

We would like to respond to the consultation as advertised. Many of us are parents of children with autism and specific learning disabilities. Our children are either out of school due to being unable to manage in the school environment or due to school environment and triggers to behaviour issues have been suspended. Either way our children are getting no education or offered just a couple of hours education via home tuition.

We have come together with parents whose children have cancer or ME or brain injury or such to try to get the issues with Elluminate e learning worked out so our children can access education. Elluminate is part of C2k provision and allows our child to learn from home just as if they were in school but without the noise, disruption, interpersonal relationships, and sensory issues that many of our children can not cope with.

Many of our children are capable of learning independently and especially since Elluminate can allow lessons to be recorded this is especially helpful to them.

The Minister of Education agreed in a meeting with our group in Stormont that if a child was able to attend up to 18 they should get elluminate access up to 18. So much support stops at 16 Elluminate would allow a lot more options up to 18 in subject children liked.

Also the programme could be use very economically to cross over to deliver lectures by specialist Ed Psycs from one central recording to all children who would benefit so help on study skills, organisation and managing exams - could be made massively more accessible. For children with autism Middletown could help with sensory, sleep and anxiety issues. Children are really disadvantaged from falling between stools in government departments - top specialist psychology relevant to many with special needs could be far more effectively delivered via Elluminate. This would help alleviate disadvantage to living remotely in rural locations and waiting lists etc.

We would like to submit to the consultation the content of our website www.illuminateourlives.us and our last submission to the department of education. In which we told them how appalled we were by the Minister letting the unions who are blocking access for our children design elluminate provision for them.

We sent this email and the attached documents to Sharon Lawlor in the Dept of Education this week. The attached documents explain both what we want, how it should work and a flow chart demonstrating how access to education can and should be facilitated. We especially emphasise the UK Statutory guidance attached which recommends full and equal access within 15 days for our children in need. Time is huge issue the current situation lets children unable to manage in school who often have special needs just run adrift. Ofsted recently reported in missing children report their estimate of 10, 000 missing from education in England. How schools record what happens to these children is open to schools hiding what has happened, children being lost and becoming invisible and vulnerable. This is happening to children here too. No school records things the same and no board records things the same - so children get lost, are adrift and no one bothers about them.

Subject: Urgent re Elluminate

Dear Sharon

Someone who cares about our children, cared enough to send someone what the Union Joint Working Party came up with.

I have since been sent the attached documents (the unions protocol and flow chart) from the unions meeting in confidence. These documents I have been told are confidential. The Joint Working Party, who deal with teachers pay and conditions, were as you know charged by the Minister of Education to come up with a plan on how they would use Elluminate- as teachers esp the biggest NASUWT have been blocking it. This is their plan for our vulnerable children. It is simply an appalling plan, as is up to a teacher to volunteer if maybe they may do it, and can stop it at any time, what an awful position for any parent in desperation to be in. I can see some on their knees and exploited. There is a very long protracted process to getting access to it- this could take months or years, no one can complain about anything the teacher does that could be subject to competency or disciplinary action, and if a child has been suspended then they don't get it at all! which is really bad. I am a child protection officer and I cant be part of keeping a secret about this as I know too well the impact on a child's life and wellbeing of being abandoned by education system not getting their education.

I also attach our response and our flow chart and the UK statutory guidance which is relevant. I hope this gets resolved urgently as Elluminate is a lifeline in a crisis, very beneficial to mental health and limits the impact of issues on the child's future. It can give full and equal access to education to anyone out of school and we need it to be an entitlement. We have many children with many issues from cancer, autism, ME, brain injury and other issues who would benefit from this - not getting it is causing actual distress, and harm to these children.

This Joint Working Party union group are we understand, to take their plan forward to a meeting with the Dept of Education and ELBs on the 17th of February.

This is not how policy for our most vulnerable children should be shaped and we need the Education Committee and the Minster to put things right. All children unable to attend school should be entitled to get full and equal access to education within 15 days.

We expect such children's needs to be treated with respect which means forming policy which impacts their lives in a proper, open, inclusive and transparent way. There is no place for secrecy and closed doors when making decisions which impact directly and adversely causing real hurt, distress and despair in the lives of vulnerable children and those who care for them.

Please let us know who is going to restore some humanity, compassionate and appropriate practice to this process, and when children suffering most in our community are going to get some respect, and equality of opportunity, and when the discrimination against our most in need children will end?

Please forward this email to the Minister of Education and the Chair of the WELB and any others who are part of this appalling deed.

Thank you

Elluminate Our Lives



Department
for Education

Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs

**Statutory guidance for local
authorities**

January 2013

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Summary

About this guidance

This is statutory guidance from the Department for Education. Local authorities (LAs) must have regard to it when carrying out their duty to arrange suitable full-time education (or part-time when appropriate for the child's needs) for children who are unable to attend a mainstream or special school because of their health. This duty applies to all children and young people who would normally attend mainstream schools, including Academies, Free Schools, independent schools and special schools, or where a child is not on the roll of a school. It applies equally whether a child cannot attend school at all or can only attend intermittently.

LAs are responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for permanently excluded pupils, and for other children who – because of illness or other reasons – would not receive suitable education without such provision. This means that where a child cannot attend school because of health problems, and would not otherwise receive a suitable full-time education, the LA is responsible for arranging provision and must have regard to this guidance.

There will be a wide range of circumstances where a child has a health need but will receive suitable education that meets their needs without the intervention of the LA – for example, where the child can still attend school with some support; where the school has made arrangements to deliver suitable education outside of school for the child; or where arrangements have been made for the child to be educated in a hospital by an on-site hospital school. We would not expect the LA to become involved in such arrangements unless it had reason to think that the education being provided to the child was not suitable or, while otherwise suitable, was not full-time or for the number of hours the child could benefit from without adversely affecting their health. This might be the case where, for example, the child can attend school but only intermittently.

This guidance replaces the previous guidance, *Access to Education for Children and Young People with Medical Needs* (2001). LAs should demonstrate that they have considered this statutory guidance and, if they do not follow it, have reasonable grounds for deciding not to do so.

Links to further guidance on a LA's duty under section 19 of the Education Act 1996 and guidance on support provided in-school can be found at the end of this guidance.

Review Date

The guidance will be reviewed in September 2014.

What Legislation Does This Guidance Refer To?

- Section 19 of the Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010

Who is this guidance for?

Local authorities, though it may also be of interest to all those supporting the educational attainment of a child with health needs, including all types of schools, providers of alternative provision, parents and providers of health services.

Key points

Local authorities must:

- Arrange suitable¹ full-time^{2 3} education (or as much education as the child's health condition allows) for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would otherwise not receive suitable education.

Local authorities should:

- Provide such education as soon as it is clear that the child will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative. They should liaise with appropriate medical professionals to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the child.
- Ensure that the education children receive is of good quality (as defined in the *Alternative Provision 2013* guidance), allows them to take appropriate qualifications, prevents them from slipping behind their peers in school and allows them to reintegrate successfully back into school as soon as possible.
- Address the needs of individual children in arranging provision. 'Hard and fast' rules are inappropriate: they may limit the offer of education to children with a given condition and prevent their access to the right level of educational support which they are well enough to receive. Strict rules that limit the offer of education a child receives may also breach statutory requirements.

Local authorities should not:

- Have processes or policies in place which prevent a child from getting the right type of provision and a good education.⁴
- Withhold or reduce the provision, or type of provision, for a child because of how much it will cost (meeting the child's needs and providing a good education must be the determining factors).

¹ "suitable" means suitable to the child's age, aptitude, ability and any special educational needs that he or she may have.

² Unless the pupil's condition means that full-time provision would not be in his or her best interests.

³ "Full-time education" is not defined in law but it should equate to what the pupil would normally have in school – for example, for pupils in Key Stage 4 full-time education in a school would usually be 25 hours a week.

⁴ For further guidance on providing a good education to pupils in alternative provision, see 'Alternative Provision: a guide for local authorities, head teachers and governing bodies of schools, pupil referral units and other providers of alternative provision'.

- Have policies based upon the percentage of time a child is able to attend school rather than whether the child is receiving a suitable education during that attendance.
- Have lists of health conditions which dictate whether or not they will arrange education for children or inflexible policies which result in children going without suitable full-time education (or as much education as their health condition allows them to participate in).

