

Royal Borough of Greenwich

Medical Needs Guidance

July 2025



South East London



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1. The statutory framework

- 1.1 All children and young people are entitled to high-quality education and the Royal Borough of Greenwich is committed to ensuring that the needs of the most vulnerable groups of learners are met. In June 2013 the Department for Education published updated statutory guidance entitled:

‘Ensuring a Good Education for Children and young people who cannot attend school because of Health Needs’².

- 1.2 These guidelines set out the duties placed on local authorities to ensure that children and young people with health needs receive a good quality education. In accordance with this protocol, Royal Greenwich has a duty to:
- a) Have a written, publicly accessible policy statement which explains how it will meet its legal duty towards children and young people with additional health needs. This policy should make links with related services in the area, such as the services for Special Educational Needs and Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).
 - b) Arrange suitable full-time education (or as much education as the child’s health condition allows) for children and young people of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would otherwise not receive suitable education (please refer to admissions criteria in section 4 below).

2. Aims

The aims of these guidelines are:

- To set out how Royal Greenwich, in liaison with partner agencies, strives to provide good quality education for children and young people with health needs.
- To provide guidance to schools, families and partner agencies on their roles and responsibilities in ensuring a good quality education for children and young people with health needs.
- To clarify and specify which children and young people are covered by this protocol.

Named person for overseeing medical needs

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² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-children-with-health-needs-who-cannot-attend-school>

3. Principles

- 3.1 These duties are set out in Section 19 of the Education Act 1996. Children who are unable to attend school because of medical/health reasons. The Equality Act 2010 is also an important part of the legal framework around children and young people with significant medical needs.
- 3.2 For the vast majority of children or young people with medical needs, these could be met without the additional intervention from the Royal Borough of Greenwich, for example:
- Where the child/young person can still attend school with additional support provided by the school so that they may access suitable education provision.
 - Where the school has made arrangements to deliver suitable education outside of school for the child/young person; or
 - Where arrangements have been made by the school for the child/young person to be educated on site in a hospital.
- 3.3 These guidelines and any ensuing procedures and practices are based on the following principles:
- All children and young people are entitled to a high-quality education.
 - Disruption to the education of children and young people with health needs should be minimised and the local authority should provide education as soon as practicable when the child will be away from school for 15 or more school days.
 - If children and young people can be in school then they should be in school. Children and young people's diverse personal, social and educational needs are most often best met in school. Schools are required to make reasonable adjustments where necessary to enable all children and young people to attend school.
 - Effective partnership-working and collaboration between schools, families, education services, health services and all agencies involved with a child or young person or are essential to achieving the best outcomes for the child.
 - If a child has a complex health condition that is impacting on their ability to access education, for example a condition requiring the support of a tracheotomy, then these will need to be reviewed by the Designated Clinical Officer (DCO) who will then signpost to the appropriate ICB service. A complex health need is not appropriate or subject to the medical needs guidance.
 - All children and young people referred for medical needs should have equal access to education. We value the diversity that all of our children and young people bring, and endeavor to provide flexibility and differentiation within the curriculum. This protocol is regularly reviewed to ensure that this continues to be reflected.

4. Admissions Criteria

- These guidelines apply to all children and young people of compulsory school age (5-16 years old³) who, because of illness, are unable to attend school for 15 days or more.⁴
- The child/young person must be a Royal Borough of Greenwich (RBG) resident regardless of if they attend an in or out of borough school.
- The child/young person must remain on roll at their school for the duration of medical needs education support. The school will need to lead on making referrals for assessments where necessary.
- Referrals on the grounds of medical needs should be the final intervention to re-engage children and young people in their educational setting, where there professional medical evidence and reason that outline why the child is unable to attend school.
- The evidence should come from most relevant professional, i.e. mental health need should be evidenced by a CAMHS practitioner.
- Schools must be able to evidence that they have implemented reasonable adjustments (see appendix A) to 'ensure that all children with medical conditions, in terms of both physical and mental health, are properly supported in school so that they can play a full and active role in school life, remain healthy and achieve their academic potential.' (Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions, DfE, April 2014).
- This guidance applies to all children and young people whether they attend mainstream school, academies, free schools, independent school or special schools, along with children and young people not on a school's roll.
- This guidance covers the needs, including physical and mental health needs but does not include infectious childhood diseases such as measles.
- There are three pathways (Pathway 1, 2 and 3) to enable children and young people to have access to the most suitable medical provision (see Appendix 1).
- Referral for the three pathways are heard at a fortnightly Medical Referral Triage (MRT)
- If admission to Pathway 2 or 3 is agreed by the panel but provisions are at capacity, the priority of admission will be as follows in the order below:
 - Child in our care
 - Significant mental health need
 - Young person at CP or CIN safeguarding level
 - Child with FASS involvement.
- Core membership of MRT panel: Head of Newhaven, Head of Nest, Head of Outreach, Educational Psychologist, RBG Clinical Designated Officer, LA Inclusion Officers.

