

## **Script for Video: Support for Pupils Medical Conditions**

### **Title slide**

This recording was coproduced with parents and carers and health practitioners in our county of Suffolk and will explore support in schools for pupils with medical conditions.

### **Slide 2**

This recording will go through:

- ▶ School responsibilities for supporting pupils with medical needs from slide 4
- ▶ We'll look at how the school nursing service and other services in our county can help from slide 9
- ▶ We'll also explore key points to consider and share with school, regarding your child's medical needs from slide 18
- ▶ We're going to explain individual healthcare plans and explore considerations regarding medication, toileting and school trips from slide 22
- ▶ and we'll finish by considering absences and pupils who cannot attend school due to their medical needs from slide 28

### **Slide 3**


This recording will refer frequently to the following:

The statutory guidance for supporting pupils at school with medical conditions of 2015 which comes directly from law and we'll also refer to our county's policy for supporting pupils with medical needs which was updated in 2021.

### **Slide 4**

So let's begin by looking at key points from the statutory guidance which says that 'Pupils at school with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education.'

It also states that:



School governing bodies 'must ensure that such children can access and enjoy the same opportunities at school as any other child.'

(Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions, pages 4 and 13)

## **Slide 5**

Schools do not have to wait for a formal diagnosis of any condition before providing support to pupils.

Where a pupil's medical condition is unclear, or where there is a difference of opinion, decisions about support will be based on the available evidence. The guidance states: 'This would normally involve some form of medical evidence and consultation with parents.'

(Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions, page 9, point 11)

## **Slide 6**

The guidance expects parents and pupils to be fully involved in discussions around school support for medical needs, stating that:

'It is crucial that schools listen to and value the views of parents and pupils.'

In addition, the guidance states that:

'Governing bodies should ensure that school leaders consult health and social care professionals, pupils and parents to ensure that the needs of children with medical conditions are properly understood and effectively supported.'

And pupils 'should be fully involved in discussions about their medical support needs'.

(Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions, pages 5, 4 and 13)

## **Slide 7**

The guidance recognises that different conditions can have different impacts.


Some conditions:

may require ongoing support, medicines or care;

Some may require monitoring or emergency intervention;

and some conditions may be life-threatening.

Some conditions will be more obvious than others and some may change over time.



Some children and young people may be self-conscious about their condition or develop anxiety around it.

(Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions, pages 5 points 2 & 3)

## **Slide 8**

So the statutory guidance states that arrangements for support:

'should show an understanding of how medical conditions impact on a child's ability to learn, as well as increase confidence.'

It continues that:

'Governing bodies should therefore ensure that the focus is on the needs of each individual child and how their particular medical condition impacts on their school life.'

(Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions, page 7, points 7 & 6)

## **Slide 9**

The school nursing service may support the health needs of some pupils.

They focus on early intervention and can help pupils with new or emerging health needs.


They can offer initial assessment, advice, signposting and strategies to support pupils with:

- Emotional wellbeing, including low mood, stress, anger management and bereavement
- Also with sexual health
- And physical issues including sleep difficulties, day and night-time wetting and healthy eating.

They can also liaise with lead clinicians locally on appropriate support for the child and on staff training needs.

## **Slide 10**

In our county of Suffolk each primary and secondary school will have a named school nurse to promote health and emotional wellbeing.



Young people can access confidential drop-ins at high schools, pupil referral units and specialist schools.

They can also seek help themselves by using the ChatHealth Texting service.

### **Slide 11**

Here are the details of the chat health texting service which is available Monday to Fridays between 9am and 4:30pm.

Parents and carers can also use ChatHealth to seek help and advice.

### **Slide 12**

The school nursing service in Suffolk has also produced videos for young people which they may find helpful.

Do visit the Suffolk School Nursing Service website for more information, including how to make a referral.

### **Slide 13**

The organisation Contact has produced some helpful free resources for families including a guide around understanding your child's behaviour. This includes information and advice around key issues like toileting, sleep, establishing routines, eating and mealtimes and also self-harming, sexuality, emotions and mental health.


Suffolk's Psychology and Therapeutic services have produced a number of resources around sleep which you might like to explore.

### **Slide 14**

All counties will have some services which are able to support learning settings to support pupils with different types of special educational need or disability.

