WORKING WITH SCHOOLS
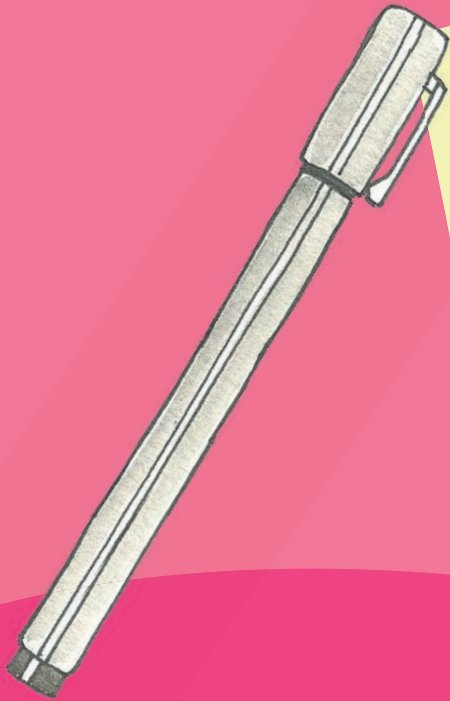
Discuss with your child what the school should know, and which staff to tell.

THINGS YOU MAY WANT TO TELL THE TEACHERS

- Your cancer type and prognosis
- Your treatment plan and any hospital stays
- Side-effects of treatment that you anticipate or are experiencing and the impact of those
- Whether you will no longer be working
- What your child knows about your cancer diagnosis
- The language you are using at home (e.g. tumour or lump)
- The staff member/s your child feel comfortable talking to
- Whether your child wants, or do not want, staff to keep checking in
- The changes at home your child may be experiencing (looking after siblings, chores, sleeping at a relative/friends, co-parent becoming primary carer)
- The names and contact details of the people who might be looking after them/ collecting from school

QUESTIONS TO ASK THE SCHOOL

Who I can directly 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?

What system will be in place if my child needs to leave the classroom because they are upset or overwhelmed?

Is it possible for my child to do their homework whilst at school, and for someone to support them with this?

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

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

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

Can my child get priority access to after school clubs?

Can you help facilitate a support network of other school parents?

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

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

If appropriate, do you have pre-bereavement policy in place?

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

THINGS YOU CAN ASK THE SCHOOL TO DO TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD

1 Can you try and keep everything as consistent as possible, and limit transitions or changes. For example do not mix up classes, or change sets, lunch timings. If changes to any schedules do have to happen, please can they be given advance warnings?

2 Can lunch time activities be provided for my child, for example, tidying the library, a creative art group, or an active sports group?

3 Can you help with drop off separation anxiety, and create a little job my child has do, like sharpen the pencils?

4 Allow my child to carry something comforting that connects them with home in their pocket (stone, piece of material, button).

5 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.

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

7 Can you inform me (and my child) in advance about what is coming up in the curriculum. For example, reading The Monster Calls by Patrick Ness.

8 Can my child put on a fundraising event, such as a fun run or cake sale for a cancer charity?

9 Can you allow my child to write in a journal, or a worry box at the beginning of school?

10 Can I share my child's monthly calendar? It shows my medical appointments and any changes in their home life, so you have an insight into my child's life outside school?

11 Can a special folder to made for my child to keep their work in as home might be too chaotic. Could they bring it home once a week for show and tell?

12 Is it possible for the school to record my child's school assemblies/plays/concerts, if I am unable to attend?

13 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?

MAGGIE's
Everyone's home of cancer care

If you are struggling, contact Maggie's for free psychological support.