

Private Requests and Services

School Absence Certification and School Letters for Educational Adjustments

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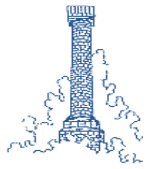
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1. Introduction

General practice services provided under the NHS are funded to deliver essential medical care and treatment to registered patients. However, there are occasions when patients, third parties, employers, insurers, solicitors, or other organisations request services, reports, forms, letters, certificates, or medical examinations fall outside the scope of NHS-funded services. These are known as private (non-NHS) services and may attract a fee.

This policy outlines the approach taken by Jessop Medical Practice in relation to private requests and services. It aims to ensure that requests are managed fairly, consistently, transparently, and in accordance with relevant NHS guidance, General Medical Council (GMC) standards, and contractual obligations. The policy also provides clarity for patients and staff



regarding which services are covered by the NHS and which services are considered private work.

The Practice recognises that patients may require documentation or medical information for a variety of purposes, including insurance applications, employment matters, fitness assessments, legal proceedings, education, travel, housing, adoption and fostering processes, and other non-clinical requirements. Whilst the Practice will endeavour to assist where appropriate, GPs and other clinicians are not contractually obliged to undertake private work and reserve the right to decline requests where they are unable to provide the information requested or where the request falls outside their professional responsibilities.

Where private work is undertaken, charges will apply in accordance with the Practice's approved schedule of fees. Fees reflect the time, expertise, administration, and professional responsibility involved in completing the work. Payment may be required in advance, and timescales for completion will depend on clinical priorities and workload.

2. School Absence Certification

This section covers requests for GP letters, medical certificates, and documentation relating to school absence, including short-term illness, recurrent absences, attendance panels, Education Welfare Officer requests, missed school days, missed examinations, and applications for special consideration.

According to local LMC guidance, GP practices are neither legally nor contractually required to provide routine sickness certificates, medical evidence, or confirmation letters for school-aged children. In most circumstances, a parent or carer's explanation of a child's illness is considered sufficient.

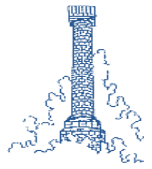
This position is supported by statutory school attendance guidance, as reflected by IPSEA, which states that schools should not routinely request medical evidence for short-term illness-related absences. Parental notification is generally regarded as adequate evidence of illness.

Practice Position

The practice does not routinely provide certificates, letters, or retrospective confirmation to verify a child's absence from school due to illness. Management of attendance concerns remains the responsibility of the school, which should address such matters directly with parents or carers through its own attendance procedures.

Existing Information Already Available

Where a child has attended the practice, factual information may already exist within the medical record, such as consultation notes, appointment history, or documented contact with healthcare services. While this information may confirm that contact occurred, it does not necessarily verify the severity, nature, or duration of the illness and should not be regarded as certification of school absence.



Requests for Further Information

Schools, Education Welfare Officers, local authorities, or other third parties requesting medical information must provide appropriate written consent from a parent, carer, or the patient where applicable, before any information can be disclosed, unless there is an overriding safeguarding concern or another lawful basis for disclosure.

Derby and Derbyshire LMC guidance advises practices not to share confidential medical information without valid consent, except where safeguarding considerations or other legal obligations apply.

3. School Letters and Educational Adjustments

This section refers to requests for GP letters relating to school attendance, educational support, and school-based adjustments for children and young people. Examples include requests for letters supporting toilet access, water bottles, snacks during lessons, physical education (PE) exemptions, seating arrangements, reduced timetables, examination adjustments, additional exam time, missed examinations, school-related anxiety, ADHD, autism spectrum conditions, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) support, Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), and letters requested by nurseries, schools, colleges, or universities.

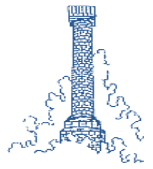
This section has been developed to ensure requests are managed consistently, appropriately, and in line with national guidance. It also aims to clarify the respective responsibilities of schools, healthcare professionals, parents/carers, and other agencies in supporting children and young people within educational settings.

Schools already operate established systems to identify, assess, and support pupils who may require additional assistance. These include class teachers, tutors, pastoral support teams, safeguarding leads, attendance teams, SEND processes, and Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs). National SEND legislation and guidance place responsibility on educational establishments, local authorities, and health organisations to work together to support children and young people with additional needs. Furthermore, schools have a legal duty to support pupils with medical conditions and to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils where required.

Practice Position

Jessop Medical Practice does not routinely provide bespoke letters requesting that schools make specific adjustments or accommodations for pupils.

Decisions regarding educational support, classroom adaptations, attendance management, examination arrangements, and reasonable adjustments are the responsibility of the educational setting and should be made through the school's established assessment and support processes.



Parents and carers are encouraged to discuss their concerns directly with the school in the first instance. Where additional support is required, concerns should be raised through the appropriate school channels, including the SENCO, pastoral team, attendance lead, safeguarding team, or other relevant educational professionals.

Existing Medical Information

In many cases, the information required by schools is already available within the patient's medical record. Existing documentation may include:

- Consultation records
- Diagnoses and problem lists
- Repeat medication records
- Hospital correspondence
- Specialist clinic letters
- Care plans
- Referral letters and reports

Parents, carers, and patients may request access to copies of relevant medical records or correspondence where appropriate. Information may also be available through online patient access services, including the NHS App.

Requests for Medical Information

Where a school requires specific factual medical information that is not already available from existing records, the school should submit a written request directly to the practice.

Any request must:

- Include appropriate consent where required.
- Clearly state the information being requested.
- Explain why the information is needed.
- Confirm how the information will be used to support the pupil.

Where a request requires a GP or clinician to prepare a bespoke report, or supporting letter beyond the provision of factual information already contained within the medical record, this is considered non-NHS work. Such requests may therefore incur a fee in accordance with the practice's Private Services and Non-NHS Fees Policy.

Reference Documents and Resources

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>
- <https://www.gov.uk/illness-child-education>