Suffolk has five specialist education services including the Sensory and Physical service which incorporates:

- The service for deaf children and young people;
- The service for children with visual and/or multi-sensory impairments;
- And the specialist learning support assistant service who support children and young people with complex medical conditions who are reliant upon technology, for example non-invasive ventilation, oxygen therapy or a tracheostomy.



The teams work with schools to help staff better understand and support pupils' needs. They may also offer specialist teaching or support directly to the pupils.

### **Slide 15**

You can find out more information about the sensory and physical service, including how to access it, on Suffolk Infolink.

### **Slide 16**

Occupational therapy services in our county are provided by two different teams. The James Paget University Trust hospital provides OT services for the north and north east of Suffolk and they have created videos showing exercises for pupils with coordination difficulties and sensory processing needs which anyone can access from their Newberry Clinic website.

The Integrated Community Paediatric services provide Occupational therapy in the west, south and south-east of Suffolk. Their service can offer a free workshop for schools exploring support for pupils with motor skills difficulties and also a free workshop for schools around understanding and supporting the needs of children with sensory processing differences.

### **Slide 17**

If your child or young person has coordination difficulties or sensory processing needs, you may find it helpful to watch recordings of our webinars which explore support schools can reasonably offer for pupils with these needs.

### **Slide 18**


So what can parents and carers do to start getting the right support in place in school?

What might you need to think about and prepare?

### **Slide 19**

Firstly, tell the school as soon as your child presents with a medical condition.

Governing bodies need to ensure that all schools develop a policy for supporting pupils with medical conditions that is reviewed regularly and is readily accessible to parents and staff.



So we would recommend that you look at your school's medical needs policy and ask for a meeting with a member of staff responsible for medical needs of pupils.

It's helpful to prepare information to share about your child's medical conditions. Consider what the essential points are that staff will need to know.

## **Slide 20**

Key points to think about include:

Who needs to know about your child's condition and how much?

This is about balancing your child's privacy with making sure that the right people understand enough, to support your child to have a full school life.

Think about your child's friends and classmates.

It's important that older children and teenagers are able to share their own views so that they feel comfortable.

Questions to think about include is there a safe space where your child can go if they are unwell?

## **Slide 21**

Are any risk assessments needed?

A risk assessment identifies potential risks and explains what action will be taken to manage the risks and control or limit them as much as possible.

Considering emergencies may be vital for your child. So what signs should staff look for?

In what circumstances is it ok for your child to remain in school but have for example a rest break in a quiet place?

How does the school store medication so it is safe but also easily accessible?


Are school staff already adequately prepared to be able to give any medication?

If staff need training, when and how will this be organised?

How will school record and share with parents what medication has been given?

## **Slide 22**

For some children and young people it will be important to have an individual healthcare plan or IHP.



This is different from an Education, Health and Care plan. Any child with a medical condition can have an IHP but they are especially important for children or young people with life-threatening conditions.

An IHP records the key information about a child's medical needs, the actions that are required to support the child effectively, who will provide this support and when.

They work best when the family, school and a health practitioner like a specialist nurse create it together.

Where a child or young person also has an Education, health and care plan, the individual healthcare plan should be linked to, or become part of the EHC plan.

Free IHP templates, including templates for specific conditions, are available to download from the Medical Conditions in Schools' website.

## **Slide 23**

Let's just spend a minute or two thinking about pupils who might need medication.

Medicines should only be administered at school when it would be detrimental to a child or young person's health not to do so.

With parental agreement, children and young people can carry and administer their own medication. If this is not appropriate, then relevant staff should help to manage and administer the medicine.

Examples of medication that would be appropriate to be given in school include:

- Insulin for diabetics
- Emergency medication for anaphylaxis, asthma, epilepsy or another condition where this is required and prescribed
- Medication that requires set dosage intervals.

When it comes to paracetamol, this is usually given every 6 hours and ibuprofen every 8 hours, so for the majority of children, these can be administered before and after school.

## **Slide 24**

Staff may need some training to administer medication and medical support for some children and young people. In our county training is available through -

- '3 in 1' training from school nursing
- Community children's nursing team
- Specialist nurses and therapists
- Specialist learning support team coordinators

- e- learning and dietetic services.

