Policy for:

Children with health needs who cannot attend school

Document Control

A. Confidentiality Notice

This policy document has been approved by the Headteacher and Senior Management Team of St.Modwen's Catholic Primary School and is intended for internal and /or external publication. Where the document is identified for internal use the policy information may not be shared with external agencies or parents without the prior agreement of the Headteacher or authorising Committee

B. Document Details

Classification:	Operational Approval - Headteacher
Policy Source:	School Policy
Organisation:	St. Modwen's Catholic Primary School
Document Reference:	STM21
Current version number:	25.27 V2 (7 pages)
Current Document Approved by:	Headteacher
Date Approval:	February 2026
Scheduled Review:	November 2027 (2 Years)

C. Document Revision and Approval History

Version	Date	Version Created by	Version Approved by	Comments
25.27. V2	14.11.2025	C Salt (SBM)	Headteacher	School Policy. 25.27 Amends No Amends to main Policy content
23.25 V1	17.10.2023	C Salt (SBM)	Premises, Health and Safety 7.11.2023	School Policy. 23/25 Amends: Document Control Sheet added No Amends to main Policy content

At St Modwen's Catholic Primary School, 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 Staffordshire County Council who have the responsibility a to arrange suitable full-time education (or part-time when appropriate for the child's needs) for children who are unable to attend a mainstream or special 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.

Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018
- DfE (2023) 'Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs'
- DfE (2015) 'Supporting students at school with medical conditions' Last updated 16 August 2017

Definitions

Children who are unable to attend St Modwen's Catholic Primary 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 or school refusal.
- Progressive conditions.
- Terminal illnesses.
- Chronic illnesses.

Children who are unable to attend mainstream education for health reasons may attend any of the following:

- Hospital school: a special school within a hospital setting where education is provided to give continuity whilst the child is receiving treatment.
- Home tuition: many LAs have home tuition services that act as a communication channel between schools and students on occasions where students are too ill to attend school and are receiving specialist medical treatment.
- Medical PRUs: these are LA establishments that provide education for children unable to attend their registered school due to their medical needs.

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, schools and, where relevant, school nurses) in delivering effective education for children with additional health needs.

Roles and Responsibilities

THE GOVERNING BODY IS RESPONSIBLE FOR:

• Ensuring arrangements for students who cannot attend St Modwen's Catholic Primary School as a result of their medical needs are in place and are effectively implemented.

• Ensuring the termly review of the arrangements made for students who cannot attend St Modwen's Catholic Primary School due to their medical needs.

• Ensuring the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the arrangements to support the needs of students are clear and understood by all.

• Ensuring robust systems are in place for dealing with health emergencies and critical incidents, for both on and off-site activities.

• Ensuring staff with responsibility for supporting students with health needs are appropriately trained.

THE HEADTEACHER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR:

• Working with the Governing Body to ensure compliance with the relevant statutory duties when supporting students with health needs.

• Working collaboratively with parents and other professionals to develop arrangements to meet the best interests of children.

• Ensuring the arrangements put in place to meet students' health needs are fully understood by all those involved and acted upon.

• Appointing a named member of staff who is responsible for students with healthcare needs and liaises with parents, students, the LA, key workers and others involved in the student's care.
• Ensuring the support put in place focusses on and meets the needs of individual students.
• Arranging appropriate training for staff with responsibility for supporting students with health needs.
• Providing teachers who support students with health needs with suitable information relating to a student's health condition and the possible effect the condition and/or medication taken has on the student.
• Providing reports to the Governing Body on the effectiveness of the arrangements in place to meet the health needs of students.
• Notifying the LA when a student is likely to be away from St Modwen's Catholic Primary School for a significant period of time due to their health needs.

ST MODWEN'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL WILL HAVE A NAMED MEMBER OF STAFF (SENCO). THEY ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

• Dealing with students who are unable to attend St Modwen's Catholic Primary School because of medical needs.
• Actively monitoring student progress and reintegration into St Modwen's Catholic Primary School.
• Supplying students' education providers with information about the child's capabilities, progress and outcomes.
• Liaising with the Headteacher, education providers and parents to determine students' programmes of study whilst they are absent from St Modwen's Catholic Primary School.
• Keeping students informed about St Modwen's Catholic Primary School events and encouraging communication with their peers.
• Providing a link between student and their parents, and the LA.

