

WHAT TO DISCUSS WITH SCHOOLS?

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Schools can be an excellent source of support for both you and your child. Some schools need a bit of guidance from the family, so a good way to provide this is to arrange a meeting, and discuss points that are relevant and important to you.

Can I have a direct communication link with a staff member rather than going through reception?

Here are the names, contact details, and relationship to my child, of the people who can collect my child from school.

Which member of staff can I communicate with at short notice for problems such as clinics overrunning, or a change in person doing the pickup?

How flexible can pick up and drop off be? Is it possible to drop or collect from a different place, perhaps at an earlier time?

Here are some dates of planned treatment or periods where I will be absent from home.

Could you have extra reminders set for future events or deadlines because the receiving and returning of information might become less efficient than usual?

Is it possible for my child to do their homework whilst at school, perhaps with someone available to help them?

Does my child have to do homework?

Can my child get priority access to afterschool clubs?

Can I be informed if my child has been in contact with any illness going around the school (vomiting, diarrhoea, flu, chicken pox, shingles)?

Can you help facilitate a support network of other school parents to help me stay on top of school trips, homework, school activities, or help with giving my child lifts to and from school?

Can you let me know if you have observed any behavioural changes at school in my child?

Can I get feedback on my child's well-being, for example if they have had a 'sad' day?

Is there anyone at school that can help with the planning around transitioning to secondary school?

When my child is playing and you overhear something that might be relevant, for example, a misunderstanding about what is happening at home or with my cancer, can you let me know?

Is it possible to hold parent's evening online via zoom/Teams?

Please could you keep things as consistent as possible, and limit transitions or changes for my child? For example do not mix up classes, change academic sets, lunch timings. If changes to any schedules do have to happen, please can you give as much advance warning to my child?

Is it possible for my child to have lunch time activity that keeps them busy, for example, tidying the library, or a creative art group, or an active sports group, where their friends get together? Can they extra help with transitioning between free time and structured time?

What system will be in place for them if they need to leave the classroom because they are upset or overwhelmed? Will it be a card they put on the desk, a hand signal, or something else? Where do they go, who checks in on them, and what will they do while they are having some time out?

Please never exclude my child, for example by sending them out of the room. Talk to them first about what you are going to say, and then ask them if they want to stay.

Can my child bring in their book about cancer? Can you help them read it to the class?

Can my child be allowed to bring something in from home that helps them with separation anxiety, for example a piece of cloth sewn into their sleeve, or a stone or small soft toy in their pocket or bag?

Can you create a little job for my child before school starts, like sharpening the pencils, so they are less focused on separating from me?

Can you inform me (and my child) in advance about what is coming up in the curriculum so I can help prepare my child? For example, in Y6 or Y7 The Monster Calls by Patrick Ness might be triggering especially if they are not warned of the story line beforehand.



Could my child have a safe place to park their worries every morning before school, like a worry box or a journal? Could it be kept at school?

Can my child bring in a copy of their calendar/planner that shows my medical appointments, changes in childcare, family events coming up etc, so you get an understanding of what is happening at home, and can manage your expectations on what they might be able to achieve?

Is it possible for school assemblies, plays, and other important events at school to be recorded as I won't be able to attend them?

Can my child put on a fundraising event, like cake sale or fun run, for a cancer charity? Or if there is one planned can I be informed and can you ask whether my child might like to be included?

Could my child have a special folder where they can keep their work? Could they bring it home once a week to show me what they have been doing?

Can the school buy some age-appropriate books about cancer? Can we have a cancer education day? Can I come and do a circle time?