

## READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

<b>TO:</b>	<b>ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE</b>	
<b>DATE:</b>	1 July 2021	
<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH MEDICAL NEEDS POLICY</b>	
<b>LEAD COUNCILLOR:</b>	Councillor Terry	<b>PORTFOLIO:</b> Children
<b>SERVICE:</b>	Children	<b>WARDS:</b> BOROUGH WIDE
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#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report summarises the content of the Supporting Children with Medical Needs Policy.
- 1.2 There is a legal requirement under Section 19 of the Education Act 1996, as amended by section 3a of the Children, Schools and Families Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2010 to enable children who are medically unfit and unable to attend school settings to access alternative provision which offers good quality education. Such support should meet the child's individual needs, including social and emotional needs and enable them to thrive and prosper in the education system.

#### 2. DETAILS

- 2.1 The policy sets out how Brighter Futures for Children (BFfC), on behalf of Reading Borough Council, will comply with the statutory duty to arrange suitable full-time (or part-time when appropriate for the child's needs) education for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would otherwise not receive suitable education. There is no legal timescale for the alternative provision to be secured however, DfE guidance recommends after 15 days.
- 2.2 The statutory duty applies to all children and young people of compulsory school age, living in Reading, who would normally attend mainstream schools or special schools, including academies, free schools and independent schools, or where a child is not on the roll of such a school.
- 2.3 The provision for children who are medically unfit to attend school must ensure that:
  - Pupils make good progress in their education and do not fall behind their peers, particularly in key subjects;
  - Disruption to learning is minimised and there is a continuity of education provision within the school curriculum;
  - Pupils are able to obtain qualifications as appropriate to their age and abilities;

- Pupils are able to reintegrate successfully back into school and that this takes place as soon as their health permits;
- Pupils feel fully part of their school community and are able to stay in contact with classmates.
- BFFC is committed to providing a recovery-focused model that embraces inclusive and Therapeutic Thinking Schools principles with a clear focus on an appropriate and timely return to school-based learning.

2.4 Reading Borough Council's Health & Safety Team has produced a model policy 'Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions' updated in June 2020 which schools are recommended to adopt.

2.5 There is an expectation that most children and young people will make a full or partial recovery from their illness. At that point it is important that their needs for education continue to be appropriately met - it is understood that most children and young people will transition back to full time mainstream education.

2.6 The child's progress needs to be reviewed at least every 6 weeks by the school in liaison with the alternative provider, in consultation with the parent / carer, and other relevant services. Relevant services including Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), General Practitioners, Education Inclusion/Attendance/ Improvement Services, educational psychologists and school nurses all have responsibilities to work together to support children who are medically unfit to attend school.

2.8 The expectation is that Schools and alternative providers will make arrangements to reintegrate pupils at the earliest opportunity and as soon as they are well enough. Each child is expected to be provided with a reintegration plan set out in their Individual Health Care Plan which is reviewed and amended as appropriate.

### **3. RECOMMENDED ACTION**

**3.1 That the Committee notes the contents of this report.**

### **4. POLICY CONTEXT**

4.1 The contents summarised in this report relate to the following statutory guidance:

- Section 19 of the Education Act 1996, as amended by section 3a of the Children, Schools and Families Act 2010
- Equality Act 2010.

### **5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS**

5.1 The areas of work identified in this report are aligned with Priority 3 of the Council's Corporate Plan: To protect and enhance the lives of vulnerable adults and children

### **6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

6.1 Not applicable.