It's important that you give school any medication in the original packaging from the dispenser with the label outlining who it is for, how it is to be stored and given, and the dosage

## **Slide 25**

The statutory guidance considers it unacceptable to:

'require parents to attend school to administer medication or provide medical support to their child, including with toileting issues.'

The guidance continues:

'No parent should have to give up working because the school is failing to support their child's medical needs.'

(Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions, page 23, point 25)

## **Slide 26**

The statutory guidance also considers it unacceptable for schools to:

- Stop children from eating or taking toilet breaks where they need to, due to their health needs
- Prevent access to medication
- Send children home unnecessarily
- Assume that all children with the same condition require the same treatment
- Ignore the views of children, parents and medical professionals.

(Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions, page 23)

## **Slide 27**

When it comes to school trips, the guidance expects schools to:

'consider what reasonable adjustments they might make to enable children with medical needs to participate fully and safely on visits...-

As we highlighted at the start of this recording, the law expects children with medical needs to be properly supported so that they can access the same opportunities at school as any other child.

The guidance states that it is best practice to carry out a risk assessment which will involve consulting you and as far as possible your child and gaining advice from the relevant healthcare professional to make sure your child can safely take part.





The statutory guidance considers it unacceptable to:

Prevent children from participating, or create unnecessary barriers to children participating, in any aspect of school life, including school trips, for example by requiring parents to accompany their child.'

(Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions, pages 22 & 23)

## **Slide 28**

You'll need to think about whether your child will need hospital admission or time off for appointments.

Or will poor health likely impact on their school attendance?

It is important to gain permission from school in advance of a health appointment so that the absence can be treated as authorised.

The statutory guidance considers it unacceptable to penalise a pupil if their absence is related to their medical condition.

Also, remember to check with school that arrangements are in place for your child to catch up on any work missed when they were absent.

## **Slide 29**

Let's take a minute to think about medical evidence when it comes to absences related to health needs.

Suffolk's policy for supporting pupils with medical needs states that medical evidence should only be asked for if the school requires clarity due to genuine cause for concern about the veracity or genuine nature of the illness.'

Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions or appointment cards - you don't need to have doctor's notes.


The policy continues that:

'there is no need for a consultant's report to authorise an absence' unless additional support is being sought through an Education, Health and Care plan or EHCP.

(Suffolk Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs 2020, sections 8.2, 8.1 and 8.7)

## **Slide 30**

There will be some children and young people who cannot attend school for a period of time due to their health needs.



The statutory guidance is clear that if a pupil's absence due to health needs is expected to be more than 15 days, (either in a row or cumulatively), the local authority 'has a duty to make other arrangements.'

(Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions. p.15)

This is one form of Education Otherwise or Education Other Than at School (sometimes referred to as EOTAS)

In our county of Suffolk this is provided by the Alternative Tuition Service.

## Slide 31

You can find out more about the Alternative Tuition service on Suffolk's local offer and you may find it helpful to watch our video Pupils who cannot attend school for health reasons.

In the video we explore ideas for families and schools working together to support your child to attend, we look at resources which can help children and young people who may be experiencing emotionally based school avoidance, we explain the alternative tuition service and how they can work with your child and school and how to refer.

You may also like to download the statutory guidance for ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs.

## Slide 32

Some parents ask our SENDIASS service if their child with medical needs should have an EHC plan?

The law expects most pupils to have their needs met without an Education, health and care or EHC plan.

EHC plans support pupils with more complex **learning needs** which cannot be supported by the resources available to learning settings for SEN (or special educational need) support.

An EHC needs assessment is the first step towards getting an EHC plan.

An EHC needs assessment helps identify the education, health and care needs which are making it difficult for a child or young person to learn.

A child or young person with health needs but no learning needs will not have an EHC needs assessment agreed as this is concerned with barriers to learning.

However, as we mentioned earlier, a child or young person with health needs could have an Individual Healthcare plan.



### **Slide 33**

We have lots of information and videos about the EHC process on our SENDIASS website and YouTube channel which may help you.

### **Slide 34**

Along with further information and videos about pupils with medical needs and disabilities.

### **Slide 35**

This video was made by Suffolk SENDIASS but every county will have an impartial and confidential SEND Information, Advice and Support Service.