Pathway 1 - Physical needs

- 4.1 Some children and young people who have a physical need that prevents them from being in school, such as a chronic sickness, will be eligible to medical provision. Following the criteria listed above, a school can request for medical needs support.

³ The LA will not normally provide support for pupils who are under or over compulsory school age. For post-16 students attending mainstream provision, RBG would look to the host school, college or training provider to make any necessary reasonable adjustments for students who are unwell over a prolonged period.

⁴ We encourage schools to contact us before this point if appropriate to enable early intervention and to avoid delays. In addition, 15 days do not have to be consecutive if for the same evidenced medical reason.

Pathway 2 - SEMH

- 4.2 We are aware some children and young people present with social and emotional difficulties that prevent them from attending school. Following the criteria listed above, a school can request medical needs support.

Pathway 3 - NEST

- 4.3 A number of children will have chronic social and emotional needs that prevent them from attending school. Newhaven Educational Support Team (NEST) provision is run by Newhaven School and there are very limited spaces available for young people. The NEST panel meets once every half term to review referrals. If a young person does not meet the threshold for NEST or does meet the threshold but there is no capacity currently in the provision, Pathway 2 may be considered.

Referral process

- 4.4 All referral forms should be sent for triaging to:
school-medical-needs@royalgreenwich.gov.uk

If the child or young person meets the admissions criteria (as listed above) and you would like to discuss which pathway is most suitable, please contact Julie Clark before making a referral.

Pathway Transfers

- 4.5 A child/young person placed within Pathway 2 or Pathway 3 can move between these provisions, either from SEMH Outreach to NEST or from NEST to SEMH Outreach, should criteria be met and there be a benefit to their education. The proposed transfer should be presented to the NEST/Outreach Panel, which meets once every half term. Placement on either pathway cannot proceed without the Panel's endorsement that the application meets the criteria and confirmation that there is capacity within the provision. The child/young person and a parent/carer must consent, ensuring that pathway transfers are made collaboratively, with transparency, and full consideration of the student's best interests and evolving needs.

To facilitate the above, the *Medical Needs - Transfer of Pathway Form* (see Appendix 5) must be completed by the referring provision and submitted with the original medical needs application to the School Medical Needs inbox.

5. Signposting services

- 5.1 The Attendance Advisory Service and Sensory Support Services can liaise with education settings to advise on making reasonable adjustments and support them to ensure access to the curriculum. For more information about these services, please use the contacts below.

Service	Summary and contact details
Attendance Advisory Service	A support service to give advice and support around improving your child's attendance and access to education. School-Attendance-Advisory@royalgreenwich.gov.uk
Special Educational Needs	The SEND Assessment and Review Service works with schools to review any changing needs of a child or young person with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) who is unable to attend school because of their medical needs. The EHCP will link the long-term educational needs associated with the child's medical condition to the most appropriate teaching and learning provision. Special-Needs@royalgreenwich.gov.uk
Greenwich Local Offer	https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/info/200236/children_with_additional_needs/1671/about_the_local_offer
ASD Outreach Service	The ASD Outreach Service supports mainstream schools and families to make sure that they are able to meet the needs of children with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD). The service offers various training packages to parents and professionals to support children with ASD. These include online training courses, training sessions, advice and referrals, and a structured support programme for transitions. The service can support schools in creating Personal Learning Plans to match individual children's learning needs. This may involve arranging support from a specialist teacher, occupational therapist, or speech and language therapist. The service can also provide specialist practical resources such as visual timetables and workstations, as well as a range of courses for parents on topics relating to ASD. ASD Outreach Services

