



Students with Additional Health Needs Attendance Policy

North Kesteven Academy
2025-2026



Introduction Date:	Autumn Term 2025
To be Reviewed:	Autumn Term 2026

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1. Statement of intent

North Kesteven Academy aims to ensure that all students who are unable to attend the academy due to medical needs continue to have access to as much education, including physical education, and as many school trips as their medical condition allows.

Due to the nature of their health needs, however, some students may be admitted to hospital or placed in alternative forms of education provision and unable to attend the academy as normal. We recognise that, whenever possible, students should receive their education within their school and the aim of the provision will be to help reintegrate students back into the academy as soon as they are well enough.

We understand that we have a continuing role in a student's education whilst they are not attending the academy and will work with the LA, healthcare partners and families to ensure that all students with medical needs receive the right level of support to enable them to maintain links with the academy.

2. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- DfE (2015) 'Supporting students at school with medical conditions'
- DfE (2022) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2023) 'Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following academy policies:

- Attendance and Absence Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy

3. Local Authority duties

For the purpose of this policy, the LA's duties when students are unable to attend school due to health needs are outlined below. These duties have been included so as to differentiate the responsibilities that lie with the academy and those that will be carried out by the LA. The academy is not responsible for ensuring that the LA meets its responsibilities – the academy's responsibilities are outlined in the 'Role and Responsibilities' section of this policy.

The LA will be responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would not receive suitable education without such provision. The academy will fulfil its duty to effectively collaborate and communicate with the LA as required.

In line with statutory guidance, the LA should:

- Provide such education as soon as it is clear that a student will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutively or cumulatively.
- Liaise with the appropriate medical professionals to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the student.
- Ensure the education students receive is of good quality, allows them to take appropriate qualifications, prevents them from falling behind their peers in school, and allows them to reintegrate successfully back into school as soon as possible.
- Address the needs of individual students in arranging provision.
- Have a named officer responsible for the education of students with additional health needs and ensure parents know who this is.
- Have a written, publicly accessible policy statement on their arrangements to comply with their legal duty towards children with additional health needs.
- Review the provision offered regularly to ensure that it continues to be appropriate for each student and that it provides suitable education.
- Have clear policies on the provision of education for children and young people under and over compulsory school age.
- Maintain good links with the schools in its area and put systems in place to promote co-operation between them when children cannot attend due to ill health.

To comply with statutory guidance, the LA should not:

- Have processes or policies in place which prevent a child from getting the right type of provision and a good education.
- Withhold or reduce the provision, or type of provision, for a child because of how much it will cost.
- Have policies based upon the percentage of time a student is able to attend school rather than whether the student is receiving a suitable education during that attendance.
- Have lists of health conditions which dictate whether or not they will arrange education for children or inflexible policies which result in children going without suitable full-time education (or as much education as their health condition allows them to participate in).

4. Definitions

“Children with health needs” are children of compulsory school age who are unable to attend school as a result of their medical needs. These medical needs include:

- Physical health issues.
- Physical injuries.
- Mental health problems, including anxiety issues.
- Emotional difficulties or school refusal.
- Progressive conditions.
- Terminal illnesses.
- Chronic illnesses.

Children who are unable to attend mainstream education for health reasons may attend or participate in any of the following:

- **Hospital school** – a school within a hospital setting where education is provided to give continuity whilst the child is receiving treatment.
- **Home tuition** – many LAs have home tuition services that act as a communication channel between schools and students on occasions where students are too ill to attend school and are receiving specialist medical treatment.

For the purpose of this policy, **“school-based support”** in relation to supporting students with additional health needs may include:

- Day-to-day support offered at school where the student is able to attend as normal.
- Support given to students who are absent from school because of illness for a period of less than 15 school days, whether consecutive or cumulative.
- Any educational or extra-curricular provision as requested by the LA as part of its arrangements for students who cannot attend school full-time, e.g. where the student attends school part-time as an arranged part of their full-time education provision.
- As part of their reintegration into normal school attendance following a period of absence or part-time attendance due to health needs.

“LA-arranged education”, for the purpose of this policy, is defined as education provision arranged by the LA where the student cannot attend school full time due to medical reasons for a period of 15 school days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The governing board will be responsible for:

- Ensuring there is a schedule of regular updates on the arrangements made for students who cannot attend the academy due to their medical needs.
- Ensuring the roles and responsibilities of those involved in any school-based arrangements to support the needs of students are clear and understood by all.
- Ensuring robust systems are in place for dealing with health emergencies and critical incidents where a student with health needs is able to, or partially able to, attend school and/or extra-curricular activities.
- Ensuring a suitable member of staff is assigned responsibility for the education of students with additional health needs to be a point of contact for the LA and parents.
- Ensuring staff with responsibility for supporting students with additional health needs are appropriately trained.
- Approving and reviewing this policy on an annual basis.

The headteacher will be responsible for:

- Working with the governing board to ensure compliance with the relevant statutory duties when supporting students with additional health needs.
- Working collaboratively with the LA, parents and other professionals, as necessary, to develop any school-based arrangements to meet the needs of students.
- Ensuring any school-based arrangements put in place to meet students' health needs are fully understood by all those involved and acted upon.
- Appointing a named member of staff who is responsible for students with additional health needs and liaises with parents, students, the LA, key workers and others involved in the student's care.
- Ensuring any school-based support put in place focusses on and meets the needs of individual students.
- Arranging appropriate training for staff with responsibility for supporting students with additional health needs who are attending school, or attend school part-time.
- Providing teachers who support students with additional health needs with suitable information relating to a student's health condition and the possible effect the condition and/or medication taken has on the student.
- Providing annual reports to the governing board on the effectiveness of any school-based arrangements in place to meet the needs of students of students who cannot attend school due to health needs.
- Notifying the LA when a student is likely to be away from the academy for a significant period of time due to their health needs.

The SENDCo will be responsible for:

- The management of any students registered at the academy who are unable to fully attend school because of their health needs.
- Actively monitoring student progress and reintegration into school.
- Supplying any LA-arranged education providers with information about students' capabilities, progress and outcomes.
- Liaising with the headteacher, LA-arranged education providers, and parents to help determine students' programmes of study whilst they are absent from school, where necessary.
- Keeping students who are being educated by LA-arranged education providers informed about academy events and encouraging communication with their peers.
- Providing a link between students and their parents, the academy, and LA where necessary.

Staff will be responsible for:

- Understanding confidentiality in respect of students' health needs.
- Designing school-based activities, including lessons, in a way that allows students with additional health needs to participate fully and ensuring students are not excluded from activities that they wish to take part in without a clear evidence-based reason.
- Understanding their role in any school-based support for students with additional health needs and ensuring they attend the required training.
- Ensuring they are aware of the needs of their students through the appropriate and lawful sharing of individual students' health needs.
- Keeping parents informed of how their child's health needs are affecting them whilst in school-based education.

Parents will be expected to:

- Ensure, where school-based provision is in place, the regular and punctual attendance of their child at the academy where possible.
- Work in partnership with the academy, LA and any LA-arranged provision to ensure the best possible outcomes for their child.
Notify the academy, or the relevant education provider, of the reason for any of their child's absences without delay.
- Provide the academy with sufficient and up-to-date information about their child's medical needs.
- Attend meetings to discuss how any school-based support, including reintegration, for their child should be planned.

6. Managing absence

Parents will be required to contact the academy on the first day their child is unable to attend due to illness.

Absences due to illness will be authorised unless the academy has genuine cause for concern about the authenticity of the illness.

The academy will provide support to students who are absent from the academy because of illness for a period of less than 15 school days, whether consecutive or cumulative, by liaising with the student's parents to arrange schoolwork, as soon as the student is able to cope with it, or part-time education at school. The academy will give due consideration to which aspects of the curriculum are prioritised in consultation with the student, their parents and relevant members of staff.

In line with the local authority policies, for significant periods of absence due to health reasons, the academy is able to apply for alternative provision through the local authority medical referral panel.

Where absences are anticipated or known in advance, the academy will liaise with the LA to enable education provision to be provided from the start of the student's absence.

For planned hospital admissions, the appointed named member of staff will liaise with the LA and the hospital education provider as early as possible to discuss the likely admission date and expected length. Plans will be made, where possible, for the educational programme to be followed while the student is in hospital.

The LA will set up a personal education plan (PEP) for the student which will allow the academy, the LA and the provider of the student's education to work together.

The academy will monitor student attendance and mark registers to ensure it is clear whether a student is, or should be, receiving education other than at school.

The academy will only remove a student who is unable to attend the academy because of additional health needs from the academy roll where:

- Neither the student nor their parent has indicated to the academy the intention to continue to attend the academy, after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.

A student unable to attend the academy because of their health needs will not be removed from the academy register without parental consent and, even if the LA has become responsible for the student's education.

Staff will be alert to the fact that missing education can put students at risk of harm and may be an indicator of a safeguarding issue. Concerns will be handled in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Children Missing from Education Policy. Staff will also be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for students with additional health needs.

7. Support for students

Where a student has a complex or long-term health issue, the academy will discuss the student's needs and how these may be best met with the LA, relevant medical professionals, parents and, where appropriate, the student.

Students with continuing health needs will have an IHP which is subject to regular review and assessment. Where a student's needs amount to ongoing SEND, an EHC plan may be more appropriate to meet their long-term needs. Where a student has an EHC plan and an IHP, both plans will be reviewed alongside each other.

Medical evidence will be used where available to best understand a student's needs and identify the most suitable provision. Where specific medical evidence is not readily available, the school will consider liaising with other medical practitioners and other sources of evidence to ensure appropriate provision can be arranged as soon as possible.

The LA expects the academy to support students with additional health needs to attend full-time education wherever possible, or for the academy to make reasonable adjustments to students' programmes of study where medical evidence supports the need for those adjustments.

The academy will make reasonable adjustments under students' IHCPs, in accordance with the Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy.

Students admitted to hospital will receive education as determined appropriate by the medical professionals and hospital tuition team at the hospital concerned.

During a period of absence, the academy will work with the provider of the student's education to establish and maintain regular communication and effective outcomes.

The use of digital resources will be considered to support learning and complement face-to-face education, where appropriate. Digital resources will only be used in accordance with the student's needs.

Whilst a student is away from academy, the academy will work with the LA to ensure the student can successfully remain in touch with their school using the following methods:

- Academy newsletters
- Emails
- Invitations to academy events
- Cards or letters from peers and staff

Where appropriate, the academy will provide the student's education provider with relevant information, curriculum materials and resources. The school will strive to achieve effective collaboration between relevant services to ensure continuity of provision and consistency of curriculum.

To help ensure a student with additional health needs is able to attend the academy following an extended period of absence, the following adaptations will be considered:

- A personalised or part-time timetable, drafted in consultation with the SENDCo, Head of Year or Assistant Head
- Access to additional support in the academy
- Online access to the curriculum from home
- Movement of lessons to more accessible rooms
- Places to rest at the academy
- Special exam arrangements to manage anxiety or fatigue

Provision for students will support their individual needs to overcome barriers to attainment and achievement, giving equal consideration to their pastoral needs to allow them to prosper in the education system. Consideration will be given to the student's personal, social and emotional needs to allow them to feel fully included in the school community, maintain contacts with classmates and have access to the same opportunities.

The school will ensure that students are involved in decision-making as much as possible, in accordance with the student's age and maturity, to help ensure that the right provision is offered and encourage their commitment and engagement.