TEACHERS AND SUPPORT STAFF ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

• Understanding confidentiality in respect of students' health needs.
• Designing lessons and activities in a way that allows those with health needs to participate fully and ensuring students are not excluded from activities that they wish to take part in without a clear evidence-based reason.
• Understanding their role in supporting students with health needs and ensuring they attend the required training.
• Ensuring they are aware of the needs of their students through the appropriate and lawful sharing of the individual students' health needs.
• Ensuring they are aware of the signs, symptoms and triggers of common life-threatening medical conditions and know what to do in an emergency.
• Keeping parents informed of how their child's health needs are affecting them whilst in St Modwen's Catholic Primary School.

PARENTS ARE EXPECTED TO:

• Ensure the regular and punctual attendance of their child at St Modwen's Catholic Primary School where possible.
• Work in partnership with St Modwen's Catholic Primary School to ensure the best possible outcomes for their child.
• Notify St Modwen's Catholic Primary School of the reason for any of their child's absences without delay.
• Provide St Modwen's Catholic Primary School with sufficient and up-to-date information about their child's medical needs.
• Attend meetings to discuss how support for their child should be planned.

Managing Absences

Parents are advised to contact St Modwen's Catholic Primary School on the first day their child is unable to attend due to illness. Absences due to illness will be authorised unless St Modwen's Catholic Primary School has genuine cause for concern about the authenticity of the illness. St Modwen's Catholic Primary

School will provide support to students who are absent from St Modwen's Catholic Primary School because of illness for a period of less than 15 school days by liaising with the student's parents to arrange schoolwork as soon as the student is able to cope with it or part-time education at St Modwen's Catholic Primary School. St Modwen's Catholic Primary School will give due consideration to which aspects of the curriculum are prioritised in consultation with the student, their family and relevant members of staff. 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 St Modwen's Catholic Primary School year, the named person with responsibility for students with health needs will notify the LA, who will take responsibility for the student and their education.

Where absences are anticipated or known in advance, St Modwen's Catholic Primary School will liaise with the LA to enable education provision to be provided from the start of the students' absence. For hospital admissions, the appointed named member of staff will liaise with the LA regarding the programme that should be followed while the student is in hospital. The LA will set up a personal education plan (PEP) for the students which will allow St Modwen's Catholic Primary School, the LA and the provider of the student's education to work together.

St Modwen's Catholic Primary School will monitor student attendance and mark registers to ensure it is clear whether a student is, or should be, receiving education otherwise than at St Modwen's Catholic Primary School. St Modwen's Catholic Primary School will only remove a student who is unable to attend St Modwen's Catholic Primary School because of additional health needs from St Modwen's Catholic Primary School roll where:

- The student has been certified by a Medical Officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend St Modwen's Catholic Primary School before ceasing to be of compulsory school age; and
- Neither the student nor their parent has indicated to St Modwen's Catholic Primary School the intention to continue to attend St Modwen's Catholic Primary School, after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
- A student unable to attend St Modwen's Catholic Primary School because of their health needs will not be removed from St Modwen's Catholic Primary School register without parental consent and certification from the Medical Officer, even if the LA has become responsible for the student's education.

Support for Students

Where a student has a complex or long-term health issue, St Modwen's Catholic Primary School will discuss the students' needs and how these may be best met with the LA, relevant medical professionals, parents and, where appropriate, the student.

The LA expects St Modwen's Catholic Primary School to support students with health needs to attend full-time education wherever possible, or for St Modwen's Catholic Primary School to make reasonable adjustments to students' programmes of study where medical evidence supports the need for those adjustments. St Modwen's Catholic Primary School will make reasonable adjustments under students' individual healthcare plans (IHCPs), in accordance with the Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy.

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

During a period of absence, St Modwen's Catholic Primary School will work with the provider of the student's education to establish and maintain regular communication and effective outcomes.