	Greenwich Community Directory
The STEPS Service	The STEPS Service supports groups of children with additional needs in mainstream primary schools and has a smaller team in secondary schools. The Complex Needs Team is led by specialist teachers and delivered by outreach workers for children needing significant support to access a differentiated or personalised curriculum. In addition, there is a Dyslexia Team of specialist dyslexia teachers who carry out assessments and deliver 1:1 teaching to those children with significant need. The service works with schools to increase staff confidence and capacity to include all children with a wide range of additional needs. Support Team for Education in Primary and Secondary School (STEPS) Greenwich Community Directory
The Sensory Service	The Sensory Service provides support for children and young people aged 0-19 in homes and schools, who have semi- permanent or permanent deafness or vision impairment that cannot be corrected by glasses. Qualified teachers of the deaf/vision impaired can write advice and visit in schools/homes to support meeting each child's individual needs, as well as offering deaf/vision awareness training and British Sign Language courses. Specialist support workers work with teachers and families. Training by a mobility/habilitation officer or deaf instructor is available. Schools can be provided with specialist resources such as low vision aids, Braille facilities, radio aids and adapted curriculum materials. The service also provides a weekly pre- school group for families with children with a sensory disability (ages 0-3). Royal Greenwich Sensory Service Greenwich Community Directory
The Early Years Inclusion Team	The Early Years Inclusion Team provides an advisory service to private, independent and voluntary early years settings on a range of special educational needs disability issues. The team consists of inclusion co-ordinators/area SENCOs, early years practitioners and an education psychologist. The team offers support for SENCOs and other staff members in identifying and meeting the needs of children with SEND and to become a more inclusive setting. The team supports staff to adapt/differentiate the curriculum and environment to make sure the child makes the best possible progress in their early years setting. The team provides practical materials and resources that can be

	used to support a child with SEND and all children in their early years setting. Early Years Inclusion Team Greenwich Community Directory
Educational Psychology Service	The Educational Psychology Service offers a range of approaches to help schools improve outcomes for children and young people experiencing difficulties in their learning and their social & emotional development. In particular, this means children and young people with special educational needs, those at risk of exclusion and those whose life chances are impaired as a result of social and emotional deprivation. Educational psychologists work with teachers, parents, professionals and other staff to assess and identify needs, develop skills and design interventions to help improve educational attainment and emotional resilience and promote inclusive practice. Additional information Educational Psychology Service Greenwich Community Directory

CAMHS Support Services	If you are a parent and you have concerns about your child's mental health, please contact 0203 260 5211 Monday to Friday 9am-5pm / the SLP (out-of-hours) crisis line on 020 3228 5980 Monday to Friday 5pm-10pm and Saturday to Sunday 9am to 10pm. For all other times, please contact the Oxleas Urgent Advice line on 0800 330 8590. Support is available via Kooth (external link). http://oxleas.nhs.uk/services/service/child-and-adolescent-mental-1/referral/?p=/gps-referrers/gp-child-and-young-people/gp-camhs-greenwich/
Children's Community Nursing	Our Children's Community Nursing Team provides a range of services to support children and young people who require skilled nursing support in their own home, school, clinic or a community setting. We are a team of specialist children's nurses and healthcare assistants who provide a range of services for children with complex, chronic or acute healthcare needs. Email: oxl-tr.ccnhah@nhs.net 0203 004 0092 opt:1

Children's Specialist Community Paediatric Service - Greenwich	The Children's Specialist Community Paediatric Service provides support and assistance to Greenwich residents who are concerned about their child's: • Development • Communication and interaction • Difficulties impacting performance at school • Disabilities with ongoing needs We also perform various assessments for children in collaboration with the Local Authority. How to access this service To access this service, you must: • Be aged 16 or under • Registered with a GP in Greenwich Young people up to the age of 19 may be referred to the service if they attend Charlton Park or Willow Dene Special Needs Schools. Email: oxl-tr.childrenstherapies@nhs.net Phone number: 020 8836 8621, Select Option Two, followed by Option Two
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6. Roles and responsibility

- 6.1 The parent/carer should keep the school informed of all relevant information regarding their child's health situation, including any planned medical absences and periods of illness. They should ensure that the child or young person attends all medical appointments and share all recommendations with the school, including obtaining explicit advice if their child is unable to go to school. Please note that a GP letter will not be suitable evidence and any recommendations should come from a specialist (consultant/CAMHS). However, in order to avoid delays, evidence from a GP may be accepted if the child is under a consultant but the medical report has not yet been issued. For example, a GP has referred a child or young person to CAMHS but they have not yet been seen. The consultant evidence would still need to be submitted at a later date to inform the education needs of the child/young person.

