Hednesford Valley High

Disability & Children with Health Needs Policy

Reviewed by:	Emma Perry
Last reviewed:	September 2025
Next review due by:	September 2026

1. Introduction

Hednesford Valley High is committed to equality of opportunity and access for all. This policy sets out the school's commitment to:

- Students, staff, and governors with disabilities (current and potential).
- Those who may become disabled during their time at the school.
- Children with health needs who may be unable to attend school for short or long periods.

We aim to create a supportive environment where every member of our school community can participate fully in education, employment, and governance.

Legal Framework:
This policy is guided by:

- Equality Act 2010 (reasonable adjustments and non-discrimination duty).
- SEND Regulations 2014 and SEND Code of Practice (0–25 years, updated Sept 2024).
- Education Act 1996, Section 19 (education for children unable to attend due to health needs).
- DfE guidance *Arranging Education for Children Who Cannot Attend School Because of Health Needs* (2023).

2. Objectives

- Ensure equality of access and opportunity for all students, staff, and governors with disabilities.
- Provide additional support to children with health needs unable to attend school.
- Promote awareness, acceptance, and positive attitudes towards disability across the school.
- Work in partnership with families, local authorities, healthcare providers, and external agencies.

3. Students with Disabilities

- Admissions are made irrespective of disability.
- Reasonable adjustments will be provided to ensure access to the curriculum, assessments, and extracurricular activities.
- Individual Health Care Plans (IHCPs) or Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) will guide provision where appropriate.
- Assistive technology, adapted materials, and specialist equipment will be provided where possible.
- Disability awareness and representation are promoted through assemblies, curriculum content, and whole-school ethos.

4. Students with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School

Where a student cannot attend due to illness or medical treatment:

Short-term absences (up to 15 days):

- Teachers will provide appropriate learning materials.
- The SENDCo will liaise with parents and medical professionals to ensure continuity.

Long-term absences (15 days or more, continuous or cumulative):

- The Local Authority is responsible for arranging suitable alternative provision (e.g. home or hospital tuition).

- The school will collaborate with the LA, health professionals, and family to draw up a Personal Education Plan (PEP) or IHCP.
- A reintegration plan will support the pupil's return, including phased timetables, reduced hours, and pastoral support.

Principles:

- Children should have access to education equivalent to their peers.
- Provision must be flexible, reviewed regularly, and centred on wellbeing as well as academic progress.

5. Staff and Governors with Disabilities

Recruitment

- Recruitment and selection processes encourage applications from people with disabilities.
- Reasonable adjustments are provided for applicants at every stage of recruitment.
- Selection decisions are based solely on qualifications, experience, and skills.

Retention and Support

- Staff who become disabled will be supported to remain in employment wherever possible.
- Reasonable adjustments will be made to duties, equipment, working hours, or the environment as required.
- Redeployment will be considered where necessary and appropriate.
- Wellbeing support and Occupational Health input will be offered.

Training and Career Development

- Training and development opportunities are accessible to all staff and governors.
- Adjustments (e.g. accessible venues, adapted materials, flexible delivery) will be made to enable full participation.
- Line managers will ensure staff with disabilities are supported to progress in their roles.

Workplace Culture

- All staff and governors receive disability awareness training.
- Leaders and colleagues are expected to respond positively to individual adjustments.
- Staff with disabilities will be consulted on changes affecting their roles or working conditions.

6. Working and Learning Environment

- The school will use its best endeavours to ensure the physical environment is accessible (entrances, classrooms, toilets, signage).
- New building work will comply with accessibility standards.
- Digital learning platforms, communications, and resources will be made accessible.
- Information for parents/carers and staff will be available in alternative formats (large print, translated, audio, telephone).

7. Monitoring and Data

- The Business Manager will maintain confidential records of staff who declare a disability to monitor recruitment and retention.

- The SENDCo will monitor the progress, attainment, and inclusion of students with disabilities and/or health needs.
- Policy effectiveness will be evaluated through outcomes, attendance, stakeholder feedback, and review of adjustments.

8. External Partnerships

- The school will work with external advisory bodies, including local Disability Services, NHS professionals, Access to Work, and the Disability Employment Adviser.
- Parents, carers, staff, and students with disabilities will be involved in reviewing policy implementation.

9. Dissemination and Review

- This policy will be shared with staff, governors, and stakeholders, and published on the school website.
- It will be reviewed annually, or sooner if guidance changes.
- Next full review: **February 2026**.