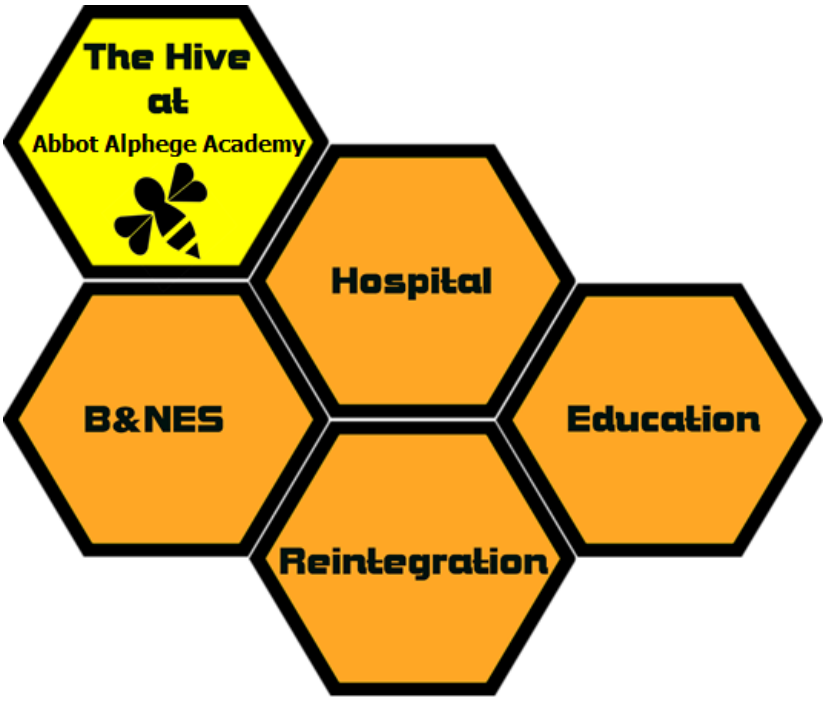
Hospital Education and Reintegration Service (HERS)

HERS Welcome Pack and Permission Form



Address:

The Hive

Abbot Alphege Academy (top floor)

Beckford Drive, Lansdown

Bath, BA1 9AU

. **0117 462 3941** - *For reporting absences and general enquiries*

A Welcome by the Service Manager, Sarah Dunsford

Dear parent/carer and student,

We are delighted to welcome you and your child to HERS even though we understand that this may have been a challenging time for you. This pack is designed to give you information you might need initially when your child joins us, or as a reminder. Please take the time to read through it carefully and note down any questions you may have, to ask your lead teacher.

We are a temporary service for pupils aged 4 to 16 in early years to year 11, for students who have health and medical needs and cannot access learning opportunities at their own school. Our aim is to offer education and plan reintegration once your child's health has improved or until an EHCP plans your child's education more permanently.

Our HERS staff are focused on supporting pupils and families to achieve the best possible education and reintegration outcomes. We work with a range of other professionals, including a medical/health professional, to ensure each child's needs can be correctly identified and support everyone academically and socially to prepare them for reintegration.

There is a positive atmosphere in which children can fulfil their potential and grow in self-confidence and develop the resilience and perseverance to overcome individual challenges alongside a clear understanding that our learners are unwell, and so a bespoke and medically guided programme is required.

We are proud of the pupils and staff who aim to cultivate an environment where students feel well enough and safe to learn. Students are taught in a range of ways, guided by medical advice, such as in our small and quiet base, online and by teachers supporting and guiding independent work, in conjunction with the child's home school curriculum and external exam requirements where applicable.

All students are dual registered with us to maintain effective links with the home school regarding curriculum, SEND, exam entries, post-16 destinations, reintegration work and pastoral support. We aim to provide a high quality, relevant and balanced education for all our pupils, based on medical needs.

Our focus is on academic and core subjects balanced with sessions to help improve social isolation, friendships, and a therapeutic approach as part of a wider holistic curriculum for those who cannot yet access core subject learning.

We are incredibly proud of our service, and we hope our team, The Mendip School website, Class Dojo and this pack, provides you with a greater understanding of what life is like for pupils, families and staff across the county of Bath & North East Somerset (BANES) whilst in HERS.

Students must reside in BANES to be able to have a referral to HERS considered. This referral is coordinated through the home school and with supporting and appropriate medical evidence. This is then considered by BANES Panel meetings.

What is HERS?