6.2

Schools

- 6.1 All schools must have a policy in place to address how the school will meet the educational requirements of students who have health needs. There should be a named person at the school who will ensure that all students have the fullest possible access to educational resources and support. Every school must have an allocated school nurse with whom the named person can liaise for information, advice, training, signposting to other local specialist/professional involved in the child's care, as well as coordinating development of a health/care plan. . This applies to all students, including those with Educational Health Care Plans (EHCPs), specific Health/Care Plans or on the SEN Register. Schools should make a referral to the local authority as soon as they become aware that a child or young person is likely to be/has been absent for 15 consecutive days due to their medical needs.
- 6.2 Whereby a student cannot attend, schools should consider all reasonable adjustments, such as a hybrid model to enable access to learning materials and/or lessons. Please see link: [Providing remote education: non-statutory guidance for schools \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)
- 6.3 When students are too ill to attend, the school will establish, where possible, the amount of time they may be absent and identify ways in which the school can support them in the short term, e.g. by providing work to be done at home in the first instance.
- 6.4 Where children and young people have long-term health needs, the pattern of illness and absence from school can be unpredictable, so the most appropriate form of support for them should be discussed and agreed between the school and family. Schools should work with partner services to put in place a care plan for any child or young person who needs support under this protocol. Up- to-date medical evidence will be required and should be reviewed at least, termly.
- 6.5 Schools must **not** remove students who are unable to attend because of health needs from the school register. Instead, schools must continue to monitor the progress and needs of the child/young person whilst accessing the medical needs provision, such as NEST.
- 6.6 School should lead on all referrals for assessments that may be necessary to understand any long-term needs children may be presenting with. This

includes those children who may have emotional school avoidance and struggling to engage with professionals. All services should be adjusting their engagement method to enable assessments to take place outside the school environment/clinic where appropriate or necessary.

- 6.7 Schools must complete the Support Plan (see Appendix C) to ensure the child/young person still has a sense of belonging and efforts are being made to support their reintegration following their period of absence due to their medical needs. Regular contact with the parent/carer and student (where appropriate) is very important to enable them to feel included and part of the school community. This should also extend to having some communication between the student and their peers to prevent social thinning. An exemplar support plan is included in the appendix.
- 6.8 When tutoring within a child/young person's home is identified as the best way to meet their health and/or medical needs, an appropriate risk assessment will be undertaken by the school. Where a child/young person is taught at home, there must be a responsible adult present for them and any other children in the house at the time of the session.

