



Children with health needs who cannot attend school Policy

Date: **November 2024**

To be reviewed: **November 2026**

Aims

At Norbreck Primary Academy, we aim to ensure that all children, regardless of circumstance or setting, receive a good education to enable them to shape their own futures. Children may miss school due to health reasons. This may be illness (physical or mental health), injury or a planned admission to hospital. The health problem may be time-limited, or a child may have a long-term condition. Most absences will be for minor, short-term health problems and absences from school will be short and infrequent. In such a case, Norbreck Primary Academy would work with the child's family to arrange any educational support relating to such absences. However, some children may miss school for longer periods due to health reasons which prevent them from attending school.

This policy sets out the alternative education arrangements of those children and the role of Blackpool Council in providing such provision.

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
- Data Protection Act 2018
- DfE (2013) 'Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs'
- DfE (2015) 'Supporting students at school with medical conditions'

Definitions

Children who are unable to attend Norbreck Primary Academy as a result of their medical needs may include those with:

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

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

- Hospital school: a special 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.
- Medical PRUs: these are LA establishments that provide education for children unable to attend their registered school due to their medical needs.

Local Authority Arrangements

The Local Authority (LA) must arrange suitable full-time education for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would not receive suitable education without such provision. Norbreck Primary Academy has a duty to support the LA in doing so.

The LA should:

- Provide such education as soon as it is clear that a child will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative. They should liaise with the appropriate medical professionals to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the child.
- Ensure the education the child receives 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 Norbreck Primary Academy as soon as possible.
- Address the needs of individual children in arranging provision.
- Have a named officer responsible for the education of children 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 the child and that it is providing suitable education.
- Give clear policies on the provision of education for children and young people under and over compulsory school age.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees is responsible for:

- Ensuring arrangements for children who cannot attend Norbreck Primary Academy as a result of their medical needs are in place and are effectively implemented.
- Ensuring the termly review of the arrangements made for children who cannot attend Norbreck Primary Academy due to their medical needs.
- Ensuring the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the arrangements to support the needs of children are clear and understood by all.
- Ensuring robust systems are in place for dealing with health emergencies and critical incidents, for both on and off-site activities.
- Ensuring staff with responsibility for supporting children with health needs are appropriately trained.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Working with the Board of Trustees to ensure compliance with the relevant statutory duties when supporting children with health needs.
- Working collaboratively with parents and other professionals to develop arrangements to meet the best interests of children with medical and health needs.
- Ensuring the arrangements put in place to meet children's health needs are fully understood by all those involved and acted upon.
- Appointing a named member of staff who is responsible for children with healthcare needs and liaises with parents, the LA, key workers and others involved in the child's care.
- Ensuring the support put in place focusses on and meets the needs of the individual child.
- Arranging appropriate training for staff with responsibility for supporting children with health needs.
- Providing teachers who support children with health needs with suitable information relating to the child's health condition and the possible effect the condition and/or medication taken has on the child.
- Providing reports to the Board of Trustees on the effectiveness of the arrangements in place to meet the health needs of the child.
- Notifying the LA when a child is likely to be away from Norbreck Primary Academy for a significant period of time due to their health needs.

Norbreck Primary Academy will have a named member of staff. They are responsible for:

- Dealing with children who are unable to attend Norbreck Primary Academy because of medical needs.
- Actively monitoring the child's progress and reintegration into school.
- Supplying the education providers with information about the child's capabilities, progress and outcomes.
- Liaising with the Headteacher, education providers and parents to determine the child's programmes of study whilst they are absent from Norbreck Primary Academy.
- Keeping children informed about Norbreck Primary Academy's events and encouraging communication with their peers.
- Providing a link between the child and their parents, and the LA.

Teachers and support staff are responsible for:

- Understanding confidentiality in respect of the child's health needs.
- Designing lessons and activities in a way that allows those with health needs to participate fully and ensuring they are not excluded from activities that they wish to take part in without a clear evidence-based reason.
- Understanding their role in supporting children with health needs and ensuring they attend the required training.
- Ensuring they are aware of the needs of the child through the appropriate and lawful sharing of the individual child's health needs.
- Ensuring they are aware of the signs, symptoms and triggers of common life-threatening medical conditions and know what to do in an emergency.
- Keeping parents informed of how their child's health needs are affecting them whilst at Norbreck Primary Academy.

