This leaflet has been designed to inform all school staff of potential sources of support when a pupil is returning to their school after treatment for cancer, or while still on treatment.
When a pupil is diagnosed with cancer it is a shock for everyone and when they return to school there will almost certainly be some concerns among staff as to how the pupil can be best supported. Over 75% of children and young people diagnosed now make a full recovery and everyone will want to make sure that the return is as smooth as possible.

This is also often an anxious time for the pupil and their family as it represents an important step in resuming some kind of normality in their lives.

A PLANNED AND MANAGED RETURN IS ALWAYS BENEFICIAL
The support required will vary depending upon circumstances. Most pupils who have had cancer treatment will tire easily and this can last for some months. Pupils who have had treatment for brain tumours may have physical or mental difficulties, which will make the normal school day harder to manage. In some cases pupils with cancer may require a Statement of Special Educational needs.

PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP

The pupil or their family
This is always the best place to start.

The hospital where the pupil has received treatment
The hospital will be able to give advice and this is often the best point to start if the pupil or their family are not able to help. Permission should be sought from the pupil and their family before doing this.

The school may have already been contacted when the original diagnosis was made, and parents’ permission will have been sought at that stage. The pupil may also have had support from the hospital school. In these cases there will be a named hospital contact.

Hospitals usually have outreach nurses, social workers, and psychologists who may be willing to come to school and talk to staff about their concerns. They will usually answer questions over the phone and some have their own booklets and leaflets with helpful advice.

Some hospitals hold professional evenings two or three times a year where talks are given on issues concerning schools. This is also a chance to meet staff from other schools who are in similar situations.

The Local Authority
May have a designated person who is responsible for the care of sick children.

The Pupil’s GP
Permission would need to be given from the family to contact the pupil’s GP.
HELPFUL ORGANISATIONS

Children’s Cancer and Leukaemia Group (CCLG)

(formerly the United Kingdom Children’s Cancer Study Group)
The CCLG is a national professional body responsible for the organisation of
treatment and management of children with cancer in the United Kingdom.
They produce information leaflets on all aspects of childhood cancer including
siblings, which might be of particular interest to school staff if the child
with cancer also has a sibling in the school. These can be downloaded
from their website www.childcancer.org.uk. They also produce a list of
books and videos. These are listed in their resource directory, which also
mentions over 100 parent support groups, charities, hospices and related
organisations of potential interest to families and professionals.

Cancer Research UK (CRUK)

CRUK produces a booklet entitled ‘Welcome Back’, which has been written
to help teachers understand more about childhood cancer, the treatments
available, and the problems it can cause children and young people in
school. This booklet is usually given to schools as a routine measure when
a child in the school is diagnosed. It raises issues concerning not only the
pupil with cancer, but also those of parents, siblings, and classmates. It
suggests practical ways of managing these and it also contains a list of
useful contacts and reading materials.

CRUK also produce ‘Welcome Back after a Brain Tumour’. This provides
information for teachers and parents who are supporting children and
young people who have had treatment for a brain tumour. It aims to
improve knowledge of how a brain tumour may affect a pupil’s learning and
behaviour. It helps to facilitate understanding and communication between
parents and teachers. It also provides simple and practical suggestions as
to how best help the pupil in school.

Both booklets are available to download as PDFs from CRUK
http://info.cancerresearchuk.org/ourpublications/teachersandschools or
hard copies can be ordered at a cost of £1 each (details on the website).

Macmillan Cancer Support

Macmillan have a website for teachers at www.macmillan.org.uk/cancertalk
This contains a support section for teachers that offers advice and
information on dealing with specific situations that might arise when a pupil
returns to school following treatment.

Macmillan also produce free curriculum based teaching packs for Primary
and Secondary Schools called ‘Cancertalk’. This helps teachers talk about
cancer with their pupils and educate them as to what cancer is. It helps
dispel any myths and helps to make pupils aware of how best to support
their returning classmate.

Details of this and other helpful resources are obtainable on the Cancertalk
website, or by emailing cancertalk@mktpoint.com They can also be
ordered directly by calling 0845 601 1716

The Schools and Youth Coordinator is contactable for advice on 020 7840 7805
CLIC Sargent is the UK’s leading children’s cancer charity, providing a range of services to support children and young people with cancer and their families. These include, the Child Cancer Helpline which offers support to anyone affected by childhood cancer, including teachers and schoolfriends.

CLIC Sargent also produces a range of booklets which can be ordered through the helpline or via CLIC Sargent’s website. They are also available to download from the website in Bengali, Punjabi, and Gujarati.

For further information or support, please contact the Child Cancer Helpline on 0800 197 0068 or helpline@clicsargent.org.uk.

Cerebra, the charity for brain injured children and young people, together with a team from the oncology unit at The Royal Marsden Hospital in Sutton, have produced a booklet entitled, ‘Returning to School - A Teacher’s Guide for Pupils with Brain Tumours’. This booklet, whilst aimed at teachers, would also be useful for other school staff.

It is a detailed guide and recognises the anxieties and challenges involved for secondary school staff when they have a pupil returning after treatment for a brain or spinal cord tumour. It gives information and practical strategies. There is a tick system in the contents guide which helps staff quickly find the information relevant to their particular pupil.

The booklet is available for reference only in the main treatment centre hospitals. For a personal copy contact – Cerebra (details left).

For further information about this booklet contact The Children’s Oncology Department, The Royal Marsden Hospital, Downs Road, Sutton, Surrey SM2 5PT.

In collaboration with the Department of Health the DfES have produced a document entitled, ‘Access to Education for Children and Young People with Medical Needs’. This is not specifically for pupils with cancer, but it provides advice for local authorities, schools, hospital and home teaching services, hospital and health trust managers, and social services departments. It gives guidance to ensure that these establishments have in place arrangements to enable the continuity of pupils’ learning.