7. References

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

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

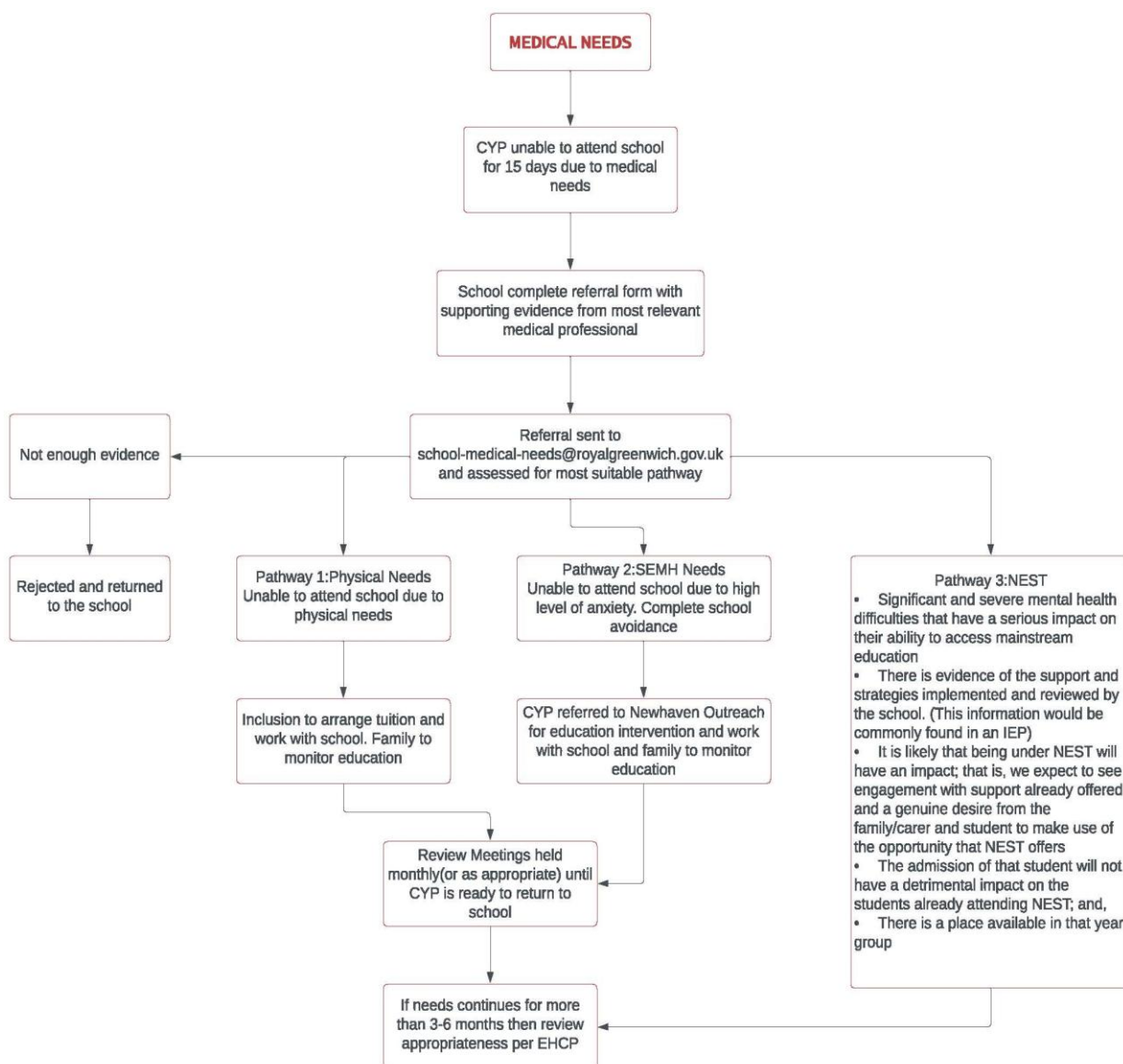
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/306952/Statutory_guidance_on_supporting_students_at_school_with_medical_conditions.pdf

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-students-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3>

Next review date: January 2026

8. APPENDIX

APPENDIX I



APPENDIX 2

Examples of reasonable adjustments to support students with mental health needs to attend school:

Develop individual strategies with students to manage need (for example anxiety- mindful colouring, time out and listen to music (time limited), RAG cards to show teacher mood, trusted adult to go to, safe space to go to, permission to contact parent/safe adult on phone.

Timetable strategies: quiet space for break times, place to eat, remove subjects causing issues, staggered start, finish times to support getting ready/journey; reduce time expected in school with clear plan and support to attend.

Support: Planned slow inductions where necessary; change flagged and practiced; problem solving/interventions in subjects they are really struggling in; trusted adult in class; therapeutic intervention- mentor, counsellor, available therapies; regular reviews with parent; training of key staff re student's needs.

Other agencies: Appropriate referrals to explore communication, learning and sensory needs (EP/SALT/OT); close liaison with CAMHS where possible- school seeks and uses advice.

Further examples of reasonable adjustments including case studies can be found in [Support for pupils where a mental health issue is affecting attendance: effective practice examples \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

APPENDIX 3

REFERRAL FORM MEDICAL NEEDS

All forms should be returned to school-medical-needs@royalgreenwich.gov.uk

Application for education provision based on health and medical needs including mental health.

