



Interim Solutions

From home schooling to final school certificates

Mixed school attendance

Mona Meister

Head teacher, School for Home and Hospital Tuition in Hamburg

Elisabeth Voigt

Clinic teacher, School for Home and Hospital Tuition in Hamburg

The School for Home and Hospital Tuition (HuK) is responsible for providing tuition for sick pupils within the entire Hamburg area. We have the following departments:

- Home schooling
- Clinic schools (Paediatrics)
- Clinic schools (Psychiatry)
- Autism advisory service
- Cooperative projects with schools and youth welfare services

Our teaching staff work on a permanent basis at our school and is made up of teachers from all types of schools.



In 2010, we employed 62 teachers to cover 46.5 full-time positions.

Hospital Somatic	Home schooling	KJP Child and adolescent psychiatric unit	Advisory centre Autism
8 Teachers of which 4 for home-work supervision too	23 Teachers	29 Teachers	2 Teachers +12 colleagues

All teachers at HuK work completely independently with their pupil patients with the objective of covering as much lesson content as possible, but always adapted to the current state of health.

We remain in close contact with schools and subject teachers.



Federal legislation

Ministry of cultural affairs
statutory regulations
directives

Clinic / ward

Therapists /doctors
Social pedagogues / Tutors
Ergo-, art and exercise therapists
nursing staff

We operate in close cooperation with schools, therapists and parents.

Our greatest priority is to enable pupils to return to class lessons as soon as possible. Should they not however be able to manage a full school week for health reasons or continue to have extended periods of absence from school, these pupils are supervised by our mobile teachers. In the case of chronic illness, long-term supervision over a period of several years is also available.

We offer:

- lesson content parallel to home class
- class tests can be written under supervision of colleagues in home schooling or in the clinic school
- equivalent test as substitute for class tests
- preparation of a presentation as substitute for oral marks

Additionally in the case of chronic illness:

- extra tuition at home
- close cooperation with subject teachers
- reduction of timetable e.g. through the deletion of “unnecessary” subjects

If necessary:

- grading in cooperation with the teachers of home school
- individual subjects covered during homework supervision



- possibility of extended periods for school leaving certificate courses, e.g. divided Abitur [German equivalent of 'A' levels] in several sections taken over 3-4 years instead of all examinations after 2 upper school years

We provide support until:

- the pupil has caught up with the home class.
- the fear of failure after long "break" from school has been reduced.
- teachers are certain that the pupil has found his or her feet again.

Schools can expect from us:

- consultation discussions in schools with teachers, pupils and parents
- special regulations on conditions for tests and/or examination conditions adapted to the long-term effects of the illness.
- improvement of situation in daily life at school
- accompanied return to home school class
- advice on compensating for disadvantages

On a school administration level:

- consultation with head teacher on legal leeway of compensation for disadvantage
- creation of test and examination conditions adapted to illness
- participation of HuK head teachers in round-table discussions
- advisory partner for school supervising authority and legal department of education authority

Examples:

Middle school: Florian

Upper school: Hanna, Vivian, Nora

Florian

Florian has been suffering for a number of years from an "overgrowth" syndrome (i.e. the overgrowth of normal flora in the small intestine through bacteria from the large intestine).

The effects of this illness are similar to chronic inflammatory intestinal diseases:

- Malabsorption of a variety of nutritional elements with subsequent flatulence after meals
- Bad breath due to the resorption and lung exhalation of intestinal gases which originate from the metabolisation of nutrients through bacteria in the large intestine.
- Allergies as a result of antigen inundation as the patient has an increased mucus membrane permeability
- Diarrhoea or pulpy stools.

All the above symptoms are extremely embarrassing for Florian – he avoids mentioning these topics.



Meeting with Florian in year 9, first time round: spring/summer 2008

At the beginning of our cooperation, Florian had clocked up a substantial number of days absent due to the intestinal problems which had not yet been clearly diagnosed. The periods of absence were extended due to accompanied bullying.

Florian's school attendance during this period of accompanying home schooling was irregular, depending on his state of health. Our work sessions were also irregular for the same reason. He was interested in retaining contact with his subject teachers and therefore rejected support from the home teacher. He continued to receive material from his subject teachers, but in hindsight he considered our cooperation with these teachers to be insufficient.

Despite our successful accompanying home schooling provided, Florian decided to avoid bullying by repeating the school year.

Florian has to go into hospital after the end of each term to be "nursed back to health".

At the moment he is managing without the help of the HuK, but knows that he can always take advantage of our services again at any time.

Questions to Florian and his parents

We would like to obtain some feedback as to how helpful the home schooling service was for you as a pupil for our HOPE congress which will be taking place in Munich in November 2010

Florian's answers:

1. How did you learn about HuK?

Through an enquiry made by my school when I was ill and had therefore missed lessons.

2. What was the most important aspect of our activities?

The attempt to maintain the educational workload, filling of educational gaps and flexible working hours on the part of the home teacher.

3. What would have been additional requirements?

Better cooperation between school and the home teachers.

Parents' answers:

1. How did you learn about HuK?

We were made aware of this possibility during advisory sessions at the Alexander-von-Humboldt-Gymnasium due to our son's increasing periods of illness-related absence from school.



2. What do you consider was the most important aspect of our activities?

Swift availability, flexible provision of tuition and the extent and quality of teaching offered.

3. What would you have additionally wished for?

A complete recovery on the part of our child ;-)

Greater involvement of the school teachers in passing on lesson topics and material.

In addition to Florian, we frequently teach other pupils with chronically inflammable bowel diseases who require highly individual support depending on the course of the illness.

We are often able to arrange the following as compensation for disadvantages:

- flexible reaction to periods of absence
- reduction of homework during periods of severe exhaustion, but also
- utilisation of staff toilets or toilets for wheelchair users (personal key)
- possibility of lying down in a quiet room in the case of stomach pains

Hanna

Hanna suffers from depression with a pronounced anxiety disorder. She only just scraped through her intermediate secondary school certificate and was subsequently treated as an inpatient outside Hamburg. During her treatment, she suffers unexpected side-effects from her medication. Hanna is not able to attend any lessons during this time.

First meeting in May 2008.

Hanna has resumed learning after an almost one-year stay in the clinic – she is linguistically gifted and is attending a foreign language institute to learn Persian.

Her aim:

to attend sixth form at grammar school – but no years to be repeated

Support undertaken by HuK:

- evaluation of standards in the subjects German, English, Maths and Sciences
- assessment on the part of teaching colleagues to confirm that she can manage sixth form.

Services undertaken by HuK

- The search for a new school which would be prepared to take Hanna despite her poor results in her previous school certificate and non-attendance of the first year of sixth form.
- The guarantee for the head of this new school that HuK will retain responsibility should difficulties subsequently be encountered.
- Guarantee of continuing supporting tuition as required.
- Accompanying tuition in German, Philosophy, Maths and English as required.



Hanna has been very conscientious and organised regarding support. In her better phases, she does not need extra tuition. She asks for extra tuition before class exams and manages to coordinate everything well. In phases of poorer health, she requires a great deal of support. At certain intervals, motivation discussions are held with the head teachers of HuK.

Hanna specifically wishes not to take advantage of any special regulations relating to compensation for any disadvantages. Shortly before her final Abitur examinations, her state of health deteriorates dramatically. The rule governing stipulated periods of absence is suspended. Several discussions are held at her home with the head teachers of HuK. The heads of the school and HuK remain in close contact with each other. Hanna succeeds in taking her Abitur examinations as planned and achieves good grades. At the moment she is abroad and cannot therefore participate in this workshop as we had originally jointly planned.

For this reason, we ask her mother about her experiences.

We would like to obtain some feedback as to how helpful you as a father/mother found the home schooling service for your child and for the family in general for our HOPE congress which will be taking place in Munich in November 2010.

Mother's answer

1.) How did you learn about HuK?

While our daughter was in a clinic, we made acquaintance with Prof. Schulte-Markwort who gave us the number of the HuK to enable us to make contact with Ms Mona Meister. We were received in a very friendly manner by Ms Meister and provided with competent support. My own attempts to help my daughter in her reintegration at school after her stay in the clinic had been unsuccessful and our personal interview with the responsible education authority also achieved nothing. The return to school was only possible after the contact with the HuK head teachers and their untiring support. We are profoundly grateful to have had Ms Meister on our side!!!

2.) What did you consider as the most important factor of our services?

As a mother, I found it important after our long odyssey to have found an institution which accepted our problem and was able to offer help. Right from our first appointment, I had the feeling after months of despair: "Here at last is someone who is there for you and does not merely make promises of help, but also fulfills these promises!!"

The choice of HuK teachers was also an important factor. The selection of Ms Kömen as a teacher for our daughter meant that she was accompanied and supported by someone who was not only an expert in her subject, but also harmonised wonderfully with our daughter. Ms Kömen additionally succeeded in awakening our daughter's love of literature. Thanks to the HuK, our daughter was able to cope with the



new start to school after a year's absence and achieved an excellent Abitur qualification (I cannot begin to imagine how things would have turned out without the support of the HuK). We offer our wholehearted thanks to the HuK and above all Ms Meister and Ms Kömen

3.) What would you have additionally desired?

We are completely satisfied!!