Whilst a student is away from St Modwen's Catholic Primary School, St Modwen's Catholic Primary School will work with the LA to ensure the student can successfully remain in touch with their St Modwen's Catholic Primary School using the following methods:

- St Modwen's Catholic Primary School newsletters
- Emails
- Invitations to St Modwen's Catholic Primary School events
- Cards or letters from peers and staff

• Where appropriate, St Modwen's Catholic Primary School will provide the student's education provider with relevant information, curriculum materials and resources.

To help ensure a student with additional health needs is able to attend St Modwen's Catholic Primary School following an extended period of absence, the following adaptations will be considered:

• A personalised or part-time timetable, drafted in consultation with the named staff member
• Access to additional support in St Modwen's Catholic Primary School
• Online access to the curriculum from home
• Movement of lessons to more accessible rooms
• Places to rest at St Modwen's Catholic Primary School
• Special exam arrangements to manage anxiety or fatigue

Reintegration

When a student is considered well enough to return to school, St Modwen's Catholic Primary School will develop a tailored reintegration plan in collaboration with the LA. St Modwen's Catholic Primary School will work with the LA when reintegration into school is anticipated to plan for consistent provision during and after the period of education outside school. As far as possible, the student will be able to access the curriculum and materials that they would have used in school.

If appropriate, the school nurse will be involved in the development of the student'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 student. St Modwen's Catholic Primary School will consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made to provide suitable access to St Modwen's Catholic Primary School and the curriculum for the student.

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

St Modwen's Catholic Primary School is aware that some students will need gradual reintegration over a long period of time and will always consult with the student, their parents and key staff about concerns, medical issues, timing and the preferred pace of return.

The reintegration plan will include:

• Details of social contacts, including the involvement of peers and mentors during the transition period.
• St Modwen's Catholic Primary School will ensure a welcoming environment is developed and encourage students and staff to be positive and proactive during the reintegration period.
• Following reintegration, St Modwen's Catholic Primary School will support the LA in seeking feedback from the student regarding the effectiveness of the process.

Information Sharing

It is essential that all information about students with health needs is kept up-to-date. To protect confidentiality, all information-sharing techniques, e.g. staff noticeboards, will be agreed with the student and their parent in advance of being used.

All teachers, 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 School procedures. Parents will be made aware of their own rights and responsibilities regarding confidentiality and information sharing.

To help achieve this, St Modwen's Catholic Primary School will:

- Ensure this policy and other relevant policies are easily available and accessible.
- Provide the student and their parents with a copy of the policy on information sharing.
- Ask parents 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.

- When a student is discharged from hospital or is returning from other education provision, St Modwen's Catholic Primary School will ensure the appropriate information is received to allow for a smooth return to the school. The named member of staff (SENCO) will liaise with the hospital or other tuition service as appropriate.
- Consider how friendship groups and peers may be able to assist students with health needs. When a student is discharged from hospital or is returning from other education provision, Hanson will ensure the appropriate information is received to allow for a smooth return to the school. The named member of staff will liaise with the hospital or other tuition service as appropriate.

Record Keeping

In accordance with the Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy, written records will be kept of all medicines administered to students. Proper record keeping protects both staff and students and provides evidence that agreed procedures have been followed. All records will be maintained in line with the Records Management Policy.

Training

Staff will be trained in a timely manner to assist with a student's return to school. Once a student's return date has been confirmed, staff will be provided with relevant training before the student's anticipated return.

Healthcare professionals should be involved in identifying and agreeing with Hanson the type and level of training required. Training will be sufficient to ensure staff are confident in their ability to support students with additional health needs.

Parents of students with additional health needs may provide specific advice but will not be the sole trainer of staff.

Examinations and Assessments

The named member of staff will liaise with the alternative provision provider over planning and examination course requirements where appropriate.

Relevant assessment information will be provided to the alternative provision provider if required.

Awarding bodies may make special arrangements for students with permanent or long-term disabilities and learning difficulties, or temporary disabilities and illnesses. Applications for such arrangements will be submitted by the school, or LA if more appropriate, as early as possible.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Headteacher is responsible for updating this Policy biannually.