HERS stands for 'Hospital Education and Reintegration Service'.

Our aim is to provide educational support when, for medical reasons, a child is unable to attend their normal mainstream school. The duration of the placement is dependent on medical advice.

How long does a HERS placement last?

We have some pupils who attend HERS on a short-term basis, and some, more long term. HERS provision is determined at Single Point of Access Panel meetings organised by BANES Local Authority. A HERS placement may be extended based on medical advice but is temporary.

What happens once my child has a HERS placement allocated?

The Initial Meeting

A lead teacher will contact you shortly after allocation. They serve as your primary contact and will arrange an initial home meeting with your child present to:

- Explain HERS provision
- Build a bespoke timetable based on your child's needs
- Discuss lesson locations and transport options
- Address technology access for online lessons
- Answer questions

We receive advance information from home schools including grades, targets, and SEND details. The forms you have signed allow us to access this information to best help your child.

Lesson Format

Lessons follow a core curriculum including PSHE/SRE content. Your lead teacher will guide you through allocations and build a personalised timetable, reviewed regularly based on medical advice.

Where do lessons take place?

Lessons occur:

- Individually or in small groups at The Hive (Abbot Alphege Academy, Bath)
- Online

- At home school during reintegration
- Other mutually agreed suitable locations
- At RUH base for inpatients/day admissions

Lessons typically last one hour but may be shorter based on medical conditions.

What does a HERS lesson look like?

All teachers are qualified with experience, ensuring lessons align with National Curriculum standards. Content maintains school-level challenge while being adapted for individual HERS student needs. We operate on first-name terms.

What will my child need for their lessons?

Dress Code: Must be appropriate at all times for a school setting - comfortable to smart casual, covering bare skin appropriately, without inflammatory language. No school uniform is required. Nothing should be offensive.

Equipment:

- School pencil case and calculator
- Existing school exercise books
- Water bottle and snacks/packed lunch as needed

We provide exercise books, resources, and revision guides. Equipment loans available but organisation is encouraged as a life skill.

Free School Meals: Contact your child's home school directly. Please be aware that policy on this can change, so please continue to talk to us and the home school at review meetings regarding this. There is a designated time/space for eating at The Hive but please talk to your lead teacher about how this works for your child.

Lessons at The Hive

- Arrival: please aim for 5 minutes before lesson start time to sign in and store devices safely.

- NO DEVICES policy in class - these should be handed in and stored safely in our office. We believe all children should have a break from phone use and we will be very understanding if any child wants to use our office phone appropriately.

- Transport: Car drop-off, walk if local or taxi. Fuel can be claimed for once applied for to the LA.

- Adult Support: a responsible adult may attend where helpful. We have a small parent/carer room to be used solely by visiting adults. Please be aware that an adult not employed by HERS should never be alone with any child other than

their own. If you find yourself in this position, please notify a staff member immediately. Please sign in and take a visitor's lanyard.

- Homework: Available weekly. We encourage completion but understand individual limitations - please discuss this with the lead teacher. Century Tech platform is available for additional learning.

Use of the lift

We do not have access via the lift corridor every day as now a separate entrance, but there is full access if required. If you need the lift to get upstairs, please let us know. As part of evacuation policy, you may be able to get downstairs without the lift in an emergency situation. If not, we MUST complete a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan with you, to be upstairs with us. We have 2 evacuation chairs that can be used if absolutely necessary. In case of any emergency evacuation, a loud alarm will sound. In the event of a lockdown, the call will be lockdown, lockdown, lockdown.

There is one accessible parking space.

Assessment and Feedback

There is regular assessment throughout the school year with feedback and improvement opportunities. Data is shared with your child and home school using our HERS feedback policy.

Reporting:

- One summative academic progress report annually
- Evidence For Learning data collection 6 times yearly
- Review meetings every 6 weeks (attendance required)
- Immediate discussion of any progress concerns, usually within a few days

What should I do if my child is sick and/or has a medical appointment?

Contact: **0117 462 3941**

- Please provide a clear reason using national attendance coding
- We ask advance notice for individual lessons where possible
- We may ask for appointment letters/confirmations for our records
- Please notify the lead teacher of any relevant information

This includes online Tute lessons so that we can log the reason on our attendance system.

Unauthorised absences may be recorded if no reason is communicated. Our attendance data is shared with the home school and BANES AWSS (Attendance and Welfare Support Service) when necessary. We will set up an attendance contract where this may be needed.

We will contact you if your child doesn't arrive as expected - but please contact us first. This remains your responsibility.

What happens if my child's teacher is unwell?

We will notify you immediately of any staff illness or safeguarding emergencies. Lessons may be cancelled, changed, or amended but alternative work will be provided:

- Oak Academy work
- Homework or revision guides
- Century Tech
- Cover teacher where possible, and appropriate

The Hive always has teachers present. We cover teacher absences internally in the first instance.

What happens when my child is ready to return to their home school?

HERS works closely with you, your child, home school, and medical professionals for careful reintegration planning:

- **Termly review meetings** between parents/carers, home school, medics, and the HERS lead teacher
- **Reintegration support** - HERS teachers help establish what reintegration looks like and supports the child through the process (usually 6 weeks)
- **Closure** - You will receive a letter when the child successfully reintegrates back into an agreed educational setting

What do I do if I'm not happy with any aspect of HERS provision?

1. **First**: Please discuss it with the Lead Teacher. We will always try to accommodate any appropriate needs of our learners
2. **If unsatisfied with the response or wish to discuss anything further**: Please contact HERS Service Manager Sarah Dunsford: sdunsford@banes-hers.com

Contact Details

Hospital Education and Reintegration Service (HERS)

The Hive, Abbot Alphege Academy (top floor) Beckford Drive, Lansdown, Bath, BA1 9AU

0117 462 3941 (web-based number, not Bristol-based)

sdunsford@banes-hers.com (HERS manager)

ldyte@banes-hers.com (general enquiries)

https://www.themendipschool.co.uk/01-welcome-to-hers

Welcome video availabl**e** - please ask if this would be helpful. We use Class Dojo for day-to-day communication.

HERS Staff Contact Directory

Name	Email
BIDDLESTON Dave	dbiddleston@banes-hers.com
BURFORD Paul	pburford@banes-hers.com
BURTON Sian	sburton@banes-hers.com
BURTON Richard	rburton@banes-hers.com
DUNCAN Melissa	mduncan@banes-hers.com
DUNSFORD Sarah	sdunsford@banes-hers.com
DYTE Lara	ldyte@banes-hers.com
GOLLEDGE Anne	agolledge@banes-hers.com
HAYHURST Rachel	rhayhurst@banes-hers.com
HELLIER Alison	ahellier@banes-hers.com
INGLIS Yvonne	yinglis@banes-hers.com
JAMES Karen	kjames@banes-hers.com

KELLY Ellie	ekelly@banes-hers.com
LANZON Elizabeth	elanzon@banes-hers.com
McCUTCHEON Damien	dmccutcheon@banes-hers.com
PATE Katherine	kpate@banes-hers.com
ROGERS Nicola	nrogers@banes-hers.com
SULLY James	jsully@banes-hers.com
WALL Annabel	awall@banes-hers.com

Safeguarding of our HERS learners

HERS follows The Mendip School's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy (available on their website) and adheres to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025.

We work with home schools sharing safeguarding updates and concerns. HERS staff must see children at least weekly. We carry out welfare checks as required.

Safeguarding Contacts (working hours):

- Home school safeguarding team
- HERS Lead teacher (as per list above)
- DSL: Natalie Hanna (01749 838040)
- Deputy DSL: Sarah Dunsford (0117 462 3941)
- Safeguarding Governor: Melinda Barker

Out of hours emergencies: Contact police, social care, GP, other medic or follow the medical support plan, or other agency you work with.

Attendance for our HERS learners

HERS follows The Mendip School's attendance policy and adheres to Working Together to Improve School Attendance.

We use nationally-recognised attendance coding recorded on BROMCOM. Regular attendance is required for effective learning provision. Therefore, prompt communication regarding any absences, or cancelled TUTE lessons, is vital.

Best contact method: **0117 462 3941**

Any decisions regarding attendance concerns, following initial verbal and written communication, will be made with the home school, BANES local authority, education, health, social care, and other relevant agencies such as the BANES Attendance and Welfare Support Service.

We follow The Mendip School policies and share their DfE number.

Additional information will be provided during your time with HERS.

We look forward to helping you with your learning until you can reintegrate back into an appropriate educational setting.

Sarah Dunsford and the team, 3rd September, 2025

Copy of email sent to families in July 2025 as a reminder

Good afternoon parents and carers,
Please be aware that the term for staff starts on the 1st of September. Staff have 2 training days on the 1st and 2nd.
We will make contact with you from the 3rd September onwards and plan to see you and your child from this point onwards. This is a time for updates and planning. Some of this is already happening depending on each child's situation as we work in a bespoke way.

Lessons at The Hive start again on 8th September and we are working on taxis for those where it is clear on a new timetable. We hope taxis will be in place if booked early enough but if not, groups can be joined at a slightly later time.
If you/your child is reintegrating, you will have discussed this at review meetings so please follow this plan.

You should now be aware that we have a new entrance so that will continue in September.

As you may know, adults can attend The Hive to support their child, but please ensure you are never alone with any other child than your own. If you find yourself in this position, please ensure you let a staff member know immediately for safeguarding purposes. The parent/carer room is small and as we have a little less space in September, we ask that only adults use this.

A new educational group will be moving in downstairs but we don't expect that until October.

If the lift is needed, we can access that but we must alert staff downstairs. They will be a completely different team. If you do need the lift, we will need to complete a personal evacuation plan for you in the case of emergency. From that point, we will not have access to the lift area next to the office.

If we visit the home for any reason, a reminder that a responsible adult must be present.

Please remember that dress to The Hive should be suitable for an educational setting.

We now have a set of student drawers in the corridor and students can leave non-valuable items there.

We will ask students to hand in mobile phones as they arrive, but please be really clear that in the case of a medical need, we will work with you child to contact you as quickly as we can as we know this can help a lot. Everyone needs a break from screen time.

Please also be aware that lessons work so much better where communication can happen gently between teacher and child so we ask that ear defenders are only used for health reasons. Please discuss this in September if you have any thoughts or concerns.

Please bring basic equipment with you and a packed meal if staying longer. If this is hard, please talk to the home school or lead teacher. It is wise to bring a water bottle.

Our Parent Family Support Adviser will be visiting some of the HERS students over the summer break so please discuss this with your lead teacher if needed. Otherwise, HERs closes for the summer. In the case of anything concerning please contact a health professional, the police or any other agency you work with.

You should now have received the end of year summative report by email.

There will be an updated welcome pack and permission letter in September. Some things here are explained further. Please add any data changes to this permission letter. This will also include something about student data privacy as you all have a right for your details not to be shared.

Please remember to complete our pupil/parent voice survey, and Class Dojo gives a great summary of the year. I hope you enjoyed the year, the reading spa and the careers carousel at the farm recently if you were able to attend.

I look forward to meeting more and more of you, if I haven't already, and thank you for how you have worked with us so well this year. Best educational outcomes happen with joint working.

Sarah

The permission form below is required for us to work with you and your child. Thank you. One copy is for you to keep, and one is to sign and return.

HERS Permission Form *To be given with welcome pack or start of the academic year*

As parent/carer, I give permission for: ***Please delete with a clear line any that are a NO***

- ☐ First aid to be given by a HERS staff member trained in paediatric first aid
- ☐ To complete the information at the bottom if my child has an allergy
- ☐ For trained staff to administer medication as per the HERS policy – separate form
- ☐ For my child to travel in a HERS staff car in exceptional circumstances where business insurance is in place, and this has been risk-assessed
- ☐ For HERS staff to have the mobile phone number for older students for safeguarding reasons - separate form
- ☐ To upload your child's details to Century Tech if they are using this for learning
- ☐ To upload your child's details to Tute if they are using this for learning
- ☐ To take part in sex, relationships and health education in an age-appropriate way (you will be made aware of content)
- ☐ To have my details added to Class Dojo for communication reasons
- ☐ To know that photographs are taken in HERS (we avoid faces and rarely show these) and occasionally used on EFL / Class Dojo
- ☐ To use data as per the SPA form that you signed for referral into HERS
- ☐ To work in a range of public locations with your knowledge and agreement such as schools, cafes, libraries, a farm, or other suitable place
- ☐ For assessment to take place on GCSE exam access requirements in conjunction with the home school where your child is registered
- ☐ To use permissions already granted to your child's home school
- ☐ I give permission to share my child's information with any specialist information and advice guidance worker, to help with post-16 destinations
- ☐ I understand that I must never be alone with any learner in HERS unless my own child
- ☐ We will respect the privacy of other families regarding their child's education provision and medical condition by not sharing the names of other HERS families with the wider community

Name of parent/carer.....

Name of student.....

Date..... Email address of parent/carer.....

Signature of parent/carer.....

Notes to share/update - Changes to medical condition, allergies, change or contact details, etc. Continue on the back if required.

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