Ashwicken Primary School

Children with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School Policy

Formally adopted by the Governing Board	**Ashwicken Primary School**
On:-	**October 2025**
Chair of Governors/Trustees:-	**Murree Groom**
Last updated:-	**Autumn 23**

Aims

This policy aims to ensure that:

- Suitable education is arranged for pupils on roll who cannot attend school due to health needs.
- Pupils, staff and parents understand what the school is responsible for when this education is being provided.

Legislation and Guidance

The Children and Families Act 2014 places a duty on maintained schools and academies to make arrangements to support pupils with medical conditions. Local Authorities also have key responsibilities in championing the needs of these children and young people and in providing education to children and young people who are unable to attend school due to ill health. The Department for Education issues statutory guidance for schools and Local Authorities to follow in relation to children and young people with medical conditions.

The December 2023 statutory guidance titled "Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs" includes the following updates:
Schools must make reasonable adjustments for pupils whose health conditions impact attendance, ensuring compliance with the Equality Act 2010.
Local Authorities are required to publish clear policies detailing their arrangements for educating children unable to attend school due to health needs and to appoint a named officer responsible for these arrangements.
Funding responsibilities have been clarified, with schools potentially contributing to the costs of alternative education provided by Local Authorities.
The guidance now includes more precise definitions of "Hospital Education" and outlines Local Authority duties for immediate and tailored interim provisions.

The key responsibilities for schools within the statutory guidance document include:

- Ensuring that children with medical conditions can access and enjoy the same opportunities at school as any other child.
- Guaranteeing that no child with a medical condition is denied admission or prevented from taking up a place in school because arrangements for their medical condition have not been made. However, governing bodies are not required to accept a child at times when doing so would be detrimental to the health of the child or others.

This policy reflects the requirements of the Education Act 1996 and is also based on guidance provided by our Local Authority.

For further details, see Norfolk's Medical Needs Education Provision policy Norfolk County Council Medical Needs Education Provision.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

School Arrangements

Initially, the school will make arrangements to deliver suitable education for pupils with health needs who cannot attend school.

- The SENDCO and the Headteacher will work in partnership to determine who will be responsible for making and monitoring these arrangements on a case-by-case basis.
- The school will consult with parents about these arrangements by telephone or email.
- For a short-term absence, we will send work home to complete through Microsoft Teams, INSIGHT, or by inviting the pupil to attend blended learning through Microsoft Teams. This work will be as closely matched to the work being completed by the pupil's classes as possible.
- For longer-term absences (15 days or more), the school will seek to offer educational provision via the Medical Needs Service.
- A reintegration programme will be implemented as required, co-ordinated by the SENDCO.

Local Authority Arrangements

Medical Needs Co-ordinator

The Medical Needs Co-ordinator is responsible for the education of children with additional health needs in Norfolk. They work with schools and professionals to ensure children and young people with medical needs and those who cannot attend school receive a good education.

Services Provided by the Co-ordinator

- Parents can contact the Co-ordinator to discuss their child's specific circumstances, particularly if they feel their child's medical needs are not being addressed.
- Schools can contact the Co-ordinator to get support, advice and guidance in relation to medical needs.
- The Co-ordinator will liaise with professionals and colleagues to ensure children with additional health needs can access suitable education.

Contacting the Co-ordinator

Email: medicalneeds@norfolk.gov.uk Address: Professional Development Centre, 144 Woodside Road, Norwich, Norfolk NR7 9QL.

Making a Medical Needs Referral

Schools can make a medical needs referral for a pupil who cannot attend school because of health needs if the pupil will be away from school for 15 days or more,

whether consecutive or cumulative.

What Happens Next?

Following the acceptance of a referral:

- The Medical Needs Co-ordinator will contact the Short Stay School for Norfolk, commissioned to provide education for children unable to attend school due to health needs.
- Interim medical needs provision will begin without delay.
- A planning meeting will be held to decide how provision will be delivered. This will be for an initial period of 12 school weeks (or for the period that a child is absent from school, whichever is shorter).
- If after this initial period the child is unable to return to school, further medical advice will be required for the provision to continue.

Information about how medical needs provision is planned and delivered, along with how reintegration to school can be supported, is outlined in the Local Authority's medical needs policy, available at: Medical Needs Service.

School Support for Local Authority Arrangements

In cases where the Local Authority makes arrangements, the school will:

- Work constructively with the Local Authority, providers, relevant agencies and parents to ensure the best outcomes for the pupil.
- Share information with the Local Authority and relevant health services as required.
- Help ensure the provision offered to the pupil is as effective as possible and supports reintegration into school.

When reintegration is anticipated, the school will:

- Plan for consistent provision during and after the period of education outside the school, allowing the pupil to access the same curriculum and materials they would have used in school as far as possible.
- Enable the pupil to stay in touch with school life (e.g., through newsletters, emails, invitations to school events or links to lessons).
- Create individually tailored reintegration plans for each child returning to school as required.
- Consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made.

Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually. At every review, it will be approved by the Local Governing Board.

Links to Other Policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Attendance
- Accessibility Plan
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions