

Sir Michael Wilshaw
Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, OFSTED
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD
Friday 11th November 2016

Wells Lawrence House
126 Back Church Lane
London
E1 1FH

Tel 0345 123 2399*
Fax 020 7424 1001

Email info@diabetes.org.uk
Website www.diabetes.org.uk

Dear Sir Michael Wilshaw

As you may know the Children and Families Act 2014 introduced a duty for schools to ensure they make arrangements to support children with medical conditions. This additional support helps children to achieve their academic potential, participate fully in all activities, and also crucially to stay safe at school.

The change in the law was a fantastic achievement, however, due to ongoing concerns raised by parents in the two years since, the Health Conditions in Schools Alliance (HCSA), a group of 30 organisations; charities, healthcare professionals and trade unions has investigated whether or not schools are complying with the duty. We found that **78% of schools failed to demonstrate that they had a medical condition policy and the 46% of schools that do have a medical conditions policy were not compliant with the legislation.** This has led to many children with medical conditions being excluded from school activities and having their health and safety put at risk.

Ofsted's role in ensuring that schools implemented the duty is included in the statutory guidance: *Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions. Statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academies in England* which states:

'Their [Ofsted] inspection framework places a clear emphasis on meeting the needs of disabled children and pupils with SEN, and considering the quality of teaching and the progress made by these pupils. Inspectors are already briefed to consider the needs of pupils with chronic or long-term medical conditions alongside these groups and to report on how well their needs are being met. Schools are expected to have a policy dealing with medical needs and to be able to demonstrate that this is implemented effectively.'

What is concerning is that the HCSA has evidence of schools achieving a good or outstanding inspection result, while failing to provide the necessary support for children with medical conditions as detailed in the legislation. Several such cases have been brought to our attention which have resulted in children's health being put at risk, and children being excluded from school activities and even school meals because of their medical condition.

Patron: Her Majesty The Queen

Diabetes UK is the operating name of the **British Diabetic Association**.
Company limited by guarantee. Registered in England no. 339181.
Registered office: Wells Lawrence House, 126 Back Church Lane, London E1 1FH.
A charity registered in England and Wales (215199) and in Scotland (SC039136).
*Calls may be recorded for quality and training purposes.

The HCSA have met with civil servants at Department for Education including Lesley Hollick, Policy Adviser in the School Inspections Unit, regarding how Ofsted is currently assessing whether schools understand and are implementing the legislation. To expand on these discussions we would like to meet with you directly to discuss how the inspection process can be used to make sure schools are aware of the legislation surrounding support for children with medical conditions.

The HCSA would like to see monitoring of medical conditions policies and the necessary support for children with long-term medical conditions imbedded as a key part of all routine inspections as we believe this is necessary to keep children with medical conditions safe at school.

Furthermore, we would like to bring to your attention a change.org petition which has received 5,387 signatures as of the Friday 11th November. The petition was started by a concerned parent Louise Fyfe, because her 12 year-old daughter's life was put in danger after a severe hypo at school. The school didn't know that they needed a plan to care for children with medical conditions like Type 1 diabetes. Had the school been aware of the legislation and had a medical conditions policy in place this incident could have been avoided.

The calls in Louise's petition mirror that of the Alliance; for Ofsted to check as part of routine inspections, that schools have medical conditions policy in place and that schools are following them properly.

Louise Fyfe's petition: <https://www.change.org/p/edward-timpson-mp-raise-awareness-that-every-school-has-to-by-law-have-a-medical-needs-policy-implemented>

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tara Finn". The script is cursive and fluid.

Tara Finn

Policy Officer

On behalf of the Health Conditions in School Alliance

Cc Lesley Hollick, Policy Adviser in the School Inspections Unit, Department for Education