

Pupils unable to attend school due to health/medical needs Policy

Weaverham High School



Approved by:	Governing Body	Date: 8 th October 2025
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Last reviewed on:	September 2025
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Next review due by:	September 2026
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Introduction

Most pupils at some time have a medical condition, which may prevent them from attending school. For the majority this will be short term. For pupils who have long-term or recurrent illness, access to school may be limited. The Department for Education (DfE) has produced statutory guidance 'Access to Education for Children and Young People with Medical Needs' with regard to pupils who may be absent for more than 15 school days because of medical need. This policy statement has been written to comply with such guidance.

Weaverham High School seeks to maintain a high quality education for those pupils on roll who have medical needs and are unable to attend school as a result.

Weaverham High School will work closely with parents, the Local Authority (LA), health professionals and other agencies to ensure that their pupils receive access to appropriate educational provision when they are not able to attend school.

Weaverham High School is mindful of the objectives set out in the document 'Every Child Matters' and the importance of providing support for those objectives to be achieved when their pupils are not able to attend school. Weaverham High School fully understand its role and that of parents and pupil to secure personalised and appropriate support and provision. See appendix 1.

Children and young people who are unable to attend school as a result of their medical needs will include those with:

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

Management Responsibility

The designated member of staff with responsibility for pupils with medical needs at Weaverham High School is Mr Richard Harris. The role of the designated member of staff is to work in conjunction with our Raising Standards Team and Access and Achievement Team to ensure our approach to support is personalised, monitored and has impact. The point of contact for Parents will be the Pastoral Support Manager for the year group. They will provide a link between the school, family and the LA and other agencies. to support the young person.

Continuing Provision for pupils with Medical Needs

Attendance process at Weaverham High School are robust. Our Attendance Officer works in collaboration with Heads of Year and Senior Leaders to ensure any pupil whose absence is a concern has appropriate intervention. When Weaverham High School becomes aware that a pupil will be absent for more than 15 school days because of their medical need, the designated member of staff will notify the Education Access Team as soon as possible. This will assist the LA with continuity of educational provision. Weaverham High School will contact parents and arrange a meeting to discuss the needs of the child and seek to agree a short term education plan. The Attendance Officer will be updated on these discussions and agreed outcomes.

The designated member of staff will provide the Education Access Team with the necessary information as is required to make a referral to an appropriate education provider. Parental consent will be obtained before information regarding the pupil is passed to the Education Access Team

The designated member of staff will be responsible for liaising with the LA education provider and will ensure that information is given regarding the pupil's ability, progress and work programmes. Wherever possible, work and materials will be provided for the pupil in accordance with their peers.

In cases of long-term or recurrent absence the designated member of staff will participate in the development of a Personal Education Plan (PEP) for the pupil. This will be written in conjunction with the LA, healthcare professionals, the parents/carers and the pupil.

Monitoring and Recording of Absence

All pupils who are unable to attend school for more than 15 school days due to medical needs will be regularly monitored and reviewed by the designated member of staff together with the LA representatives. Ongoing medical advice will be taken into account at all times.

Absence will be recorded on the register as medical (eg code M) only when appropriate medical advice has been received. When a pupil commences education with an alternative education provider the absence will be recorded as educated off site (eg code B).

This is in accordance with the LA attendance policy.

Pupils absent for medical reasons will not be removed from the school roll unless advice is received from the School Medical Officer. Parents/carers will be fully consulted and their consent sought if their child is to be removed from the school roll in these circumstances.

Pupils with Long-Term or Recurring Absence

Some pupils will be away from school long-term or with recurrent bouts of illness. In these cases the designated member of staff will liaise with the LA to ensure that alternative education provision is put in place as soon as possible. The school will have responsibility for ensuring that the education provider has all information regarding work programmes and curriculum plans. It is acknowledged that continuity of education is important for these pupils. For pupils whose learning progress is being severely affected by long-term absence the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDCO) will be advised and consideration will be given as to whether Statutory Assessment of Special Educational Needs should commence.

Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need or Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP)

These pupils may be able to access alternative educational provision through the LA – sometimes with assistance from specialist teaching services. The SENDCO will notify the Assessment and Placement Service if a pupil with a Statement of SEND or EHCP is going to be absent from school through medical need.

The school will retain responsibility for co-ordinating the Annual Review meetings and for inviting the appropriate people to such reviews.

Reintegration

For pupils who have been absent from school it may be necessary to have a staged reintegration plan. The designated member of staff will co-ordinate the initial meeting to instigate a plan, together with the LA, parent/carer, pupil and any health professionals who may need to be involved.

The reintegration will be monitored and reviewed regularly with all parties to ensure success. The student may be assigned access to the Reintegration Studio to ensure they are supported successfully back into school

Contact between School/Pupil

Weaverham High School is committed to ensuring that, even if a pupil is absent for medical reasons they should retain contact with the school.

After consultation with the pupil, and taking into account their wishes in relation to the level of contact, the designated member of staff will put a plan into place to ensure contact is maintained.

Weaverham High School has the following modes of contact available:

1:1 support from Pastoral Support Managers of Achievement Coordinators, newsletters to be sent home, peer group home visits, inclusion in trips and social events, contact with peers and members of staff via email or letters

Public Examinations

Wherever possible pupils will be entered for public examinations. Weaverham High School will endeavour to work with other education providers to ensure that sufficient educational input is made to enable each pupil to reach their full potential.

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In some cases the school may make special arrangements with Awarding Bodies for pupils who are unable to attend school because of their medical need.

As the time for public examination nears, pupils and parents/carers will be fully consulted by the designated member of staff so that their wishes may be taken into consideration.

Date of Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years at the same time as the Policy for Special Educational Needs or earlier if there is a change in legislation or guidance from the DfE.

This policy was drawn up using the sample policy supplied by the Local Authority

Appendix 1

The School's role is to:

- host and chair regular review meetings (normally every 6 weeks); produce action plans and distribute notes of these meetings;
- provide materials for an appropriate programme of work and work plans;
- maintain a plan, such as an Individual Education Plan, which records progress made towards a return to school;
- ensure all staff are kept informed;
- ensure appropriate arrangements, including entry and invigilation are made for all examinations;
- provide the pupil's academic attainment levels including any relevant examination requirements;
- make arrangements for public exams;
- assess coursework;
- facilitate career interviews;
- arrange work experience placements;
- provide a named teacher with whom each party can liaise (usually the SENDCO);
- provide a suitable working area within the School, where necessary;
- be active in the monitoring of progress and the reintegration into school, using key staff to facilitate the reintegration into school;
- ensure that pupils who are unable to attend school, are kept informed about school social events, are able to participate, for example, in homework clubs, study support and other activities;
- encourage and facilitate liaison with peers, for example, through visits and videos.

The pupil's role is to:

- engage with the provider;
- be prepared to communicate their views;
- engage with other agencies as appropriate;
- prepare for reintegration as soon as possible.

The parents' role is to:

- commit to a plan of reintegration;
- be willing to work together with all concerned;
- provide early communication if a problem arises or help is needed;
- attend necessary meetings;
- reinforce with their child, the value of a return to school.

The provider's role is to:

- liaise with the named person in school;
- liaise, where appropriate, with outside agencies;
- be sensitive to the needs of the child and family;
- provide a flexible teaching programme;
- provide regular reports on the pupil's progress and achievements;
- provide an opportunity for the pupil to comment on their report;
- ensure appropriate course work and any other relevant material is returned to school;
- work with the mainstream school and Education Welfare Service (EWS) where appropriate to ensure good attendance whilst with the provider;
- attend review meetings;
- help set up an appropriate reintegration programme at the earliest opportunity as soon as the pupil is ready to return to school.

Health Service's role is to:

- offer medical treatment and advice where appropriate.

Other involved agencies, for example Social Services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service's role is to:

- work, with others, for the benefit of the pupil;
- attend review meetings if possible;
- provide written reports where necessary;
- give appropriate advice and support.