

Children with Health Needs who Cannot Attend School Policy 2026 2027

Nothing is beyond our reach!

Approved by	Governing Board
Policy Lead	Headteacher/Senco
Date approved	Autumn 2026
Review date	Autumn 2027

Vision Statement

Nothing is beyond our reach!
Care and challenge engage and motivate us!
Praise reassures and supports us!
Successes are celebrated and built on!

At Norton Community Primary School we are committed to providing a caring, safe, inclusive and respectful environment where every child feels valued and able to achieve their full potential.

1. Statement of Intent

Norton Community Primary School is committed to ensuring that all pupils receive a suitable and effective education, regardless of their health needs.

We recognise that some children may be unable to attend school because of physical or mental health needs. In these circumstances, we will work closely with parents, health professionals, North Yorkshire Council and the Medical Education Service (MES) to ensure that appropriate educational provision is available and that pupils remain connected to their school community.

The school aims to minimise the disruption to a child's education and support a successful return to school as soon as their health allows.

2. Aims

This policy aims to ensure that:

- Suitable education is arranged for pupils who cannot attend school because of health needs.
- Pupils continue to make academic progress during periods of absence.
- Pupils maintain contact with their peers and school community.
- Safeguarding responsibilities are maintained throughout any absence.
- Effective partnerships are developed with parents, health professionals, North Yorkshire Council and alternative education providers.
- Reintegration into school is carefully planned and supported.

3. Legal Framework

This policy has regard to:

- Section 19 of the Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions (DfE)
- Education for Children with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School (DfE, updated December 2023)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- North Yorkshire Council procedures for supporting children with medical conditions and those unable to attend school because of health needs

4. Definition

Children with health needs who cannot attend school are those who:

- Have physical health conditions.
- Have mental health difficulties.
- Have medical treatments that prevent attendance.
- Are recovering from illness, surgery or injury.
- Can only attend intermittently due to their medical condition.

This may include pupils who are absent for 15 school days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative.

5. Responsibilities

Governing Board

The Governing Board will:

- Ensure the school meets its statutory duties.
- Monitor implementation of this policy.
- Ensure suitable arrangements exist to support pupils with medical needs.

Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- Ensure appropriate support is put in place without delay.
- Appoint a named member of staff to coordinate provision.
- Maintain oversight of safeguarding arrangements.
- Liaise with North Yorkshire Council and the Medical Education Service when required.
- Ensure appropriate resources are available for learning.

Senco

The Senco will:

- Coordinate support for pupils unable to attend school.
- Liaise with parents, health professionals and external agencies.
- Arrange review meetings.

- Monitor pupils' progress and wellbeing.
- Support reintegration planning.

Class Teachers

Class teachers will:

- Provide suitable learning materials and curriculum plans.
- Monitor progress and provide feedback.
- Maintain appropriate contact with the pupil.
- Work alongside any tutor or educational provider involved.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Keep the school informed about their child's medical condition.
- Provide relevant medical evidence where appropriate.
- Support their child's engagement with educational provision.
- Attend review and reintegration meetings.

6. Early Identification and Support

The school will act promptly when it becomes clear that a pupil's health is affecting attendance.

Support may include:

- Reasonable adjustments.
- Adapted timetables.
- Remote learning.
- Home learning resources.
- Pastoral support.
- Individual Health Care Plans where appropriate.

The school will not wait unnecessarily before exploring suitable educational arrangements.

7. Educational Provision

Where a pupil cannot attend school because of health needs, the school will:

- Provide work and resources suitable to the pupil's needs.
- Ensure access to learning platforms and digital resources where appropriate.
- Tailor education to the pupil's age, aptitude, ability and any special educational needs.
- Monitor engagement and progress.

Where a child is likely to be absent for 15 school days or more and the school is unable to provide suitable education alone, North Yorkshire Council may arrange provision through the Medical Education Service (MES).

8. Pupils Receiving Medical Education Service (MES) Support

Where a pupil is supported by the Medical Education Service, the school will:

- Nominate a key contact.

- Maintain regular communication with the pupil and family.
- Share schemes of work, curriculum plans and resources.
- Attend Pupil Reintegration Education Plan (PREP) meetings.
- Continue to monitor safeguarding and wellbeing.
- Arrange examination entries and access arrangements where appropriate.
- Participate in review meetings and reintegration planning.

9. Safeguarding

The school retains safeguarding responsibility for pupils on roll, including those receiving education elsewhere because of health needs.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will:

- Maintain oversight of safeguarding arrangements.
- Ensure concerns are acted upon promptly.
- Liaise with alternative providers where necessary.
- Monitor attendance, welfare and engagement.

10. Communication and Wellbeing

The school recognises that prolonged absence can affect emotional wellbeing and social development.

To support pupils, the school may:

- Provide regular welfare check-ins.
- Maintain contact with classmates.
- Share school newsletters and updates.
- Invite pupils to suitable events and activities.
- Facilitate participation in school life where possible.

11. Reintegration to School

Return to school will be planned carefully and collaboratively.

The school will:

- Seek advice from relevant medical professionals.
- Meet with parents and the pupil.
- Agree a phased return where appropriate.
- Provide reasonable adjustments.
- Monitor attendance, wellbeing and progress.

Reintegration plans will be individualised and regularly reviewed.

12. Supporting Pupils with SEND or EHCPs

Where a pupil has SEND or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), educational provision will continue to meet identified needs.

The school will work with North Yorkshire Council, health services and parents to ensure that statutory requirements are met throughout any period of absence.

13. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher and SENDCo, or sooner if legislation, statutory guidance or local authority procedures change.

Related Policies

- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions
- Attendance Policy
- SEND Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Equality Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Behaviour Policy

This policy should be read alongside North Yorkshire Council procedures and the school's Medical Conditions Policy.