

Criteria for referral to OOST

Relevant guidance:

[Section 19 of the Education Act](#) is the legal framework that underpins the local authority provision of OOST (and other teams within All Children Receiving Education ACRE).

The important section with reference to ACRE and OOST is:

“Each local authority shall make arrangements for the provision of suitable education at school or otherwise than at school for those children of compulsory school age who, by reason of illness, exclusion from school or otherwise, may not for any period receive suitable education unless such arrangements are made for them”.

Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs
(Department for Education, December 2023)

Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions. Statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academies in England (Department for Education, August 2017).

Important extracts for OOST from the guidance ‘**Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs**’ are as follows:

Local authorities must have regard to the guidance when carrying out their duty to arrange suitable education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs. The guidance also covers the role that the child’s home school should play in ensuring the child receives a suitable education when too unwell to attend school and, where appropriate, is successfully re-integrated back into their home school once they are well enough to be.

When a child is already attending school, there is a range of circumstances where their health needs can and should be managed by the school so that they can continue to be educated there without the need for the intervention of the local authority.

For some children, however, we recognise that there is a need for the local authority to become involved in arranging suitable provision.

Identification of children who may require OOST support

In general, we recognise the following groups of children as having health needs which may require support from OOST:

- Children who are injured as a result of trauma and need some additional recovery time once discharged from hospital before returning to school.
- Children who have undergone significant surgery and require some time to recuperate or avoid possible injury before returning to school.
- Children with chronic illness such as juvenile arthritis, where periods of ill health can make attendance at school impossible.
- Children undergoing treatment or recuperation from cancer.
- Children with mental health related problems confirmed by a senior health practitioner within specialist services, usually Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
- Children with life limiting and terminal illness where this is in line with the wishes of parents/carers and is supported by medical advice.

However, this is not a definitive list, and the LA and OOST would consider the individual circumstances of the child.

Referral criteria for OOST

In order for OOST to consider a referral, the following criteria need to be met:

- The child has been/will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether cumulative or consecutive because of illness and where suitable education is not otherwise being arranged
- Evidence or information about the school's *graduated* response towards meeting the needs and providing a suitable education so far
- The child must be a Derbyshire resident and must be on roll at a school
- The referral must be sent in by the child's school
- Medical evidence should be included in the referral, to explain the reasons for absence; OOST will work closely with medical professionals to consider the medical evidence. Where specific evidence from a medical consultant is not immediately available, OOST will consider liaising with other medical professionals such as the child's GP and will consider looking at other evidence (related to the child's health condition) to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the child
- For medical information and evidence from a private individual to be accepted it must be from someone who is registered with a professional regulatory body and is therefore audited and maintaining their CPD
- Once a case has been accepted then we will periodically check that the medical professionals continue to be involved.
- Medical evidence with a referral needs to be recent (within 3 months) and therefore providing an accurate and up to date explanation of the child's medical situation.

Referral to OOST

Schools should follow the guidance in the OOST policy and complete the referral information, providing supporting documents.

The OOST team is currently based at Alfreton and can be contacted via email at:

OOST@derbyshire.gov.uk

[Out of School Tuition \(OOST\) - Derbyshire Local Offer](#)