Role and responsibilities of the local authority

1. LAs are responsible⁵ for arranging suitable⁶ full-time⁷ education for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would not receive suitable education without such provision. This applies whether or not the child is on the roll of a school and whatever the type of school they attend. It applies to children who are pupils in Academies, Free Schools, special schools and independent schools as well as those in maintained schools.
2. The law does not define full-time education but children with health needs should have provision which is equivalent to the education they would receive in school. If they receive one-to-one tuition, for example, the hours of face-to-face provision could be fewer as the provision is more concentrated.
3. Where full-time education would not be in the best interests of a particular child because of reasons relating to their physical or mental health, LAs should provide part-time education on a basis they consider to be in the child's best interests. Full and part-time education should still aim to achieve good academic attainment particularly in English, Maths and Science.
4. The LA should:
 - Have a named officer responsible for the education of children with additional health needs, and parents should know who that person is.
 - Have a written, publicly accessible policy statement on their arrangements to comply with their legal duty towards children with additional health needs. The policy should make links with related services in the area - for example, Special Educational Needs and Disability Services (SEND), Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Education Welfare/Attendance Improvement Services, educational psychologists, and, where relevant, school nurses.
 - Review the provision offered regularly to ensure that it continues to be appropriate for the child and that it is providing suitable education.
 - Have clear policies on the provision of education for children and young people under and over compulsory school age.

Ensuring children have a good education

5. Every child should have the best possible start in life through a high quality education, which allows them to achieve their full potential. A child who has health needs should have the same opportunities as their peer group, including a broad and balanced curriculum. As far as possible, children with health needs and who are unable to attend school should receive the same range and quality of education as they would have experienced at their home school.
6. Children unable to attend school because of health needs should be able to access suitable and flexible education appropriate to their needs. The nature of the provision must be responsive to the demands of what may be a changing health status.

⁵ Section 19 of the Education Act 1996, as amended by section 3 of the Children Schools and Families Act 2010

⁶ "suitable" means suitable to the child's age, aptitude, ability and any special educational needs that he or she may have.

⁷ Unless the local authority considers that a pupil's condition means that full-time provision would not be in his or her best interests.

7. The use of electronic media – such as ‘virtual classrooms’, learning platforms and so on – can provide access to a broader curriculum, but this should generally be used to complement face-to-face education, rather than as sole provision (though in some cases, the child’s health needs may make it advisable to use only virtual education for a time).

8. LAs should maintain good links with all schools in their area and put in place systems to promote co-operation between them when children cannot attend school because of ill health. Schools can do a lot to support the education of children with health needs and the sharing of information between schools, health services and LAs is important. Schools can also play a big part in making sure that the provision offered to the child is as effective as possible and that the child can be reintegrated back into school successfully. Parents also have a vital role to play, and LAs should encourage schools to have a publicly accessible policy that sets out how schools will support children with health needs; it is also helpful if schools have a named person who can be contacted by the LA and by parents.

9. LAs should ensure that teachers who provide education for children with health needs receive suitable training and support and are kept aware of curriculum developments. They should also be given suitable information relating to a child’s health condition, and the possible effect the condition and/or medication taken has on the child.

10. Some complex and/or long-term health issues may be considered disabilities under equality legislation. This legislation provides that LAs must not discriminate against disabled children and are under a duty to eliminate discrimination, foster equality of opportunity for disabled children and foster good relations between disabled and non-disabled children. LAs should make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage faced by disabled children, and plan to increase disabled children’s access to Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) premises and their curriculum.

Identification and intervention

11. Where they have identified that alternative provision is required, LAs should ensure that it is arranged as quickly as possible and that it appropriately meets the needs of the child. In order to better understand the needs of the child, and therefore choose the most appropriate provision, LAs should work closely with medical professionals and the child’s family, and consider the medical evidence. LAs should make every effort to minimise the disruption to a child’s education. For example, where specific medical evidence, such as that provided by a medical consultant, is not quickly available, LAs should consider liaising with other medical professionals, such as the child’s GP, and consider looking at other evidence to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the child.

12. Once parents have provided evidence from a consultant, LAs should not unnecessarily demand continuing evidence from the consultant without good reason, even where a child has long-term health problems. Evidence of the continuing additional health issues from the child’s GP should usually be sufficient. In cases where a LA believes that a consultant’s on-going opinion is absolutely necessary, they should give parents sufficient time to contact the consultant to obtain the evidence.

13. The law does not specify the point during a child’s illness when it becomes the LA’s responsibility to secure for the child suitable full-time education. Schools would usually provide support to children who are absent from school because of illness for a shorter period, for example when experiencing chicken pox or influenza. In some cases, where a

child is hospitalised, the hospital may provide education for the child within the hospital and the LA would not need to arrange any additional education, provided it is satisfied that the child is receiving suitable education. More generally, LAs should be ready to take responsibility for any child whose illness will prevent them from attending school for 15 or more school days, either in one absence or over the course of a school year, and where suitable education is not otherwise being arranged.

14. There is no absolute legal deadline by which LAs must have started to provide education for children with additional health needs (unlike for excluded children, where provision must begin by the sixth day of the exclusion). LAs should, however, arrange provision as soon as it is clear that an absence will last more than 15 days and it should do so at the latest by the sixth day of the absence, aiming to do so by the first day of absence. Where an absence is planned, for example for a stay or recurrent stays in hospital, LAs should make arrangements in advance to allow provision to begin from day one.

15. With planned hospital admissions, LAs should give the teacher who will be teaching the child as much forewarning as possible, including the likely admission date and expected length of stay. This allows them to liaise with the child's school and, where applicable, with the LA about the programme to be followed while the child is in hospital. LAs should set up a personal education plan, which should ensure that the child's school, the LA and the hospital school or other provider can work together.

16. LAs should have regard to any medical advice given by the hospital when they discharge a child, as to how much education will be appropriate for them after discharge, when they might be ready to return to school and whether they should initially return to school on a part-time basis only. LAs should work with schools to complement the education a child receives if they cannot attend school full-time but are well enough to have education in other ways.

Long-term medical conditions – provision at home or hospital

17. Where children have complex or long-term health issues, the pattern of illness can be unpredictable. LAs should discuss the child's needs and how these may best be met with the school, the relevant clinician and the parents, and where appropriate with the child. That may be through individual support or by them remaining at school and being supported back into school after each absence. How long the child is likely to be out of school will be important in deciding this. LAs should make provision available as soon as the child is able to benefit from it.

18. Where a child has been in hospital for a longer period and returns home, if appropriate, the LA should aim to provide education at home or otherwise as quickly as possible. The child's education may well have been disrupted by their time in hospital, so further discontinuity should be avoided if at all possible.

Working together – with parents, children, health services and schools

19. The LA and/or the provider delivering the education should consult parents before teaching begins. Parents have an important role to play, whether their child is at home or in hospital. Parents and carers can provide useful information that can inform the teaching approach. In the case of a looked after child, the LA is responsible for safeguarding the child's welfare and education. Both the LA and primary carers (foster carers or residential

social workers) would fulfil the parental role here and should be engaged. Children should also be involved in decisions from the start, with the ways in which they are engaged reflecting their age and maturity. This will help ensure that the right provision is offered and encourage the child's commitment to it.

20. In all cases, effective collaboration between all relevant services (LAs, CAMHS, NHS, schools and, where relevant, school nurses) is essential to delivering effective education for children with additional health needs. Service level agreements and/or multi-agency forums may aid this process. This applies whether the child is in hospital or at home. When a child is in hospital, liaison between hospital teaching staff, the LA's alternative provision/home tuition service and the child's school can ensure continuity of provision and consistency of curriculum. It can ensure that the school can make information available about the curriculum and work the child may miss, helping the child to keep up, rather than having to catch up.

21. Local authorities should be aware that under the Education (Pupil Registration) England Regulations 2006⁸, a school can only remove a pupil who is unable to attend school because of additional health needs where:

- a) the pupil has been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school, before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and;
- b) neither the pupil nor their parent has indicated to the school the intention to continue to attend the school, after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.

22. A child unable to attend school because of health needs must not, therefore, be removed from the school register without parental consent and certification from the school medical officer, even if the LA has become responsible for the child's education. Continuity is important for children and knowing that they can return to their familiar surroundings and school friends can help their recovery and their educational progress.

Reintegration

23. When reintegration⁹ into school is anticipated, LAs should work with the school (and hospital school, PRU/home tuition services if appropriate) to plan for consistent provision during and after the period of education outside school. As far as possible, the child should be able to access the curriculum and materials that he or she would have used in school. The LA should work with schools to ensure that children can successfully remain in touch with their school while they are away. This could be through school newsletters, emails, invitations to school events or internet links to lessons from their school.

24. LAs should work with schools to set up an individually tailored reintegration plan for each child. This may have to include extra support to help fill any gaps arising from the child's absence. It may be appropriate to involve the school nurse at this stage as they may be able to offer valuable advice. The school nurse will also want to be aware that the child is returning to school, so that they can be prepared to offer any appropriate support. Under

⁸ Regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 sets out the circumstances in which a pupil can be deleted from a school's admission register.

⁹ Full guidance on reintegration is set out in the Alternative Provision guidance.

equalities legislation¹⁰ schools must consider whether they need to make any reasonable adjustments to provide suitable access for the child.

25. Where the absence is likely to be lengthy, the reintegration plan may only take shape nearer to the likely date of return, to avoid putting unsuitable pressure on an ill child in the early stages of their absence. While most children will want to return to their previous school routine at once, some will need gradual reintegration over a longer period.