Parents are expected to:

- Ensure the regular and punctual attendance of their child at Norbreck Primary Academy where possible.
- Work in partnership with Norbreck Primary Academy to ensure the best possible outcomes for their child.
- Notify Norbreck Primary Academy of the reason for any of their child's absences without delay.

- Provide Norbreck Primary Academy with sufficient and up-to-date information about their child's medical needs.
- Attend meetings to discuss how support for their child should be planned.

Managing Absences

Parents are advised to contact Norbreck Primary Academy on the first day their child is unable to attend due to illness. Absences due to illness will be authorised unless Norbreck Primary Academy has genuine cause for concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Norbreck Primary Academy will provide support to children who are absent from school because of illness for a period of less than 15 school days by liaising with the child's parents to arrange schoolwork as soon as the child is able to cope with it or part-time education at Norbreck Primary Academy.

Norbreck Primary Academy will give due consideration to which aspects of the curriculum are prioritised in consultation with the child, their family and relevant members of staff. For periods of absence that are expected to last for 15 or more school days, either in one absence or over the course of an academic year, the named person with responsibility for children with health needs will notify the LA, who will take responsibility for the child and their education.

Where absences are anticipated or known in advance, Norbreck Primary Academy will liaise with the LA to enable education provision to be provided from the start of the child's absence. For hospital admissions, the appointed named member of staff will liaise with the LA regarding the programme that should be followed while the child is in hospital. The LA will set up a Personal Education Plan (PEP) for the child which will allow Norbreck, the LA and the provider of the child's education to work together. Norbreck Primary Academy will monitor attendance and mark registers to ensure it is clear whether a child is, or should be, receiving education otherwise than at Norbreck Primary Academy.

Support for Children

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

The LA expects Norbreck to support children with health needs to attend full-time education wherever possible, or for Norbreck to make reasonable adjustments to children's programmes of study where medical evidence supports the need for those adjustments. Norbreck will make reasonable adjustments under children's individual Healthcare Plans (HCPs), in accordance with the Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy.

Children 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, Norbreck will work with the provider of the child's education to establish and maintain regular communication and effective outcomes.

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

- Norbreck newsletters;
- Parent Connect App;

- Seesaw;
- access to shared online learning platforms such as TimeTables Rockstars and Spelling Shed;
- invitations to Norbreck events;
- cards or letters from peers and staff;
- where appropriate, we will provide the child's education provider with relevant information, curriculum materials and resources.

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

- a personalised or part-time timetable, drafted in consultation with the named staff member;
- access to additional support at Norbreck;
- online access to the curriculum from home;
- movement of lessons to more accessible rooms;
- places to rest.

Information Sharing

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

All teachers, supply and support staff will be provided with access to relevant information, including high-risk health needs, first aiders and emergency procedures, via the agreed School procedures.

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

- ensure this policy and other relevant policies are easily available and accessible;
- provide parents with a copy of the policy on information sharing;
- ask parents to sign a consent form which clearly details who their child's health information will be shared with and which methods of sharing will be used;
- when a child is discharged from hospital or is returning from other education provision, Norbreck will ensure the appropriate information is received to allow for a smooth return to school. The named member of staff will liaise with the hospital or other tuition service as appropriate.

Record Keeping

In accordance with the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, written records will be kept of all medicines administered to children. Proper record keeping protects both staff and children and provides evidence that agreed procedures have been followed.

Training

Staff will be trained in a timely manner to assist with a child's return to school. Once a child's return date has been confirmed, staff will be provided with relevant training before the child's anticipated return. Healthcare professionals should be involved in identifying and agreeing with Norbreck Primary Academy the type and level of training required.

Training will be sufficient to ensure staff are confident in their ability to support children with additional health needs. Parents of children with additional health needs may provide specific advice but will not be the sole trainer of staff.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

This policy links to the following policies:

- Supporting pupils with a Medical Condition Policy;
- Accessibility Policy.