



OUR MISSION: TO TRY OUR BEST, TO TELL THE TRUTH, TO LOOK AFTER EACH OTHER AND THE COMMUNITY

"Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare is OUTSTANDING" (Ofsted, 2019)

Children with health needs who cannot attend school policy

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Chair of Governors: Mrs L.Glasper

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Next review due by: September 2026

1. Aims

Stanley Crook Primary School is committed to ensuring that pupils who are unable to attend school because of physical or mental health needs continue to receive a suitable education and remain connected to school life wherever possible.

This policy aims to ensure that:

- Pupils with health needs receive suitable and effective education.
 - Educational disruption is minimised.
 - Pupils can access education equivalent to that provided to their peers, as far as their health needs allow.
 - Pupils, parents/carers and staff understand the respective responsibilities of the school and Durham County Council.
 - Pupils are supported to maintain relationships, wellbeing and a sense of belonging during periods of absence.
 - Effective arrangements are made for reintegration to school following absence.
 - The school fulfils its duties under equality, SEND and safeguarding legislation.
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2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on:

- Section 19 of the Education Act 1996
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Section 100 of the Children and Families Act 2014

It also reflects the following guidance:

- *Arranging Education for Children Who Cannot Attend School Because of Health Needs* (DfE, December 2023)
- *Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions* (DfE, August 2017)
- *Alternative Provision Statutory Guidance*
- *Mental Health Issues Affecting a Pupil's Attendance: Guidance for Schools*
- Durham County Council guidance relating to supporting children with medical conditions and health-related absence.

This policy should be read alongside the school's:

- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- SEND Policy

- Attendance Policy
 - Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
 - Accessibility Plan
 - Equality Information and Objectives
 - Remote Education Offer
 - Complaints Policy
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3. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, health needs may include:

- Physical illnesses
- Chronic medical conditions
- Recovery from surgery or treatment
- Accidents and injuries
- Mental health conditions
- Emotional health difficulties
- Hospitalisation
- Long-term or recurring illnesses

A pupil does not need an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or disability status to be eligible for support under this policy.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Governing Board

The governing board has overall responsibility for ensuring that:

- Appropriate arrangements are in place to support pupils with health needs.
 - The school complies with statutory duties.
 - This policy is reviewed annually.
 - Strategic oversight is maintained regarding pupils unable to attend school due to health needs whilst maintaining appropriate confidentiality.
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4.2 Headteacher

The Headteacher is the school's named lead for pupils with health needs who cannot attend school.

The Headteacher will:

- Oversee implementation of this policy.
- Act as the main point of contact with Durham County Council where required.
- Coordinate support for pupils with prolonged absences.
- Ensure staff understand their responsibilities.
- Monitor educational provision and reintegration arrangements.
- Ensure appropriate safeguarding arrangements remain in place.

Operational responsibilities may be delegated to another member of the senior leadership team, but overall accountability remains with the Headteacher.

4.3 Parents and Carers

Parents/carers should:

- Inform the school of their child's medical needs as soon as possible.
- Provide relevant medical information and evidence where appropriate.
- Engage with meetings and reviews.
- Support agreed reintegration arrangements.
- Keep emergency contact information updated.

4.4 Pupils

Where appropriate, pupils will be:

- Consulted about their education.
- Involved in planning support arrangements.
- Included in decisions regarding reintegration.
- Encouraged to share their views and preferences.

5. Supporting Pupils Before Alternative Provision Is Required

The school recognises that many pupils with health conditions can continue to attend school successfully with appropriate support.

Where possible, pupils will remain in school through:

- Reasonable adjustments.
- Adapted timetables.
- Individual Healthcare Plans.
- Medical support arrangements.
- Pastoral support.
- SEND provision where required.
- Mental health support.
- Temporary flexibility regarding attendance where appropriate.

The school will work closely with parents, healthcare professionals and external agencies to ensure that barriers to attendance are reduced wherever possible.

6. Individual Healthcare Plans

Where appropriate, pupils will have an Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP).

The IHP will:

- Identify the pupil's medical needs.
- Clarify support arrangements.
- Outline reasonable adjustments.
- Specify roles and responsibilities.
- Detail emergency arrangements.
- Support reintegration planning.

IHPs will be reviewed annually or sooner where needs change.

Where pupils have SEND Support Plans or an EHCP, healthcare planning will be coordinated with these arrangements.

7. When a Pupil Cannot Attend School

Where a pupil cannot attend school because of their health needs, the school will seek to ensure continuity of education.

The school will:

- Maintain regular contact with the pupil and family.
- Consider flexible and personalised approaches.
- Liaise with medical professionals where appropriate.
- Keep educational disruption to a minimum.
- Monitor the pupil's progress and wellbeing.

Support may include:

- Adapted learning materials.
- Remote learning.
- Blended learning approaches.
- Hospital education.
- Home tuition.
- Work provided through digital platforms.
- Support from external agencies.

The school will not wait until 15 days of absence have elapsed before seeking advice and support for a pupil experiencing significant health-related absence.

8. Durham County Council Responsibilities

Where it becomes clear that a pupil is likely to be absent for 15 school days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative over a school year, the school will work with Durham County Council to determine whether alternative provision should be arranged.

Where Durham County Council becomes responsible for arranging education, the school will:

- Provide information about the pupil's curriculum.
- Share assessment information.
- Support continuity of learning.
- Attend planning and review meetings.
- Maintain contact with the pupil and family.
- Support reintegration.

The school will continue to regard the pupil as a valued member of the school community.

9. Maintaining School Connection

The school will make reasonable efforts to help pupils remain connected to school life during periods of absence.

This may include:

- School newsletters.
- School communications.
- Digital learning platforms.
- Email contact.
- Invitations to appropriate school events.
- Opportunities to maintain peer relationships.

Arrangements will always take account of the pupil's health needs and wellbeing.

10. SEND and Equality Considerations

Where a pupil has SEND or an EHCP, the school will work closely with Durham County Council SEND services and relevant professionals to ensure educational arrangements remain appropriate.

The school recognises that some medical conditions may meet the definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010.

The school will:

- Avoid discrimination.
 - Make reasonable adjustments where required.
 - Promote equality of opportunity.
 - Remove barriers to participation wherever possible.
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11. Safeguarding

The school recognises that prolonged absence due to health needs may increase safeguarding risks.

Where appropriate:

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be informed.
- Safeguarding procedures will continue to apply.
- Welfare checks may be undertaken.
- Multi-agency working will be maintained.
- The emotional wellbeing of pupils will be monitored.

Pupils educated off-site, online or at home remain subject to the school's safeguarding responsibilities.

12. Reintegration into School

Planning for reintegration will begin as early as possible.

The school will work with:

- The pupil
- Parents/carers
- Durham County Council
- Healthcare professionals
- Other relevant agencies

to develop an individual reintegration plan.

Plans may include:

- A phased return.
- Curriculum support.
- Pastoral support.
- Attendance targets.
- Additional interventions.
- Reasonable adjustments.
- Ongoing medical support.

Reintegration plans will be reviewed regularly and amended according to the pupil's needs.

13. Examinations and Assessment

Where applicable, the school will work with Durham County Council and external providers to ensure that pupils are able to access assessments and examinations alongside their peers wherever possible.

Appropriate access arrangements will be considered where required.

14. Monitoring Arrangements

The Headteacher will review this policy annually.

The effectiveness of arrangements for pupils with health needs will be monitored through:

- Attendance data.
- Reintegration outcomes.
- Parent and pupil feedback.
- Review meetings.
- Governor oversight.

The governing board will receive periodic reports regarding implementation of this policy whilst ensuring individual pupils cannot be identified unnecessarily.

15. Complaints

Concerns regarding support provided under this policy should initially be raised with the Headteacher.

If concerns cannot be resolved informally, parents/carers may make a formal complaint through the school's Complaints Policy.

Where concerns relate to alternative provision arranged by Durham County Council, parents/carers may also raise concerns directly with the Local Authority.