Alongside the LA, the provision offered to a student will be regularly reviewed by the school to ensure it continues to be appropriate for the student's needs and that suitable education is being provided. The review process will seek input from:

- The student.
- Parents.
- Relevant agencies and medical practitioners, where possible.
- The LA SEND team, where the student has an EHC plan.

8. Reintegration

When a student is considered well enough to return to the academy, the academy will develop a tailored reintegration plan in collaboration with outside agencies.

During a lengthy absence, a reintegration plan will be developed near to the likely date of return to avoid putting unsuitable pressure on an ill pupil in the early stages of their absence.

The academy will work with the appropriate agencies including the Student Reintegration Team when reintegration into the academy is anticipated to plan for consistent provision during and after the period of education outside school.

As far as possible, the student will be able to access the curriculum and materials that they would have used in school.

The academy will consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made to provide suitable access to the school and the curriculum for the student.

For longer absences, the reintegration plan will be developed near to the student's likely date of return, to avoid putting unnecessary pressure on an ill student or their parents in the early stages of their absence.

The academy is aware that some students will need gradual reintegration over a long period of time and will always consult with the student, their parents and key staff about concerns, medical issues, timing and the preferred pace of return.

The reintegration plan will include:

- The date for planned reintegration, once known.
- Details of regular meetings to discuss reintegration.
- Details of the named member of staff who has responsibility for the student.
- Clearly stated responsibilities and the rights of all those involved.
- Details of social contacts, including the involvement of peers and mentors during the transition period.
- A programme of small goals leading up to reintegration.
- Follow-up procedures.

The academy will ensure a welcoming environment is developed and encourage students and staff to be positive and proactive during the reintegration period.

9. Information Sharing

It is essential that all information about students with additional health needs is kept up-to-date.

All confidential information relating to students with additional health needs will be handled in accordance with the academy's Data Protection Policy and Student Privacy Notice.

All teachers, LSAs, supply and support staff will be provided with access to relevant information, including high-risk health needs, first aiders and emergency procedures, via a Health Care Plan and / or Learner Profile.

Parents will be made aware of their own rights and responsibilities regarding confidentiality and information sharing. To help achieve this, the school will:

- Ensure this policy and other relevant policies are easily available and accessible.
- Provide the student and their parents with a copy of the policy on information sharing.
- Ask parents to sign a consent form which clearly details the organisations and individuals that their child's health information will be shared with and which methods of sharing will be used.
- Consider how friendship groups and peers may be able to assist students with additional health needs.

When a student is discharged from hospital or is returning from other education provision, the school will ensure the appropriate information is received to allow for a

smooth return to the school. The named member of staff will liaise with the hospital or other tuition service as appropriate.

10. Record keeping

In accordance with the Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy, written records will be kept of all medicines administered to students.

Proper record keeping will protect both staff and students and provide evidence that agreed procedures have been followed.

All records will be maintained in line with the statutory guidance.

11. Training

Healthcare professionals will be involved in identifying and agreeing with the academy the type and level of training required. Training will be sufficient to ensure staff are confident in their ability to support students with additional health needs.

Staff will be trained in a timely manner to assist with a student's return to the academy.

Once a student's return date has been confirmed, staff will be provided with relevant training one week before the student's anticipated return.

Parents of students with additional health needs may provide specific advice but will not be the sole trainer of staff.

12. Examinations and assessment

The SENDCo will liaise with the alternative provision provider over planning and examination course requirements where appropriate.

Relevant assessment information will be provided to the alternative provision provider if required.

Awarding bodies may make special arrangements for students with permanent or long-term disabilities and learning difficulties, or temporary disabilities and illnesses. Applications for such arrangements will be submitted by the school, or PRT if more appropriate, as early as possible.

13. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed by the governing board on an annual basis.

Any changes to the policy will be clearly communicated to all members of staff involved in supporting students with additional health needs, and to parents and students themselves.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is Autumn Term 2026.