



# Education Procedure Manual 3/35

## **GUIDANCE ON EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE UNABLE TO ATTEND SCHOOL DUE TO PROLONGED ILL HEALTH**

**For**

**Teachers and Employees on Scottish Negotiating Committee  
for Teachers (SNCT) Conditions of Service**

**Effective from: July 2025**

Education, People & Business



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本文件可按要求翻譯成中文，如有此需要，請電 0300 123 4510。

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ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦਾ ਮੰਗ ਕਰਨ ਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ 0300 123 4510 ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

Gabhaidh an sgriobhainn seo cur gu Gàidhlig ma tha sin a dhìth oirbh. Cuiribh fòn gu 0300 123 4510

अनुरोध करने पर यह दस्तावेज़ हिन्दी में भाषांतरित किया जा सकता है। कृपया 0300 123 4510 पर फ़ोन कीजिए।

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### Version Control History

Version No.	Effective Date	Details of change from previous version	Date Approved	New version no.
-	Mar 2003	Updated template Updated terminology	-	-
-	Mar 2003	Updated template Updated terminology Updated references to other revised EDC policy	13/06/2025	

### GDPR Statement

East Dunbartonshire Council holds, uses and processes information in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations and all other relevant national data protection laws. Further information detailing how East Dunbartonshire holds and uses personal information and copies of privacy notices used throughout the Council are available on our [website](#).

### Policy Review Statement

This policy will be reviewed in line with:

- Legislative Change
- Changes to SNCT National Conditions of Service
- Other external factors
- Feedback on the effectiveness of the policy
- Requests for review by Elected Members, Trade Unions and/or Management.

### 1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this guidance is to provide advice and information for East Dunbartonshire schools in relation to their statutory duty, under section 14 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, to make special arrangements for pupils to receive education when they are unable, or it would be unreasonable to expect them, to attend a suitable education establishment as a result of their prolonged ill health.

Every child has a right to education. East Dunbartonshire Council is committed to enabling all children and young people to get the most from the learning opportunities in life, learning and work.

- 1.2 The Scottish Government has produced revised guidance for local authorities, hospitals and other services for the education of pupils unable to attend school due to ill health.

### 2.0 Scope

- 2.1 This procedure applies to all pupils who, for health reasons, are unable to attend a suitable educational establishment and special arrangements must be made for such pupils to receive education elsewhere than at an educational establishment.

### 3.0 References & Related Documentation

- 3.1 The following documents should be referenced when considering this procedure:
- [SNCT Handbook](#)
  - [Education of children unable to attend school due to ill health: guidance - gov.scot](#)
  - [Education \(Scotland\) Act 1980](#)
  - [Getting It Right For Every Child](#)
  - [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)
  - [Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000](#)
  - [Equalities Act 2010](#)
  - [Education \(Scotland\) Act 2016](#)
  - [Additional Support for Learning Act.](#)

### 4.0 Introduction

- 4.1 The guidance sets out the key rights, duties and principles relation to pupils unable to attend school due to ill health, including:
- Every child and young person's right to be provided with an education
  - Parents having a legal duty to provide education for their child, either by ensuring they attend school or by providing education at home.
  - The rights, wellbeing, needs and circumstances of the individual child or young person should always be at the centre of the decision-making process.
  - All children and young people are entitled to support with their learning, where a need is identified, whatever their circumstances.

### 5.0 Legislation and National Guidance

- 5.1 This section sets out some key provisions within Scottish legislation directly relevant to the education of children and young people, including legislative provision in relation to children or young people who are unable to attend school or ELCC due to ill health. It does not however offer any interpretation of the legislation.
- 5.2 The **National Framework for Supporting Learners** draws together several of the legislative frameworks which apply to children and young people that need support for their learning. The links within the document provide further information on the legislative and policy frameworks.
- 5.3 [Annex B - Education of children unable to attend school due to ill health: guidance - gov.scot](#)

The interplay between legislative provision is important in terms of provision of services for children and young people unable to attend school due to ill health. The diagram below sets out the relationship between the provisions of key legislation.



### 6.0 East Dunbartonshire Context

- 6.1 This guidance applies to children and young people whose learning is interrupted due to prolonged ill health for a range of reasons such as accidents or physical trauma, chronic, long term, life limiting or terminal conditions, mental health issues receiving regular treatment and conditions which require repeated medical interventions, such as dialysis. This list is illustrative but not exhaustive. **Common childhood conditions such as colds, influenza, chickenpox etc. where a prompt return to school is expected, will not be covered by this guidance.**

Children who are absent from school for a range of common childhood ailments will be covered by the following East Dunbartonshire procedure manuals, this also includes emotionally based school avoidance which is associated with such aspects as bullying, relationships, stress, and generalised anxiety with regards to being in school.

## PROMOTING ATTENDANCE: GUIDANCE FOR EDUCATION EMPLOYEES

### PM03-39-ManagingUnnotifiedAbsencesInEducationalEstablishments-v1.0

- 6.2 Where a pupil has been exempted from attending school to give assistance at home due to illness or infirmity of a family member, then as far as is reasonably practicable and **without undue delay**, schools should make special arrangements for the pupil to receive education.
- 6.3 Section 14(1) of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 requires local authorities to make special arrangements for pupils absent from school through ill health without undue delay. The main emphasis in the initial period of absence will be on recovery, and the time required for this will vary. Wherever possible, absence should not lead to a reduction of education which would have a detrimental effect.

