

EDUCATION OF CHILDREN ABSENT FROM
SCHOOL THROUGH ILL-HEALTH
GUIDELINES

2016

1 Background

Section 40 of the *Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act* amended Section 14 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 so that education authorities are under a duty in relation to pupils unable to attend a suitable educational establishment as a result of their prolonged ill-health. In such circumstances, an education authority must make special arrangements for the pupil to receive education elsewhere than at an educational establishment.

The intention behind this duty is to ensure that children, so far as is possible within the constraints of their medical condition and the situation in which they find themselves, receive education which is, as for all children, 'directed to the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the child or young person to their fullest potential'.

(Section 2(1) of the 2000 Act)

(Since the period of time spent by children as patients in hospitals within Dumfries and Galloway normally does not extend beyond several days maximum, there is no on-site teaching provision at Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary. The following criteria for support would therefore apply)

The key Authority contact in the event of any enquiries on this matter is the appropriate Area Team Manager (Supporting Learners).

2 Children affected by the legislation

a) Short Term Illness

Where a child is absent from school for a short-term illness, ie less than three weeks, the Headteacher should ensure that the pupil receives, either through the school direct or through parents, adequate provision to continue appropriate studies, whether at home or in hospital. In the case of a secondary school pupil, the Headteacher should delegate to Pupil Support Staff the requirement to provide the pupil with appropriate studies to cover as broad a spectrum of the curriculum as possible.

Should there be special circumstances requiring additional input, the Headteacher should contact the appropriate Head of Service to discuss the matter.

b) Long Term Illness

There should be an automatic referral by schools for Home Tuition input after 15 working days of continuous or 20 working days of intermittent absence for verifiable medical reasons. Where it is known, however, that this is likely to occur in advance, then referral should proceed immediately (**see Appendix – Home Tuition Request Form**)

Similarly, children who have received education in hospital and are discharged to go home to continue treatment or to recuperate should transfer automatically to Home Tuition if the total period is likely to extend beyond 15 working days.

In exceptional circumstances, such as in the case of children with extended absence (particularly for those who are expected to be in-patients for more than 3 months), some educational provision may be provided over holiday periods.

Schools should ensure that the above information is routinely available in school prospectuses and information packs and is given to parents when children enter or change schools, in parents' and other professionals' briefing sessions, and on school notices boards.

With very few exceptions, children who are absent from school because of ill-health will return to the school in which they are enrolled. They should therefore remain on their school roll and schools are expected to retain management responsibility for their education even where delivery is undertaken in part or wholly by outreach services. Schools' continuing involvement will enable optimum coherence and continuity in education and a smoother return to school.

3 Home Tuition

Ill pupils are most likely to spend their period of absence at home, and delivery of education there by school staff is most likely to ensure curricular and social inclusion for them. When a school is looking at the possibility of Home Tuition, consideration should be given to the feasibility of how and when these duties might be undertaken. The Headteacher (or delegated member of Pupil Support Staff) should, in the first instance, contact their appropriate Area Team Manager (Supporting Learners) to discuss this. Issues to consider might include:

- The parental views regarding possible Home Tuition.
- If the child's home would be the most suitable location for such input or, alternatively, whether another venue should be considered, eg local library or community centre.
- The amount of time which might be provided. Guidance from the Scottish Office suggests that three to seven hours per week may be an appropriate baseline from which to consider variation according to individual need.
- Medical views regarding an appropriate amount of input and any factors which staff need to be aware of.
- The period of time such arrangements are likely to be required for and the mechanisms for reviewing these arrangements.
- Whether or not any member(s) of the school teaching staff is willing to undertake such input in the events thus ensuring curricular coherence and continuity. (If so, information re- rates and methods of payment can be clarified at this time).
- If not, then consideration would have to be given to appropriate staff on the supply list who might undertake such work.

- Any books, materials or resources which could be made available. (While the Authority are expected to have some basic resources such as consumables, the main provider of resources for children should be the children's own schools).
- Mechanisms for liaison between staff to undertake Home Tuition and the school as appropriate.
- Once all of the above have been discussed, the school should complete a Home Tuition Request Form and send it to the Integration and Inclusion Manager for authorisation and processing.

Section 14 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980
(as amended by Section 40 of the Standards in Scotland's Schools Act 2000)

Hew Smith
Integration and Inclusion Manager
Reviewed August 2016

HOME TUITION REQUEST FORM

NAME OF CHILD D.O.B.....

ADDRESS

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SCHOOL

NO. OF HOURS REQUESTED STARTING DATE.....

ESTIMATED LENGTH OF INPUT

NAME(s) OF STAFF TO UNDERTAKE TUITION

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LOCATION IF OTHER THAN AT HOME

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REASON FOR REQUEST:-

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SIGNATURE..... DATE.....

DESIGNATION.....

AUTHORISED BY Hew Smith, Integration and Inclusion Manager:

SIGNATURE..... DATE.....