Public examinations

26. Efficient and effective liaison is important when children with health needs are approaching public examinations. The hospital school, PRU or home tuition teachers should be able to arrange a suitable focus on the child's education at this stage in order to minimise the impact of the time lost while the child is unable to attend school.

27. Awarding bodies will make special arrangements for children with permanent or long-term disabilities or learning difficulties, and with temporary disabilities, illness and indispositions, when they are taking public examinations. The LA (or the school where applicable) should submit applications for special arrangements to awarding bodies as early as possible. Those providing education to a child out of school should provide advice and information to the school to assist it with such applications.

Provision for siblings

28. When treatment of a child's condition means that his or her family have to move nearer to a hospital, and there is a sibling of compulsory school age, the local authority into whose area the family has moved should seek to ensure that the sibling is offered a place, where provision is available, for example, in a local mainstream school or other appropriate setting.

Further sources of information

'Alternative Provision: A guide for local authorities, head teachers and governing bodies of schools, pupil referral units and other providers of alternative provision':

<http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/statutory/g00211923/alternative-provision>

'Advice to schools on attendance':

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/attendance>

¹⁰ Equality Act 2010



Department
for Education

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Introduction

The purpose of this protocol is encourage appropriate usage of Elluminate software, to ensure that pupils receive the best and most appropriate education possible, to ensure that teachers are empowered to utilize the e-tools at their disposal and are well trained, confident and protected in so doing. Practice in electronic and distance learning within the schooling system of Northern Ireland is in its infancy. As such, the protocol should be read in tandem with wider efforts to build a 'community of practice' to develop pedagogy and to invest in the e-tutoring and e-mentoring skills of the teaching workforce.

The development of a critical mass of practice within the profession, the utilization of Elluminate and similar tools should be encouraged, and training and related professional development should be facilitated, but there should be no compulsory requirement for Teachers to utilize Elluminate (or any other, particular, software or e-tools) in the first instance. The NI Teachers Council will work closely with education employers in good faith to enhance the capacity and competence of the teaching workforce to deliver appropriate e-Learning to pupils. In the short or medium term it would not be appropriate to contractually oblige teachers to undertake work for which, to date, few are pedagogically trained. Equally, some teachers have genuine reason why they do not wish to be recorded on camera. In these circumstances, compulsion would not represent a reasonable working instruction under the terms of the Jordanstown Agreement. This protocol stresses that the involvement of teachers in utilizing this (and other related) software should be voluntary.

Protocol for the Use of Elluminate Software

1. The Elluminate software is a video conferencing tool that may be used by schools. There may be times where Elluminate can be used in the short term as a support service offered to particular pupils who are unable to attend school due to medical reasons. It is neither a long term solution nor a substitute for existing support services. Candidates for this software will need input from Educational Psychologists, Education Welfare Officer, Health professionals or EOTAS providers. It should be stressed that pupils suspended from school or school refusers should not be considered for Elluminate.
2. The use of the Elluminate software will only be recommended after all other methods of pupil support have been exhausted. The traditional stages of pupil support from EOTAS, ELB tutors etc. will have been used and evidence of this support (IEPs, EWO, Ed Psych) will have been made available to the school concerned.
3. Request for the use of Elluminate in schools can only be made to the relevant Education and Library Board. The EOTAS team at the ELB will assume the lead role in the use and development of Elluminate across the system and will seek to develop a community of practice, undertaking and sourcing training and sharing best practice in and across schools.
4. The EOTAS team at the ELB will have exhausted all other options and will then explore the use of Elluminate as an option.
5. Request to a school for the use of the Elluminate software will be made to the school by the ELB EOTAS Team and approval for its use sought from the Principal / Board of Governors. The EOTAS team will have indicated how it will be monitored and a time-scale will be provided to the school.
6. [The Principal, having taken professional advice, which may include teachers of the pupil,](#)

SENCO, Pastoral Leader and the EOTAS team, will determine whether or not to explore the Elluminate Option within the context of the agreed ILP.

7. It will be the responsibility of the ELB EOTAS team to contact C2K and to arrange with C2K the provision, maintenance and security of hardware required and technical staff to ensure that this is provided to the child and school. A dedicated computer for the sole use of connecting to the school will be provided by C2K to the family concerned. The right to remove the computer for inspection at any time will be emphasised. A contract will be signed by the parents and pupil to ensure that no material may be recorded or use of screen capture allowed. An E-Safety contract/agreement will be designed by the ELBs which will cover appropriate use by parents of the Elluminate Software.
8. No material during the transmission of a lesson may be used in any competency or disciplinary procedures against a teacher, excluding child protection or criminal grounds.
9. Schools will amend their existing E-Safety policy to take account of this new technology. Relevant persons within the school will also note this development within existing policies particularly child protection policies.
10. A time limit will be set for the use of the software each day. This will be agreed with the EOTAS team, school and parents.
11. Funding will be provided to enable training in the use of Elluminate. Training should include wider pedagogical tuition in e-Tutoring and e-Mentoring for an adequate cadre of teachers across the system. Training should not be limited to software specific or software familiarisation alone. Adequate planning and preparation time will be provided to each teacher who will be using the Elluminate software – this will be funded by the ELB.
12. The location of the camera within the classroom is of vital importance. The web-cam will be fixed to observe the whiteboard and no wide angled shots of the classroom are to be viewed. All parents of children within the classroom will be contacted by the relevant ELB and written consent by parents/guardians for pupils to be recorded and filmed is to be obtained and retained by the ELB.
13. Any persons who may have access to view the video link in which children may be viewed must have completed a current Police Vetting Procedure
14. Teachers using the Elluminate software reserve the right to terminate the connection, with immediate effect at any time based on professional judgement or when classroom matters may require their complete attention.
15. School policy regarding proper use of digital media to be enforced during the period of the planned use of the Elluminate software

Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Governors:

- A member of the Board of Governors will be appointed as the E Safety governor for all matters relating to the use of the Elluminate software. They may be the governor with responsibility for data protection or safety issues. The role of the E-Safety Governor will include:

- regular monitoring of the use of the Elluminate software, parent requests, approval and length of time software was used with individual pupils
- reporting to relevant Governors committee / meeting

Principal

The Principal is responsible for ensuring the safety of members of the school community

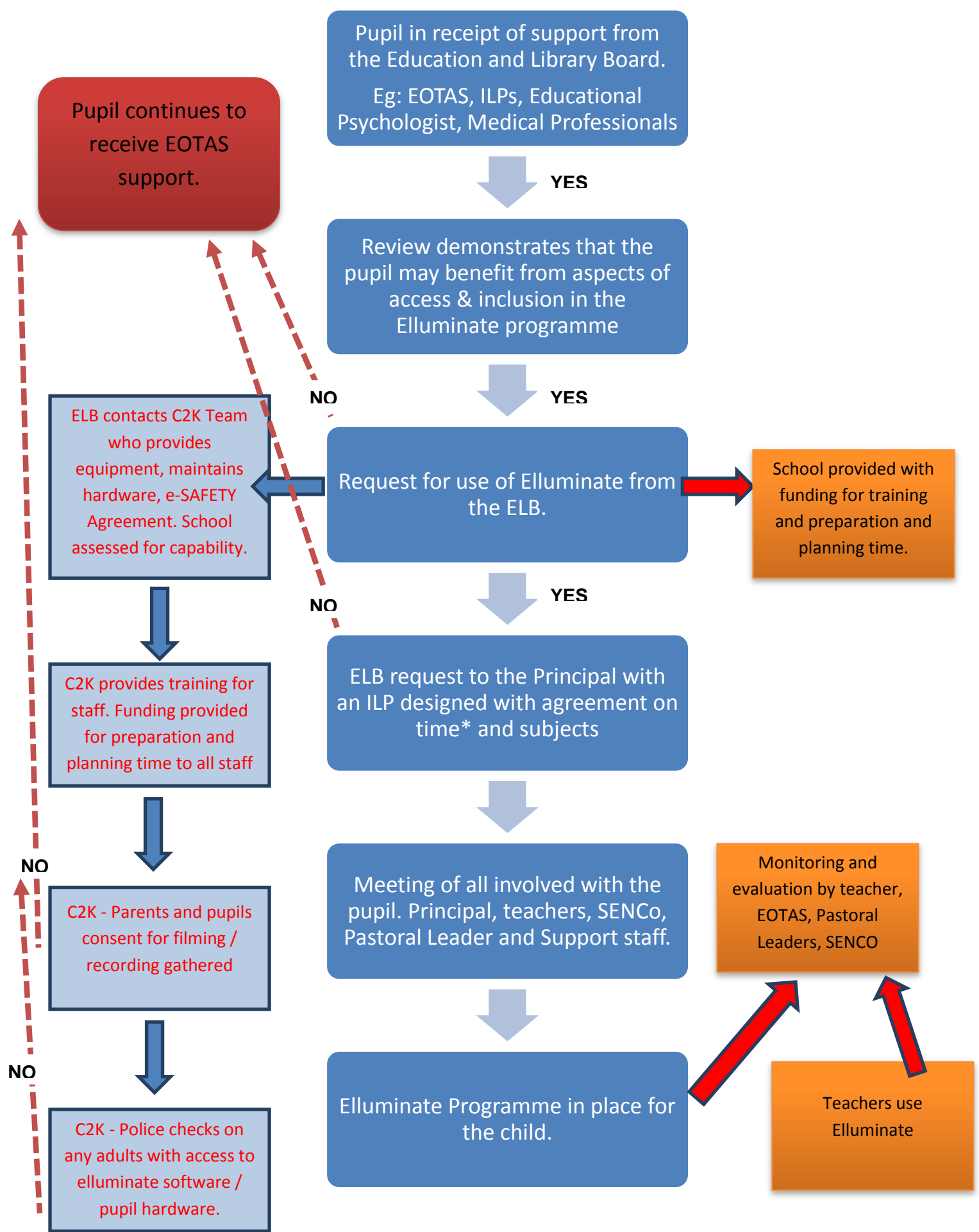
- The Principal will link with the ELB at the point of initial request and work with the relevant teacher to discuss the most effective use of the software.
- The Principal will ensure that all safety protocols are in place for the protection of both the teacher and the pupils within the classroom
- The Principal / Senior Leaders will ensure that there is a system in place to allow for monitoring and support of those in school who are using the Elluminate software
- The Principal will ensure the use of the software is included in the school e-safety policy

Education and Library Board

- The Education and Library Board will appoint a person responsible for all matters relating to the use of Elluminate software. They will responsible for
- Initial contact with parents requesting access to Elluminate software
- Liaise with the school to evaluate the value of its use and ensure all other methods to address the education needs of the pupil have been attempted. Elluminate will only be used if both the school and the ELB consider it an appropriate option.
- Work with the school plan the use of Elluminate, where agreed with the school and appropriate to the requirements of the child. Draw up specific schedules and consult with teachers regarding which lessons would be suitable for linking with home through Elluminate.
- Co-ordinate regular communication to ensure parents are aware what aspects of the curriculum/specific lessons will be suitable/will translate to remote learning through Elluminate.
- Co-ordinate with C2K for the installation of the relevant hardware for both the school and the pupil
- Ensure all permissions have been completed for any pupil who may be viewed during the period of recording
- Receive all signed agreements form parents/guardians
- Evaluate the use of the software and the return of hardware provided.

C2K

- **C2K** will be responsible for the
- Provision of hardware for the transmission of material from the classroom to the individual concerned
- Provision of a connection which will allow the transmission of recorded material form the classroom while not interfering with the normal use of the internet by other pupils.
- Monitoring of the appropriate use of the hardware provided.
- Training of staff in the use of both the hardware and software associated with Elluminate
- Ensuring the hardware has mechanisms in place to prevent the screen dump or recording of any material.



- Time Budget implications must be considered.

Response to Protocol Developed by The Teachers Negotiating Committee on Pay and Conditions who were charged by John O'Dowd Minister for Education to Produce an Agreement for use of Elluminate as Educational Provision for Children Unable to Attend School

January 2014

This document should be read with simultaneous referral to the document 'Ensuring A Good Education For Children Who Cannot Attend School Because Of Health Needs Statutory Guidance For Local Authorities January 2013' which is available to download from the 'What We Want the Government To Do' section of the website www.illuminateourlives.us

Traditionally (to use the word used in the draft protocol about all that should be done with various agencies before Elluminate is considered) children in crisis, be it due to special needs, disability, illness from cancer to ME, mental health issues or unable to manage their behavior in a school environment have suffered long gaps, serious limitations and years of delay in their education. This has added huge life long serious negative impacts on top of their disability or illness. Elluminate has the capacity through modern technology to end this huge shortfall in educational provision to our most vulnerable children in crisis.

This draft protocol drags advanced, high tech, Elluminate back into draconian practice. It takes a fabulous system which can gently, effectively and compassionately meet the needs of children in need and pulls it back into Dickensian era where our most vulnerable children are abandoned, isolated and deprived of good immediate, full and equal access to education when they need it most.

We do not agree that the Minister of Education should allow this vital provision to be shaped behind closed doors, by teacher unions in the Teacher Negotiating Committee. It should not have been put to unions to shape education policy for children unable to attend school. If the same group don't determine policy for children in school then they should not determine policy for those out of school, especially as they are vulnerable and have complex needs its even more important there is proper open, transparent, inclusive process. The needs of children should be central priority. This draft protocol resonates fear, ignorance, reluctance, entrenched adverse hostile opposition to a brilliant facility which can at last reach out, embrace, maintain, and restore equality of access in education to the children most in need. This process needs to be opened up so children in need are first and those representing them are part of designing the protocol for this provision.

This policy needs official consultation with CLIC Sargent Children's Cancer, Social workers in Belfast City Hospital School working with Children with Cancer, Autism and Mental Health, NI ADHD, Disability Action Charities and home educators – at a minimum. Children and families in need of this provision should be part of a consultation process as it has such a huge impact on the lives of their children and their families.

The tone and content of this protocol are evidence of the essential need to give priority to facilitating the parent and the children, and those who represent

vulnerable children who need this provision rather than designing it by, and out of fear, and a primary desire to hold on to traditional mechanisms, which distress and fail children in need.

There is too much in this protocol about the protection of teachers and nothing about protecting the needs and rights of all vulnerable children for which educational provision and Elluminate are funded to serve. We insist on full and equal entitlement to education for all those unable to attend school.

In the absence of clear policy and direction by the Minister for our children, school principals are failing to direct teachers to facilitate full and equal access to Elluminate, and take disciplinary action against those who do not provide for our children abandoned due to illegal industrial action.

Regarding the Introduction.

Whilst it is in its infancy in NI, teachers need to use good practice from elsewhere VISCED world and USA's (K-12) UK's Nisai Virtual School– use Elluminate to connect to other countries where it is widely used to bring NI up to speed and deliver faster and better to children as well as learn good practice in delivery – No need to reinvent the wheel here – lots of examples elsewhere to use. Think out side the box or in this case, think outside of NI. Even in NI Open University use Elluminate and Future Learn, Coursera and currently CAFRE in NI are currently using similar programmes to deliver online learning.

If it is voluntary to use as suggested – then what happens to a child's right to education, to full and equal access even if they have a disability or illness? Children's illness or disability is not voluntary – neither should provision for their illness be voluntary – ALL children should be entitled to get full and equal access to education within 15 days. Please see UK Statutory Guidance *'Ensuring A Good Education For Children Who Cannot Attend School Because Of Health Needs Statutory Guidance For Local Authorities January 2013'*

Teaching our children who are well and can attend school is not voluntary – if it is not voluntary for children who can attend, then it should not be voluntary for those who cannot attend. We insist that the government provision of education is an entitlement for all children not in school, not just the ones teachers volunteer to teach, and not just the ones fit and able to attend school. This leaves vulnerable children, who may present with emotional and challenging behaviour, which upsets people, vulnerable to teachers not volunteering to provide Elluminate provision. Children do not volunteer to be unable to attend school, so educational provision for them should not be voluntary. Children with autism, ADHD, and other conditions sometimes diagnosed, often not, and so are not recognised as having a disability and not assessed, can and do get suspended from school. They must get Elluminate provision so lack of education does not disadvantage them further. Many children have been de-registered from schools by parents due to system failures and all these children must be offered the choice of full and equal access – surely this should be viewed as a big opportunity to reengage and benefit these invisible children currently home-schooled.

Regarding Protocol for Use of Elluminate Software

1. “It is neither a long term solution” - This means that provision may not be long term. Does that mean that a child may not access long term? Education providers need to realise that some children may need short term, whilst other supports or treatments are put in place and a child will reintegrate. However, for some children’s conditions there is no cure. Some children will not recover the ability to re-join or join a class, does this mean they cannot access education? this is unfair. Educational provision via Elluminate should be in place for as long as a child needs it up to the end of A Level provision. Elluminate can and should be provided up to 18 where ‘traditional’ home tuition and other supports stop at 16.

“Medical reasons” – needs a clearer definition, will children whose challenging behaviour has led to expulsion be allowed access? Challenging behaviour is widely misunderstood and these children also need Elluminate provision outside of school. Young Carers, School Phobic, Mental Health issues – there are so many reasons why a child may not be able to attend, so many reasons that exist now, why children are absent today. Traveller children who cannot access education due to bullying in school or others who suffered to bullying and need time out due to the impact on their mental health and any child unable to attend school for wider reasons than may fit under “medical reasons”. Elluminate provision has a role in suicide prevention. Parents and young people need to know that this is an option so time out becomes a positive choice for a young person with suicide ideation. Education provision must be paramount priority for the Department of Education. Please allow parents and other professionals who understand to work on why they are not able to attend, but in the mean time provide education, to limit the impact of the issues causing limitations on what they can do.

It is completely unacceptable that children suspended from school should not be considered for Elluminate. The All Party Group on Learning Disability are making representations to Stormont assembly on this very issue at present. Contact details are; Jenny Ruddy, Mencap in Northern Ireland, Tel: 028 9069 0152

Several other organizations apart from Mencap, such as Positive Futures, ARC NI, Prospects and Triangle who are all part of the All Party Group on Learning Disabilities should be involved in this. This is a clear discrimination against vulnerable young people. Once a young person is expelled from school they lose vital connections, self-esteem and become very vulnerable, and are 70% more likely to end up with Youth Justice. 80% of those in prison have learning disabilities; many have undiagnosed ADHD or are on the Autism Spectrum. (See *Seen and Heard* and *No One Knows* Reports from the Prison Reform Trusts) It is simply not acceptable to rule these young people out of access to education via Elluminate when they have not been able to manage their behavior in school. They are still children; they still have rights even if they cannot manage their behavior in (an often chaotic and sensory challenging) school environment. Often their disabilities are invisible and misunderstood and misinterpreted and staff in schools do not have enough training to retain them in school. Neither unions nor educators should be allowed to sit as judge and jury on which child gets education and which child does not. All children should be facilitated to have full and equal access to education in or out of school environment. A child’s inability to attend school for whatever reason should not have their difficulties added to by educational provision failing them further. Children will do well if they can. If they cannot manage in school or are unable to attend, this is even more

reason to provide Elluminate for them. Please see www.livesinthebalance.org for a better understanding of such children, they often lag skills needed to manage in school. Do not add to a child's risk factors by discriminating against them in Elluminate provision. This protocol creates more NEETs and more costs to the government as it creates a life of benefit dependency. Elluminate gives educators an opportunity for compassion and positive life changing opportunity.

What is being suggested here needs careful legal, risk and impact assessments on vulnerable young people. Sadly it reeks of discrimination and efforts to stall and block education, impacting negatively on our most vulnerable young people.

“Candidates for this software need input from Educational Psychologists, Education Welfare Officer, Health Professionals, or EOTAS providers” – Please refer to UK Statutory Guidance *‘Ensuring A Good Education For Children Who Cannot Attend School Because Of Health Needs Statutory Guidance For Local Authorities January 2013’*

Parents and GP should be able to trigger Elluminate use. It is vital to give children in need continuity and where an absence is planned, Elluminate should start the next day, and at a maximum it should start within 15 days. There should be no protracted wait by any child for provision. This sounds too much like the current statementing processes, which can take one to two years to be in place. The process and referrals to Educational Psychologists, Welfare Officers or EOTAS or some specialist health professionals can take far too long – many months or years. Parents and GP should be able to trigger use as per UK Statutory Guidance (above) states. This suggestion is wrong and should not be used as it causes delay in access to education. Elluminate should be used quickly to retain the child, keep connections, relationships, self esteem and well being at optimal levels whilst a child waits for other professionals / interventions or assessments. Being fully and daily connected to their classes makes it easier to reintegrate them when it may eventually be possible.

2. “Elluminate software will only be recommended after all other methods of pupil support have been exhausted. The traditional stages of pupil support of.....”

It is very hard to understand why educators would want to keep a child who can be facilitated to access their education in full, from having such access. Why when 2011, 2012, 2013 and now 2014 technology can allow a child to have access, be engaged fully in education, keep the child out of it in favour of ‘tradition’? Technology can, does and is supposed to make things better for all humanity. It is embraced in all other areas of government provision such as health and economic development – no other government department would allow a union to stand in the way of such beneficial progress. Home tuition, which may be needed by some children, is commonly inadequate, frequently less qualified teaching, and extremely limited, often to just 4 hours in a very restricted range of subjects. All children should be offered full and equal access via Elluminate provision as a primary response and in addition to home tuition if needed as a secondary response. Waiting lists for Educational Psychologists and limited referrals are one issue but what of the child who is absent due to cancer, ME or brain injury or mental health problems? They are not subject to most of these services. GP and Parents should trigger use as per UK Guidance referred to above. It is difficult to understand why children who are unable to attend school who have traditionally become invisible, vulnerable, and

abandoned by education should still be subject to the same 'traditional stages' of long waiting lists and traditional limitations, when Elluminate can provide access to education when it is most needed.

When a child is in crisis they need continuity, relationships, homework, study and they and their parents should have a choice of full access to all their subjects – not just what is traditionally available via a couple of hours of home tuition. Teacher's primary concern should be positive, proactive maximising provision of access to education aiming at optimal engagement opportunities with young people – it seems from this it's about policing, controlling, delaying, rationing, and making it hard to get. This is also contrary to UK Statutory guidance '*Ensuring A Good Education For Children Who Cannot Attend School Because Of Health Needs Statutory Guidance For Local Authorities January 2013*'

3. Re 'that requests can only be made via ELBs and EOTAS'.

GPs and parents should have the lead role in this provision. A letter to the school from a GP should be sufficient to trigger use of Elluminate whilst waiting for other provision. Where an absence is planned, there should be no gap in educational provision. The maximum gap in education should be 15 days before Elluminate is in place. Those who 'take a lead role' in Elluminate provision should be qualified to understand needs, and risk assess young people so situations are treated with understanding, compassion and putting the needs of the young person first. People in such lead roles who are untrained, and lack understanding are likely to cause additional distress in sensitive situations. Parents should be closely liaised with and listened carefully to. For good outcomes it is essential that suitably qualified persons are positioned in such lead roles. An excellent understanding of mental health of young people should be a primary requirement so that wellbeing and compassion are central in decision-making. ELBs are not health care providers; other professionals often mean long waiting lists, and this why GPs and parents should be able to instigate provision. Parents know when a child is too ill either mentally or physically to attend school. Whilst other processes to other traditional stages of support are being put in place and referrals are being made then Elluminate should be immediately and fully available to the child.

4. Regarding 'that the EOTAS team will have exhausted all other options before exploring the use of Elluminate as an option'.

Why should any child not be offered (if they are able) full and equal access to their education via Elluminate as a first option, far and above a meagre offering of a couple of hours of home tuition? Educators need to realise that Elluminate is not just about education. It provides for children in a time of crisis and can give stability, via continuity of connections and support mental health and wellbeing via distractions from prevailing issues and maintain vital links and relationships. It lets the school keep the child connected for more hours than home tuition ever could. This lessens isolation compared to home tuition. It is difficult to understand how educators cannot see how obvious the benefits of this provision are far and above anything traditional. It can help a child reintegrate because they are fully up to date and in touch with all going on with work and class, even if they are unable to do all the work, in all the subjects. Subjects can be recorded and listened to later in the day or later in recovery. They can be replayed if a

child is tired or had a bad night due to illness or disability, which will affect many of these children. Yes some children may be unable, but many want to keep a sameness and this is positive not only for their mental health but also for the “traditionally” difficult time when it comes to returning to school, making it very much easier and avoiding all the catching up due to “traditional” getting behind. It does not help a vulnerable child to be disconnected, left out or get behind – it makes it harder. What is being suggested here makes vulnerable children more vulnerable. Children’s needs need to be put first. ‘Traditional’ needs to be let go for better ways.

5. Re ‘requests for use of Elluminate only coming from the ELB / EOTAS’.

Requests for use of Elluminate should, as per UK Statutory Guidance come from the Parents and GP. It is not clear what is meant by ‘Monitored or time-scaled’ by EOTAS. Teachers monitor each day as a child is seen as connected when they log into a class, upload their homework, or download their work or ask questions as normal via Elluminate. Teachers should monitor work with input from parents who should be in normal close communication with the school. Too much time demand of scanning in work on a young person should be avoided by regular trips to school by parent to collect books and hand outs given by each subject that day, hand in homework due that day and collect corrected homework left out by teacher from previous days - just as normally given out by teachers as if the child were in class. Parents should liaise closely with a key teacher to relate issues or difficulties with the system or subjects. Closely liaising so the work/ subjects/ levels are appropriate to the child’s needs and abilities and wellbeing. It is in the best interests of the child that there is a close relationship with the child’s parents or carers and teachers as they are in learning partnership with a vulnerable child, supporting with homework as well as providing full time care. It is not ideal that a welfare officer / EOTAS is indicating monitoring or timescales. Parents know how well their child is and what they are able to do. Parents, child and GP should be central. A close circle connection with regular effective communication between school and home is essential for optimal success of the child engaging and succeeding in Elluminate educational provision.

Educational provision for children unable to attend school should be a fundamental right for children triggered by the child’s parents and a GP whilst other professional advice is on going – as per UK Statutory Guidance *‘Ensuring A Good Education For Children Who Cannot Attend School Because Of Health Needs Statutory Guidance For Local Authorities January 2013’*

6. There are many reasons a child may be in need of this provision. All such scenarios need consideration. As the child is primary consideration and parents are the natural advocates of the child. Parents must be the major source of input followed again by GP so there is no delay in provision and continuity is in place for the child. The plan that ‘the principal having taken professional advice which may include teachers of the pupil, SENCO, pastoral leader, and EOTAS team will determine whether or not to explore Elluminate options with the context of the agreed ILP’ will not work to meet needs of vulnerable children in need. Not every child e.g. expectant /young mothers or child off sick will have an ILP. All children should be able to use Elluminate up to the end of their A levels, if they are unable to attend for what ever reason and it should be in place immediately or at a maximum of 15 days.

7. IT teachers in the school are important to support the running of Elluminate – it is not practical for any outside agency such as C2k to be in every school. Schools need to

be able to manage this day to day and trouble shoot issues at the start or during any class. Only on site staff can do this. We suggest additional payment to IT teachers in schools to support staff provision to children unable to attend is most practical as this needs to be kept working all day everyday, especially until teachers are used to using it.

It is welcomed that the C2k should provide a computer to the child to use. However more importantly may be the speed of the broadband connection – this needs to be checked also so Elluminate is delivered smoothly. It is more likely that providing a high-speed router will be needed more than a computer, which a child may already have. We suggest the computer is not as suggested 'sole use for connecting to Elluminate' but can also be used for school work and projects and research in general by the pupil just as a computer in school or at home for homework normally is. Practically, they need to download and upload from folders saved on the same computer. They need one computer for all their schoolwork. They also need a scanner to scan in and upload work to other E-learning portals and may also need a printer from time to time. However parent's / relative / neighbours / friends/ regular drop offs and pick-ups from the school may be able to avoid such printer / scanner needs.

'That no material may be recorded or screen capture is allowed" - please hear yourselves! When a child with special educational needs or disability successfully navigates school and goes on to further education the ELB often gives them a computer AND VOICE RECORDING devices. The ELB clearly understands the needs for pupils to record lessons. It is common in universities for students who do not have learning disabilities to leave their phones in front of the lecturer during a lecture to record the lecture. Many children out of school also have specific learning disabilities and voice recording is an important help with their learning – they can listen to the lesson again and this in many cases will make their learning experience more successful. It could be argued that all children in school should also be able to record their lessons to optimise learning – teachers should welcome the chance not to have to repeat themselves, and the assistance of this with revision before exams has huge potential benefits. We have to put the needs of the child, learning and education first! This should not be about union's fears first, which is why unions should not be designing this provision.

When a child is unwell, often, they are not sleeping at night and for illness or mental health, sleep is very important time of healing. It is well recognised teens especially are not fully alert until midday but children who are unwell may really need sleep during school hours and lessons should be able to be recorded so they can replay when they feel able to listen later on in the day or evening. Learning must come first.

If the child has one of many hospital or mental health appointments they should be able to replay the lesson and not be stressed about tackling homework or coursework having missed a key lesson. If it is a young school age mum she may need to feed her baby and listen later. Someone may miss a lesson and need it repeated for many reasons. If a young person has a court appearance or youth justice appointment it would help them if they could have continuity in education so they have improved positive choices for their future.

Children in schools have mobile phones, which can record or photograph. Children in school do photograph and record teachers, it happens all the time. Open provision of and open access to education for children must be a priority over ideas from a union negotiating team or having one standard for children able to attend and one for children who cant.

The child's learning should be primary concern. The teacher is in control of the audio and video on Elluminate. The child at home does not want to, and should not be exposed to seeing or hearing anything inappropriate, from another child being told off or any situation which is compromising any pupil or teacher. The teacher can and must control the microphone or any camera use. The teacher can mute the microphone or turn of the camera at any stage during a class when, for whatever reason, actual teaching is not happening. Teachers should also ensure, if they are engaging a child who may (especially due to autism) not wish to have any camera use and not wish to be identified as present, that they do not compromise that child's wishes. A child may be given a code / number so their name does not appear on the Elluminate screen as present in case other children see the screen.

Every child in the school should be able to access Elluminate provision for any variety of needs. It is not possible to give every child a computer in this way as suggested. If provision is used for example, due to severe weather or exam revision on study leave or unplanned absence such a protocol of C2k providing the computer is protracting the gap in education, not practical and not acceptable. Children should be able to use their own computers while they wait for one to be supplied and should not be blocked from education while such provision is arranged.

8. Is this giving a child unable to attend school at home the same rights as a child in school? It is not desirable to discriminate against a child due to their illness or disability it's even more important to provide equality when children are vulnerable. If the suggestion that 'no material during transmission of a lesson may be used in any competency or disciplinary procedures against a teacher, excluding child protection or criminal grounds' is put in place, does that remove the right of any child unable to attend school to complain regarding the quality or competency of teaching? This does not seem like good practice or reflect open, transparent, accountable working. Children should be free and able to raise any concerns and a healthy working environment should be open to hearing any issues and working positively to improving a child's learning experience.

9. Re 'schools amending their E-Safety policy' – parents involved in using Elluminate for their child, should have some input to revised policies at some stage during such policy development.

10. Re 'the time limit agreed with EOTAS team for use of software each day'. The child who may be in crisis, ill or suffering should be allowed to chose his or her favourite subjects ideally along with essential English and maths if they are able manage them. The child's input and parents views are vital in the choice of subjects and the parents are an essential priority for day-to-day or week-to-week planning with teachers on how well the child is, or if the child had a difficulty with the homework or lesson, as parents normally do. It is too protracted a process to put EOTAS in between the parents and the school and this is not in the best interest of the wellbeing or optimal learning outcomes for the child. For example, if a teacher forgets to turn on the microphone at the beginning of a class or if a connection is lost, it is parents who need to contact the school immediately.

11. Re 'funding to be provided for training of teachers by ELB'. Training is an urgent priority reflecting the urgent needs of vulnerable children in need. Training should be provided using Elluminate so it is quickly delivered, saving costs and also demonstrating some of the capacity of the system. Training should be given by C2k to IT teachers in

schools on common problems with microphone and general troubleshooting so they can support any situations. All teachers should be trained in Elluminate via Elluminate and C2k should organise this regular training and support sessions (which should be recorded so they can play back to revise!) so all teachers are confident, comfortable and positive about Elluminate **as a matter of urgency**. Training should also include videos and connections to those using Elluminate and examples of good practice, so teachers feel positive and appreciate the value and opportunities of moving away from 'traditional' and into the future. We suggest sharing <http://blog.ted.com/2014/01/27/we-need-to-change-everything-on-campus-anant-agarwal-of-edx-on-moocs-mit-and-new-models-of-higher-education/> and networking with organisations already using it referred to in point one. Teachers also need to be prepared to continuously learn whilst using Elluminate, for example some may forget to look at the screen from time to time during a lesson to see if the child has posted a message. If a child has not heard what page in the book they are working from at the start of the class or cannot hear the teacher properly, the teacher needs to remember that child is there online, as it can be easy to forget they are there. Regular evaluation sheets should be provided and completed by the child and or parent (depending on age of the child) to help teachers understand any issues and improve provision over time.

In ICT classes in schools there is a potential for use of Elluminate to be part of the curriculum, this should be embraced so all children are familiar with the learning resource as no one knows what may happen to any child causing them to be absent and vulnerable to loss of education provision.

There is no reason why E-Safety Governors, EOTAS, Educational Psychologists, ELB, relevant Dept. of Education staff, the Education Committee in Stormont and the Minister of Education should not have at least an overview of Elluminate provision and capacity via Elluminate programme to their own computers. If for no other reason than as a mark of respect to our most vulnerable children who have missed out in the past and who's lives are blighted forever as a result of it not functioning so far.

12. The webcam if or when it is used, should never be on or include a view of any child in the classroom. The microphone should not broadcast anything other than the teacher delivering the lesson. Views of children in the classroom, teacher's disciplining, scolding, warning, or getting angry with any child or class is not part of the delivery of education via Elluminate and teachers must ensure they do not compromise any child either by broadcasting images that would identify them or by failing to mute the microphone for a moment, if it is necessary deal with an issue.

Children who are vulnerable are sensitive and do not want to hear unpleasant situations broadcast into their homes. It is enough for any child to be humiliated in front of their class by a telling off without it also being relayed outside the classroom. Teachers should use the microphone when they are teaching to allow a child at home to learn, but ensure it is turned off otherwise. Teachers should not, for example, have the microphone turned on when they are doing a role call.

Re 'All parents of children within the classroom will be contacted by ELB and written consent by parents/ guardians for pupils to be recorded and filmed to be obtained and retained by ELB'

When contacting parents about use of Elluminate this should be done when they enrol in a school and also as part of the normal ICT agreements signed annually by pupils and teachers. Use of Elluminate should be normalised, all children should be able to benefit. Schools should practice using it with pupils before it is needed, by for example, having

one day a term when all pupils are taught online so if severe weather (as suggested by WELB as use) or illness strikes, everyone will be able to use it and there will be no gaps in educational provision. One of the uses aspired to by e-learning C2K investment was if children were unable to attend due to severe weather or illness. Any family and child can be subject to a disadvantage from many different sources it could be anything from weather to illness, diagnoses of disability, or simply need extra help when they are off on study leave. Elluminate should be positively presented to all as an exciting new resource, which can ensure continuity of learning support when absence is inevitable due to severe weather, illness, disability, or study leave periods. This should be part of annual agreement for all children every year. All parents and children worry when they miss school, worry about the impact, getting behind and how hard it will be to catch up with what they missed. This is a positive development and should be presented as such. It should not be the case that when a child is in crisis that such a letter goes to that child's class about Elluminate use – such extraordinary approach may inadvertently identify the child, causing distress and putting them at risk of bullying and unnecessarily raise fears and speculation when parents of one class in particular gets such a letter. There should not be a need to film or record pupils in class when using Elluminate. This is unnecessary and undesirable by all concerned. The microphone and camera if used should only be on the teacher when teaching or giving a demonstration. All pupils should be made aware generally that some lessons may be broadcast so that if they are unable to attend they don't have to worry about missing out or getting behind – again it should be presented in a positive way highlighting the benefits to all children, as most children experience absence for different reasons and are glad to be able to catch up. In time and with use teachers will come to see many advantages of using Elluminate a ordinary lesson can be recorded for any child to listen to again at home, so even if they were over tired close to exams and not able to give consistent full attention in the class or away at a football match or the dentist they can listen again later that evening. A more positive approach when communicating with parents about this facility is needed.

Some children who are ill, may want to connect with one or two of their close friends in class when Elluminate is running so they have a class buddy to do a quiz with or for partner work for example when doing a French or German lesson to practice language conversation. Such children could get a simple consent form from their parents to liaise with the child at home from school. However, it is essential that this practice be arranged so that some children, who may not have willing friends in class, are not isolated in such a work buddy system – a potential for bullying a vulnerable child by isolation.

All children in each school should be registered and set up so that all children can use Elluminate for any reason- if absent due to severe weather, or on study leave for a revision session or if they get ill or are not coping and need time out or have had an accident or appointment and miss school as a result.

Parents are well used to their child being online for a number of uses, connecting to their teacher, and schoolwork should be a positive improvement on many online current activities.

13. Regarding the plan that 'any person who may have access to view video link in which children may be viewed must have completed a current Police Vetting Procedure'.

There are set guidance regarding ACCESS NI checks. They are only legal in certain regulated positions. It is illegal to check someone unnecessarily. Children in the class

should not be viewed via Elluminate. The whiteboard and teacher teaching a lesson are all that is needed and teachers should ensure nothing else is broadcast. If this were the case then all parents attending a school assembly or event or watching a football match should be police vetted. There should be nothing to worry about when a teacher for example is giving a German lesson. Parents have already been to school and have better things to do than want to do it again and have little desire to return to school lessons. This is a result of scaremongering arising from ignorance about use. The reality is for adults when a child is getting lessons it's a chance for them to get other things done. Teachers should know that paedophiles are not keen on preying on teachers giving a German lesson or any other lesson, it's not what they are interested in, and the camera, if used, is on the teacher not the class. Besides it would be impossible to ACCESS NI check all people who may be providing care for the child at home. Any number of relatives or friends, nurses or doctors, mental health care workers or community volunteers depending on a child's situation may be caring for the child and people may rotate on an ever changing basis depending on the needs of the child and parents. However the teacher in the classroom has complete control of any camera and microphone use and this is the point at which other children's privacy should be protected.

ACCESS NI checks are done under criteria for regulated positions such as adults involved in an activity or providing a service such as training or teaching on a regular basis, which allow the potential to build a relationship with a child. No one in a child's home where a child is listening to a teacher or watching a demonstration has the potential for building a relationship with any child in the school so it's not a regulated position. Such adults are not eligible for a check and no one can ask for a check on someone when they are not eligible. ACCESS NI will not check people who are not eligible. If these adults are not employed then there is no one to check them also there may be regular and casual visitors to the house, and it is impossible to check all who may potentially view. In reality when a child is listening into lessons they are in a quiet room on their own and do not wish to be disturbed as they are concentrating on the lesson and doing work. This seems to be yet another obstacle set to delay and protract process before access like the suggestion that all traditional systems must be exhausted before it is considered. Paranoia must yield to progress. More harm is coming to more children due to being abandoned as a result of failure of Elluminate, they are more isolated, and lack of education makes them more vulnerable and at risk than any child is by use of Elluminate in schools.

Child protection concerns, just as education, should not be just about the children in school but also about those unable to attend, currently getting little or no educational provision. It is certain that the more hours engaged via Elluminate and doing homework, the raising of self esteem, increases in wellbeing and hope for the future, feeling part of something positive, having choices and being engaged successfully with teachers and learning everyday massively increases the protective factors for our most vulnerable young people.

14. Yes, as above this is how it should be – but please type a message to the child and let them know what time the broadcast will resume and send anything they missed that day via parent collection point or internet upload point.

15. School policy regarding proper use of digital media should be enforced during all school periods. Most children carry mobile phones which can record other children or by video and audio. It is a common way to bully and sex texting is a huge issue. Children

currently in school are more at risk from other children in school than any risk of educating by Elluminate. Such a school policy should be enforced everyday regardless of Elluminate use or not.

Regarding the outline of roles for school Governors, Principals, ELBs and C2k - it is appalling and ridiculous that children, whom the provision is for, and parents nor their advocacy organisations do not feature in roles outlined. If this becomes policy it will have a massive detrimental impact on the lives of already vulnerable children- as such it needs urgent serious open inclusive development to become a policy that works allowing Elluminate to be all that it can be to all in need.

C2k should provide E-Safety Governors with training so they understand the benefits to children of the use of Elluminate and have a positive, proactive attitude of embracing technology, which has the power to improve lives of our most vulnerable children at a time of crisis. They should understand the full potential of the system and also the full range of potential uses from short to long term and appreciate the wide range of needs of different children in different situations and the capacity the school now has to reach out and be fully inclusive to all children. Monitoring the use of Elluminate software should include offering both parents and children the opportunity to feedback if the schools provision met the needs of the child appropriately and learn if anything can be improved. There is a need to evaluate the use of current technology and its use in a schools provision in meeting the needs of all children unable to attend school for whatever reason.

The NI schools inspectorate should, as part of their inspection of schools, examine how schools are using Elluminate and how each school is meeting the needs of all the children who are unable to attend, suspended or de-registered from that school. The schools inspectorate should also check that all children who are not in school are identified by each ELB and offered Elluminate provision via the school of their choice. OFSTED recently identified in their report 'Pupils Missing Our on Education' an estimated 10,000 children were missing from education in England. NI has 1000s of missing invisible children who should be identified and reengaged in education via an offer of Elluminate.

Principals

The Principals first point of contact should be the child's parents and with the parent's consent, if the child is mature, well or stable enough and willing, the child themselves. If monitoring and support are planned, why not also put evaluation involving child and parents in the plan so everything improves for children in time. Each school should have a publicly available policy that sets out how their school will support children who are unable to attend school.

ELB

We welcome the plan that the ELB will have a person whom parents can contact when Elluminate provision is needed. We ask that such a person will have a good knowledge of special needs, autism, and challenging behaviour so they can deal with situations with understanding and compassion. They should also have good training in Elluminate and understand the potential benefits and have a positive attitude to maximising access to education to give full and equal access within 15 days. They should work closely with parents to understand the situation and help create flexible creative ways to maximise the

number of subjects a child can access. Agreements for use should be annual and school wide for all pupils and parents.

The ELB should produce a written publicly accessible policy statement on how they are going to meet the needs of children unable to attend school and informing parents about Elluminate provision and how to access it for their child. Timescales should be publicly set out and agreed to. A clear policy should be developed in consultation with parents and relevant organisations of children unable to attend school.

The ELB needs to work to identify all children up to 18 yrs. who could benefit from Elluminate provision and ensure they are made aware of the option.

ELB and Schools Provision for Public Examinations

Awarding bodies will make special arrangements for children with permanent or long-term disabilities or learning difficulties, and with temporary disabilities, illness and indispositions, when they are taking public examinations. The ELB (or the school where applicable) should submit applications for special arrangements to awarding bodies as early as possible. Those providing education to a child out of school should provide advice and information to the school to assist it with such applications. Parents and the child (depending on age and health) should be liaised with to identify a suitable place in which the child would feel comfortable to sit the exams. Necessary documentation from any professionals required so the child has any adjustments he or she needs to enable them to sit their exam, should be arranged in plenty of time before exams are due to take place to give the child optimal chance of succeeding.

C2K

C2k need to use Elluminate to educate and support **all** teachers in all schools in Northern Ireland (and others previously referred to) in the use of Elluminate – ***this is massively overdue since 2011 and urgent it should happen without any delay.*** The absence of this has created a vacuum, in which scaremongering has thrived and which has led to this appalling situation and this dreadful union protocol. C2k must know the capacity of Elluminate to redress suffering of vulnerable children – they need to communicate this to teachers so they are not only confident but also positive and enthusiastic about its use. Teachers should get a feel good factor from helping previously abandoned children via Elluminate.

C2K may also need to provide high-speed routers, scanners or printers depending on how work is to flow in and out daily from school to pupils. Where a child is able they should be kept up to speed with the class, this means daily workflow. It is helpful to teachers when the child is up to speed and also an optimal position for successful reintegration.

Teachers should be given a choice of microphone. Some may not mind a headset, which allows them to move around the classroom when teaching – it must have a mute button. Others may prefer to sit or stand in front of their laptop microphone so the child can always hear what is being said.

Whiteboards are a big issue. Ideally classes using Elluminate should all have interactive whiteboards if not, such classes should be timetabled in rooms, which have interactive whiteboards. Children at home cannot see what is being written on the blackboard / elsewhere. Only the interactive whiteboard is connected to the Elluminate screen. Teachers need training in how to connect class projector into Elluminate so slide show is available to the child at home. Children at home need to see for example the maths or

physics calculations as they are written up on any board during class. They need to be able to copy down what the teacher has written on whatever board they have written on – when the teacher says ‘copy down what I have written on the board’ – if they cannot see it at home, they get frustrated and upset, as they are lost and the rest of the lesson may not make any sense.

C2k should understand that all children should have full and equal access within 15 days of being out of school – they need effective processes and supplies in place to meet the needs of children in crisis, who may not have all they need to get access. Funding should not be wasted giving hardware to children that have their own and are happy to use it. Effective planning, proactive management needs a designated person to over see fast tracking of resources out to children in need.

The Special Link Teacher.

The child’s teacher responsible for pastoral care or head of year or form teacher or SENCO should be assigned as the day to day point of contact for the parent and or child depending on age or stage. Ideally, the principal, as a result of a discussion with the parent and or child, should select this person. (A GCSE / A level child at home may be able to suggest a teacher they feel most comfortable with as the school contact point – if the parent consents) The staff member should be the one the child feels happiest with and has the best relationship with. It is important to remember that the aim of this is to meet the needs of vulnerable young people who may be ill or have a disability or in crisis. Helping the child to engage and stay connected with learning and school is vital for a good outcome. In order to help the child, a good relationship with that child is fundamental, thus the principal’s role in linking the child and parents to the teacher they prefer is essential to good outcomes for the child. This carefully selected teacher should be the day to day contact who can smooth any issues on any subject liaising with teachers in the school if any work is absent, behind, lost, failed to upload or download, not handed in or if there is a poor connection. This teacher should be able to liaise with the IT teacher or other teachers to provide optimal support to the child as they would if the child were in school. Many older children may be happy to liaise with this teacher via email if the parent consents. Some with autism, or mental health issues, may just want their parents to liaise on their behalf.

Plans for reintegration are important for children including any adjustments which may need to be made and phased re-entry etc. The key link teacher with the best relationship with the child will again be best placed to work with the child and parents to make this a gradual step by step success. Continuity with this key teacher should continue in initial six months of phased return to ensure maximum support and optimise success of reintegration. Elluminate will ensure they are up to speed with all work but the children should also be kept in touch with newsletters and invitations to any school events etc. when they are at home. The school nurse may be an additional support to a child who has been ill they could become familiar to the child via Elluminate in advance of a planned return. The fact that children have had continuity via Elluminate during their absence, will help both with their recovery and return to their familiar surroundings.

Any draft protocol for use of Elluminate should be laid out along side the UK Statutory Guidance *Ensuring A Good Education For Children Who Cannot Attend School Because Of Health Needs Statutory Guidance For Local Authorities January 2013* because work has already been done to consider good practice in providing for children who are not in school. There are many gaps in this plan such as provision for examinations.

There is huge potential for Elluminate to improve the lives of children who are in crisis, ill or disabled and currently written off and forgotten by education provision. When devising a plan to use Elluminate the children have to be central – it is wholly wrong to allow this plan to go forward as it is. In parts it is sadly divisive in parts it is simply outright discrimination and illegal. As it is, it will add to the distress and despair of children and families in need, trying to keep some parts of their lives positively moving forward while other aspects are in disarray. It lacks both compassion and humanity.

Until Elluminate is providing as it should to all children unable to attend school, as a mark of respect to our situation and our children, we request that the Department of Education stops running their advertisement on television telling us how “Education works because it gives your child confidence, Education works because it gives your child choices” our children are not getting this chance because systems are being allowed to fail. We are not being allowed to be involved in this provision – just the unions who are against it. Our children need the confidence and choices even more than children who are able to go to school because they have so many other issues to cope with.

Finally, we note the case of Louise O’Keeffe, who suffered sexual abuse in school. The Government in the Republic of Ireland insisted for years that it was the school Board of Management, which was responsible for what she suffered, and they denied any responsibility towards her. The European Court of Human Rights gave its verdict this week. The European court found that under Section 3 and Section 13 her rights had been breached. It was not the Board of Management in the School that was responsible for what happened to her, it was the Government, and they are now liable under European Law to compensate her for what she suffered. It is wrong for the NI Government to continue to fail to provide for children unable to attend school when it can, and wrong to leave the choice up to schools or union members or individual teachers to decide for themselves if they chose to provide for a child unable to attend school. We suggest this injustice to our most vulnerable children is addressed immediately. Responsibility for the serious horrendous consequences in the lives of our vulnerable children, which results from failing to provide access to education for them, rests squarely with the NI Government and the Minister for Education in particular. We have now been pleading this case for two years. We need action now to end the savage, cruel, abandonment of our children and huge detrimental impacts on their lives. Children’s basic human rights are clearly being breached.

Illuminate Our Lives Campaign For Full And Equal Access Within 15 Days For All Children Unable To Attend School-

Demands that the Department of Education, Education and Library Boards, Boards of Governors and schools REJECT this appalling plan by unions to discriminate against our most vulnerable children who are in urgent need of access to education.

The Minister of Education must remove the power of the unions to discriminate and destroy young lives and futures, and urgently put in place a fair, open, and inclusive policy to safeguard the entitlement of all vulnerable children to education. Full training for all teachers is urgent, followed by full immediate access for all children unable to attend school. He has a duty to eliminate the current discrimination and foster equality of opportunity.

Those in authority in education must stand up for the least of these, our most vulnerable children in need, with illness and disability, who are desperately in need of the gift of Illuminate and full and equal access to education, within 15 days, to limit the impact their disability, illness or challenging circumstances has on their young lives, their wellbeing and futures.

Flow Chart for Elluminate Provision

ELB, C2K and School devise policy and consent form for parents for ALL pupils to use Elluminate if or when any needs arise. ALL Parents sign ICT consent form and permission forms at the start of each year. Schools ready to take responsibility for any child unable to attend school and prepared for adverse weather, support during study leave or other circumstance and to network to broaden and enrich education up to A level.

Child will be absent for 15 consecutive or 15 cumulative days in 1 year. At risk of not getting suitable or full time education. Due to being: only able to attend part time / getting home tuition but needs or wants more, or wants connection with school / in hospital or mental health or care facility/ suspended/ de-registered and wants access/ medically unwell/ mental health/ special needs or disability issues / pregnancy/ young mother/ losing education supports at 16/ young carer or other.

All children in school trained to set up and use Elluminate

Class on study leave or adverse weather or other circumstance leaving children unable to attend

Children use their own or nearest library networked computer to connect to teacher in class

C2K have all teachers trained via Elluminate esp. ICT teachers and record on line sessions

Parent or support agency notifies school and obtain professional/ consultant/ medical /mental health or GP written evidence of need for Elluminate and give to school. School meets parent and identifies ICT needs and other professionals involved. School, parent and child identify Special Link Teacher

ICT Teacher Identifies any shortfalls in available hardware - computer, router, scanner and printer needs

Parent works with Link Teacher to identify key person to pick up and drop off homework, books and resources daily from school, set drop off point and agree which subjects the child needs/ wants and how much child can manage

C2K provide any computer hardware the child needs

ICT Hardware in place
ICT Teacher sets up connection online
And troubleshoots on connections

Parents carefully listened to by school and professionals to gain shared understanding of needs and develop a personal education and career plan in consultation with child, (if possible). Explanation of any needs or advice impacting on education provision such as medication / sleep / restrictions / any adjustments / teaching approaches needed and eventually support reintegration and career plan.

Child resourced and connected via Elluminate by Day 1 Min, or Day 6 max

Hardware returned to C2K

Special Teacher identifies Examination needs. Applications made to Awarding Bodies for special arrangements. Regular reviews, evaluations with child and parent to ensure needs are met.

GP or other professional continues to provide evidence of need

Reintegration Planning between Special Link Teacher and Parent

Child Successfully Reintegrated or Finished Final School Exams and Career On Track