

GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS ASKED TO PROVIDE A GP NOTE FOR SCHOOL

Please note that GP's do not have a statutory duty to provide informal sick notes for children. Your relationship with the school should be such that any concerns over a child's absence can be resolved without the need for you or the school to ask your GP to provide any supporting evidence.

1. Relating to school attendance:

The school may ask you to provide a written note explaining your child's absence from school. In most cases, this should be sufficient evidence for the school to authorise the absence. In some cases the school may request supportive evidence. In these cases, schools nationally have been asked to accept a prescription or an appointment card as evidence rather than a GP letter.

If you need to obtain a record of your GP appointment from the surgery, please ask our Receptionist who will be able to provide evidence of the appointment time, with our surgery stamp. There is no charge for this service.

Occasionally, a school may feel that further evidence is required. Before our surgery is engaged, there is an expectation that you and the school will meet face to face beforehand in order to discuss and hopefully resolve the concern without the need for the surgery to be involved.

Evidence available from the surgery, following your meeting with the school, is as follows

- a) You may give the school permission to speak to us and we will be able to confirm/ provide a list of dates where your child has attended for an appointment. We will not be able to provide any detailed information on the reason for the appointment or the period of time that the child may need to be absent from school due to illness.
- b) We will be able to provide you with a medical summary which will detail any medical conditions your child may have. This will be provided free of charge. Please note that this may contain medical information which is not relevant to the absence and you may not wish to share this with the school.
- c) The school may ask you to provide a GP letter, detailing your child's illness and the likely duration your child will be absent from school. A GP appointment is NOT required in order for you to request such a letter. Please note these GP letters relating to school absence CANNOT be provided free of charge on the NHS. Agreement must be met at the meeting between you and the school prior to these requests as to who will meet the costs of this GP letter. The expected cost of this service will be in the region of £30.00.

2. Relating to requests for special consideration:

The following national guidance has been sent out to all GP's, schools and colleges by the General Practitioners' Council/ British Medical Association:

"Schools and colleges should note that GPs will not provide sick notes in support of special consideration applications. A medical certificate is not necessary when making an application for special consideration where a candidate misses an exam or their performance in an exam is affected as a result of a temporary illness/injury. As long as the school/college supports the application for special consideration this is considered sufficient evidence".

In these above situations, please arrange to discuss your child's educational requirements directly with the school. Your relationship with the school should be such that the school is able to submit an application to the examination board without the need of GP evidence.

If, in a very rare situation, the school feels that further supportive evidence is required before they are willing to either support or submit an application to the examination board, then this first needs to be discussed with you as the parent. If no agreement can be met between school and parent, and it is felt that a GP letter is required, then again, agreement will have to be reached between the school and parent as to who will meet the fee associated with such a GP letter. These letters will NOT be provided free of charge.