[Annex B - Education of children unable to attend school due to ill health: guidance - gov.scot](#)

- 6.4 A useful fact sheet has been produced by Enquire which explains children and young people's rights to education and support while they are:
- absent from school because of ill health.
  - unable to attend school for other reasons.

[too-unwell-to-attend-school.pdf](#)

## 7.0 Responsibilities and Process

- 7.1 The Named/Key Person will be responsible for supporting children and young people who are unable to attend school due to prolonged ill health. The Named/Key Person in schools can be the head or depute head teacher, principal teacher of guidance, guidance teacher or the Child Protection Co-ordinator, this would be communicated by the school. On occasion and following the principles of GIRFEC, those staff with the best relationships with the child, young person and their family may offer support. Staff within the school are best placed to understand the educational needs of each individual child or young person. In most instances, the school retains the lead role and works with partners.

Within reason, class and subject teachers should record missed work to ensure effective education and maintain the child/young person's links with school; this will support reintegration as part of broader transition planning.

Whatever the circumstances, the objective at all times is to ensure that the child's educational entitlement and wellbeing needs are met. The process followed in each case is likely to differ depending on individual circumstances, but common throughout all stages is the need for clear lines of communication between staff across education and health boards, and the child or young person and their parent/carer.

If it is deemed appropriate that the child or young person's educational needs will be

continued out with school, then the Named/Key Person will manage the arrangements in partnership with the local authority and other relevant agencies.

7.2 There are 3 main instances when a pupil may require educational provision out with school to be arranged.

- 1 If the child or young person's illness is known or reasonably thought likely, to extend to or beyond 5 days, then education should proceed immediately, ***if medical assessment permits.***
- 2 Where there is less certainty over the possible length of any absence, education out with school should commence either when 15 continuous school days of absence have been recorded on SEEMIS or 20 school days of intermittent absence recorded on SEEMIS.
- 3 Where children or young people who have been in hospital and are discharged to go home to continue treatment or to recover, the arrangements for their learning should also be considered if the total period of absence is likely to extend beyond 15 days recorded on SEEMIS.

7.3 The aim is to continue education whenever possible, whilst taking into account the practical limitations of education out with an educational setting.

If a child or young person has prolonged ill health appropriate planning should be in place, as defined in [PROMOTING ATTENDANCE: GUIDANCE FOR EDUCATION EMPLOYEES](#)

7.4 Once a child or young person has been identified as having prolonged ill health then school-based action should be initiated. This process is identified within [PROMOTING ATTENDANCE: GUIDANCE FOR EDUCATION EMPLOYEES](#)

## 8.0 Education Support

8.1 The Named/Key Person will be the main point of contact between home and school. It would be expected that all these children will be receiving medical attention and are therefore likely to be known to Health Services as well as to schools and the education authority. Support for a child or young person absent due to ill health may include:

- Named/Key Person consulting with class teachers regarding course work and liaising with the parent/carer/young person.
- Preparation of coursework/resources would be inclusive of the 35-hour working week for class teachers.
- Direct liaison between the Named/Key Person as appropriate of the school with the parent/carer/child or young person
- Child/young person directed to school related websites or platforms such as GLOW and/or other appropriate resources.
- Children and young people with more complex or longer-term illness may be designated a Lead Professional as the main point of contact.
- It is good practice for contact to be maintained with the pupil's peer group.



- If the child/young person is in hospital (and this may be outside of East Dunbartonshire) then the school should liaise with the Hospital and Home Tuition Service. This service would be based within the hospital that the child/young person is admitted to.

8.2 With a clear evidence base, tutor support may be appropriate. This relates to the enhanced support provision as stated within [PROMOTING ATTENDANCE: GUIDANCE FOR EDUCATION EMPLOYEES](#)

In this instance the Named/Key Person should contact the Inclusion Support Officer for the school. The Named/Key Person should seek to find tutors among the school's teaching staff. Tuition work is paid at the supported study pay rates. For wellbeing and mental health support the school nursing service could also be approached for advice where appropriate.

## 9.0 Useful Resources

East Dunbartonshire Council ASN Webpage:

<https://www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/services/a-z-of-services/primary-secondary-and-early-years-education/additional-support-needs/>

National Guidance on education for pupils absent due to ill health:

[Education of children unable to attend school due to ill health: guidance - gov.scot](#)

East Dunbartonshire Guidance for Promoting School Attendance:

[PROMOTING ATTENDANCE: GUIDANCE FOR EDUCATION EMPLOYEES](#)

National Guidelines on Managing and Promoting Pupil Attendance Secondary Schools April 2015

[Included, engaged and involved: part 1 - attendance in Scottish schools - gov.scot](#)

Enquire – When your child is too unwell to attend school:

[too-unwell-to-attend-school.pdf](#)

CHAS is a charity that provides the only hospice services in Scotland for children and young people who have life-shortening conditions for which there is no known cure. CHAS runs two children's hospices, Rachel House in Kinross and Robin House in Balloch, and a home care service called CHAS at Home.

<http://www.chas.org.uk/>

Young Minds is a charity that supports children and young people's mental health in the UK.

[YoungMinds | Mental Health Charity For Children And Young People | YoungMinds](#)

Lifelink works with young people aged from 11- 18 in the community and in partnership schools across East Dunbartonshire. Lifelink can provide wellbeing and counselling services: [East Dun Secondary Content | Lifelink](#)