ compliant)
- Outreach support from Manchester services

Reintegration

Reintegration will be:

- Gradual, personalised and sensitive.
- Planned collaboratively with Manchester City Council.

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- Supported by IHPs or reintegration plans.
- Focused on confidence, wellbeing and curriculum access.
- Reviewed regularly with families and professionals.

Children should remain connected through:

- Newsletters
- Emails
- Invitations to school events
- Peer contact

Information Sharing

School will:

- Keep medical information confidential.
- Agree information-sharing methods with families.
- Ensure staff have access to relevant information.
- Maintain accurate records in line with policy.

Record Keeping

School will keep:

- Records of medication administered
- IHPs
- Attendance records
- Section 19 referral documentation
- Reintegration plans

Training for Staff

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Training will be:

- Timely and appropriate
- Delivered by medical professionals
- Focused on confidence and competence
- Reviewed when needs change

School Register

Children will not be removed from roll unless statutory deletion criteria are met. Continuity supports recovery and reintegration.

Children with EHCPs

School must:

- Notify EHCP Coordinator when health needs impact attendance.
- Request early annual reviews.
- Work with SEND advisory teams (EPS, CAT, PDSS, PSS).

Emotional Barriers to School Attendance (EBSA)

School will follow:

- Manchester EBSA guidance
- Planning for Change toolkit
- Reasonable adjustments list
- Early intervention approach

Exams

School will:

- Support exam preparation



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- Liaise with Hospital School or PRU
- Apply for JCQ access arrangements
- Ensure pupils can sit exams wherever possible

Siblings

Where families move due to medical treatment, Manchester City Council will support school placement for siblings.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if guidance changes.