POLICY
FUTURES
A Reform Agenda

School policy and technology to keep sick kids connected

In schools across developed countries, up to 30% of students have an illness serious enough to affect their attendance, with millions in homes and hospitals experiencing isolation from their schools, teachers and peers.

But we don't have to leave our sick kids behind. We have the legislation and technology, now we just need the policy to get sick kids in Australia back into their classrooms.

Megan Gilmour
2016 Churchill Fellow, Australian Capital Territory

Key Policy Recommendations

1 **Set a national policy initiative.** Consult to verify public need and parameters, consider evidence, policy alternatives and implementation choices, and conduct cost benefit analysis. Start by making 'health condition' a priority equity cohort in National School Reforms.

2 **Collect and track data.** Ensure visibility of the number of students needing specialised support through NCCD, ABS, and state and territory school data, and identify funding models/schemes. Start by identifying students in need, and accessing existing funding channels.

3 **Establish education-health policy.** Manage school access by mandating and publishing school responsibility to support, technology for classroom telepresence and one-to-one lessons. Start by adding 'health condition' to 'other factors' and draft Disability Standards for Education absence guidelines.

4 **Set and monitor standards.** Enable equity by benchmarking explicit standards of professional practice and set compliance measures for school and hospital operations and support at home. Start by establishing education-health competency frameworks and mandatory training.

5 **Develop education-health guidelines.** Initiate inclusion and awareness by requiring a dedicated absence code and setting absence thresholds to trigger specialised school support. Start by setting 'health condition' absence flag and a threshold to trigger adjustments.

Ms Megan Gilmour
Missing School Incorporated
and Robots4Good
T +61 411 162 597
E megan.gilmour@missingschool.org.au

THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

Winston Churchill Trust
Learn globally, inspire locally.