PART A – School to ask parents/carers to complete.. GENERAL

INFORMATION

Child/young person's name:	
DOB:	
Address:	
School:	
Name of parent/carer:	
Contact Tel. No:	
Email:	
GP details including name & address of surgery & Post Code <i>(This is mandatory to establish responsible health authority)</i>	
Details of health professional & team involved with child e.g., CAMHS , Epilepsy specialist nurse, Community Paediatrics or Community Nursing Team: (if applicable)	
Consultant/Hospital: (if applicable)	
Consultant Tel No:	

Social Worker: (if applicable)					
Social Worker Tel No:					
Social Worker Email:					
CP	Y/N	CIN	Y/N	R&A	Y/N
Parental view on referral - what do you hope this will achieve?					
Child/young person's view on referral - why do they want to attend and why?					
Please list all of the child/young person's hobbies and interests, and future aspirations, both in and out of school:					

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Please provide any other information and where applicable, attach medical report, a current health/care plan which includes current diagnosis/symptoms/ presentation, safety concerns, medication to be kept and administered in school, side effects to observe for as well as a current risk assessment.

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Space not needed as this is addressed above.

Please confirm that you consent to this referral being discussed supporting services:
Y/N

Completed by (name and relationship to child):

Signed:

Date:

Tel. No.

Email:

REFERRAL FORM

All forms should be returned to school-medical-needs@royalgreenwich.gov.uk

Application for education provision based on health or medical needs including mental health.

PART B - School to ask **medical** professional working with the child/young person on the difficulties that makes them unable to attend school complete this section.

Alternatively, a letter from the professional confirming that the child/young person is unable to attend school can be appended.

Please note: If this is regarding mental health the child/young person **must** have an open CAMHS referral for medical needs support to be considered.

Child/young person's name:	
DOB:	
Please outline the child/young person's current needs - this may be in relation to physical or mental health. Please detail any current medical diagnoses, if applicable or your working formulation of their needs. This section should include details of formulation, the current treatment plan and the impact of any treatment already carried out:	
How does the child/young person's difficulties impact their ability to access their current education provision?	

Would receiving tuition support the current treatment plan/intervention for school reintegration?

Joined-up work is key to help young people reintegrate into school. Would you be prepared to join professionals meetings about the child/young person's reintegration into school?

Other health
professionals?
Y/N

Contact details:

Completed by:

Designation:

Following parental consent, we will contact you to discuss the proposed support plan.

Signed

Date

Tel. No.

Email:

REFERRAL FORM

All forms should be returned to school-medical-needs@royalgreenwich.gov.uk

Application for education provision based on medical or mental health needs.

PART C - To be completed by school

Child/young person's name:		
DOB:		
Ethnicity:		FSM? Y/N
School:		
Year group:		
First Language: Interpreter needed? Y/N		
<i>Please provide any relevant information including reasonable adjustment strategies or behavior support plan and attach all current documents as evidence.</i>		
SEN Y/N	EHCP Y/N	Health/Care plan Y/N
Professionals report (EP/SP&L/Occupational /Pediatrics Y/N (if yes, please attach) name:		
Last date attended:	Attendance % this year:	Attendance % last year:
Anticipated time out of school:	Possible return date:	

Please list child/young person's hobbies, interests, and extra-curricular activity:

Subject	KS2 Level	KS3 Level	Current Level	Target Grade
English				
Maths				
Science				
Exclusions: Y/N				
Dates:		Reasons:		
Child/young person's strengths at school:			Child/young person's barriers to learning at school:	

Are there any family/home issues that Royal Greenwich should be aware of that could impact on the child/young person's education?

Any further information?

Please provide additional evidence below of any intervention/s, reasonable adjustments or assess, plan, do, review that the school has implemented to *'ensure that the child or young person with health or medical conditions, , is appropriately supported in school to facilitate good health, education and social and outcomes. In line with (Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions, DfE, April 2014).*

Description and type of intervention:	What worked? What didn't work? What was the impact of interventions on behaviours?	Recommended next steps:

Please confirm the following:

- 1. You have attached medical evidence Y/N**
- 2. Evidence of 15 days consecutive non-attendance: Y/N**
- 3. The child/young person is on roll at your school and will remain so until reintegrated: Y/N**

Completed by:

Designation:

Date:

Signed:

Date: