



Vranch House: Supporting extended pupil absence

2023-2026

Making the difference

Curriculum Policy: Supporting Extended Pupil Absence



POLICY FOR SUPPORTING LEARNERS ABSENT FROM SCHOOL FOR EXTENDED PERIODS OF TIME

Pupils at Vranch House

All the pupils at Vranch House have a physical or movement difficulty and many have communication difficulties, visual perceptual difficulties and other related difficulties. The majority of the pupils have learning difficulties associated with their other difficulties and need modifications to the curriculum. As well as modifying the curriculum many different learning strategies are used to enable the pupils to access the curriculum. At Vranch House we call this 'access learning'. Strategies include the use of symbols, voice output communication aids, Makaton signing, powered mobility, touchscreen devices and eye gaze, multisensory presentation of materials and adult facilitation through trained teaching assistants.

Philosophy

At Vranch House we recognise the importance of constructing a firm foundation on which all aspects of education are built. It is our explicit aim to offer a good-quality education. All staff work together to create a caring environment, in which pupils can learn and grow in a healthy, balanced way.

Equal Opportunities

All staff at Vranch House are responsible for ensuring that all pupils, irrespective of gender, ability, ethnic origin and social circumstances, have access to the whole curriculum, and the opportunity to make the greatest progress possible in all areas of the curriculum, while at our school.

Document Purpose

This policy is written in response to the guidance contained in the document '[Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs](#)' DFE-00307-2013

Pupils covered by this policy may

- Be recovering from an illness, surgery or injury, keeping the pupil away from school during recovery.
- Have a long term or recurring illness.
- Have an illness or severe and complex needs, which cause them to be absent for a period in excess of 15 days.

The 0-25 SEN Team are kept informed whenever a child is absent from school for a period of 15 days or more. This includes pupils who are of Nursery age and those expected to attend full time. If the school has advance notification of long-term absence, (for instance due to surgery and recuperation) procedures will be put into place to create a Personal Education Plan and liaise with hospital teaching staff as appropriate within 15 days. Should the long-term absence happen unexpectedly, preparations for liaison and the Personal Education Plan will commence after 15 days of absence and will be put into action as soon as possible.



Aim

Our aim is to ensure that all pupils in our school continue to have access to as much education as their medical condition allows so that they are able to maintain the momentum of their education. The nature of the provision will be responsive to the needs of each child, and will be detailed in the Personal Education Plans, completed via discussion and liaison between parents, carers and professionals involved. The Personal Education Plan will be reviewed and updated as appropriate, according to individual needs but no less than half termly. The Head Teacher is the named person with responsibility for ensuring support for learners with additional, and complex medical needs.

The initial meeting between professionals and parents/carers will be chaired by the Head Teacher and subsequent meetings and Personal Education Plan targets will be co-ordinated by the Class Teacher in liaison with parents/carers and professionals. If the child's condition is progressive or degenerative the Nurses will liaise with parents and professionals regarding care protocols and these will be included in the Personal Education Plans.

Information will be shared with Support Staff involved with the child to ensure both a smooth return to school following long term absence, and also clear guidelines and plans in place to ensure continuity for the child, should long term absence recur at any point.

All Vranch House pupils are entitled to a curriculum that will develop their ability to:

- become active and independent to the best of their abilities;
- maximise their progress and pursue lifelong learning;
- develop an intellectual curiosity about the physical, social and artistic world in which we live;
- apply their knowledge and skills to the process of solving problems;
- promote their own physical and mental well-being and pursue a healthy lifestyle (with support if necessary);
- develop confidence in and reliance on their own abilities;
- develop the ability to make choices, take decisions and undertake initiatives.
- Pupils with additional and, or complex needs, requiring longer periods of absence from school deserve the same entitlement. For some pupils this could include an individual attendance plan upon return to school (for example reduced attendance). Such arrangements are agreed in consultation with the 0-25 SEN Team.

Process

Whenever a child is known to be absent from school for 15 days or more, or where there is a likelihood of long-term absence, an initial meeting will be set up with parents and the Head Teacher. An initial Personal Education Plan (PEP) will be agreed according to the unique and individual needs of the child concerned. Copies will be provided for parents/carers and all staff involved in the care and education of the child. Each person will sign the PEP to acknowledge their agreement, a review date or time period will be specified. The follow up review does not necessarily require a meeting but all who have signed the PEP will be invited to provide updates which will be collated and used to create a revised PEP.

The PEP will be delivered, as appropriate, by:

- face to face sessions with the pupil
- Videos, documents and learning materials shared on Earwig
- Packages of materials, equipment and other resources delivered to the hospital/home



Audience

This policy is intended for all teaching staff and staff with classroom responsibilities, the School Governors, parents, inspection teams and LA/other Advisory Body Advisers/Inspectors.

This policy document, after presentation to, and agreement by, the staff and Governing Body, is available to all teaching and non-teaching staff and the School Governors. Copies of policy documents are kept in the staffroom cupboard, in the Boardroom and on the intranet Hub. They are also available to view on the Vranch House website. Such distribution ensures the accessibility of the document to visiting teachers and to parents. Extra copies are available from the Head Teacher.

Further Information

Useful Documents and Resources

[‘Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs’](#)

DFE-00307-2013

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-children-with-health-needs-who-cannot-attend-school>

[‘Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions’](#) DFE-00393-2014

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/803956/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions.pdf

[‘Including Me: Managing Complex Health Needs’](#) The Council for Disabled Children, 2005

[‘Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years’](#) DFE-00205-2013

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

The Equality Act, 2010

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

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