Vivian

Signs of serious illness since the summer of 2006 – endless visits to the doctor with the diagnosis in February 2007: Hydrocephalus, End of February 2007: brain surgery

In spring an intensive search for a school – first without the support of HuK

During the outpatient rehabilitation phase in June 2007, Vivian heard about our organisation

First contact with HuK in the autumn of 2007; Vivian repeats year 12

Begin of accompanying home tuition for Vivian alongside school attendance

Effects of her illness:

- limited field of vision with numerous “blind spots” in both eyes
- serious problems with reading – no “overview” of worksheets
- concentration and memory problems
- rapid fatigue

Services offered by HuK:

- Vivian coordinates all lessons with us herself.
- She will receive tuition in Maths, Chemistry, English, German, Geography and Social Studies as required.
- Three colleagues come to Vivian at her home, in a schoolroom in close vicinity to her house or at her school.
- We remain in close contact with the relevant subject teachers at her school.

Compensation for disadvantages:

The following regulations to compensate for disadvantages have been arranged for Vivian during her four semesters:

- She will receive examination papers one day prior to the examination
- She will be able to undertake follow-up work on all lesson topics with us
- She does not have to participate in all subjects: the “required compulsory lesson hours” have been recognised as a basis for her Abitur



7TH HOPE CONGRESS MUNICH 2010

NOVEMBER 3 - 7, 2010

During the **Abitur examination**, special regulations were arranged for Vivian:

- her HuK teacher was available as an assistant during the examinations
- the examination time was extended by 60 minutes.

We asked Vivian and her parents the following questions:

We would like to obtain some feedback as to how helpful you as a father/mother found the home schooling service for your child and for the family in general for our HOPE congress which will be taking place in Munich in November 2010.

Mother's answer:

1. How did you learn about HuK?

Through Rebus Mitte (Grabenstraße), [advisory service] through an interesting acquaintance who is a teacher.

2. What did you consider as the most important factor of our services?

- a. The relevant necessary support to help Vivian to become re-integrated into the normal school day.
- b. The accompaniment and learning support in subjects most necessary for Vivian.
- c. That Vivian has gained self-confidence and self-assurance and has realised that she can achieve anything she really wants to!

3. What would you have additionally desired?

Nothing: I was pleased that I knew what I wanted for Vivian and was able to make this clear to my discussion partners.

Pupil's answers:

1. How did you learn about HuK?

Through an acquaintance of my mother: she is a teacher and recommended REBUS to us. That is how I made contact with Mona Meister and came to the HuK.

2. What did you consider as the most important factor of our services?

It was really important and helpful for me to receive help and support regularly (once a week) in the most important and most difficult subjects to enable me to compensate for deficits and undertake follow-up work. The commitment of lessons necessitated a certain degree of discipline: I could certainly not otherwise have achieved everything so well on my own, if at all.

- the expert competence of the teachers
- social competence (of Elisabeth) in all situations
- job application training; how to cope with the illness in later life and also the exchange with others with similar/different experiences



3. What would you have additionally desired?

Nothing more: I think that for me it could not have been better, particularly as I had thought up until then that I would have to cope completely on my own and did not know that there is a contact point for people with problems like myself: that would be the only point.

- The extension of these types of services to ensure that society is aware of contact possibilities in these types of cases to receive help and support from experts in this field (e.g. medical insurance companies, hospitals, schools, child and adolescent therapists, etc.)

Nora

Nora became ill in October 2006. Up until February 2007, a series of outbreaks of illnesses; (false) diagnoses, admittance to psychiatric clinics, medication – and then the diagnosis: Hashimoto syndrome. She still continues to suffer from symptoms such as fatigue, concentration disorders and muscle and joint pain. Frequent disruption of night sleep, bladder problems and side effects of her medication cause her great problems. Initial HuK tuition during the diagnostic phase in the clinic through colleagues in the internal clinic school. This was followed by an application for home schooling.

First meeting with us at her home in February 2007: Nora was at this time in year 9.

Compensation for disadvantages:

Alongside support through home schooling, the following “special rules” were formulated for Nora:

- significantly reduced school timetable
- general secondary school leaving certificate [Hauptschule] not necessary as the intermediate leaving certificate [Realschule] could be expected.
- Nora was allowed to go home as soon as she became exhausted
- she did not have to undertake a school internship: during this period, she received intensive home schooling
- extra tuition accompanying school lessons as required from February 2007 up to summer 2008

One-year break. Nora managed to complete year 11 alone.

- In summer 2009, further stay in hospital; new medication
- since summer 2009, two colleagues have been giving Nora regular tuition in Maths and English
- reduced school timetable up to the present day

The home schooling colleagues are able to build up a good cooperation with the school level coordinators. Contact with subject teachers from the school does not currently play a role as Nora is able to organise her support independently.



We asked Nora and her parents the following questions:

We would like to obtain some feedback as to how helpful you as a father/mother found the home schooling service for your child and for the family in general for our HOPE congress which will be taking place in Munich in November 2010.

Parents' answer:

1. How did you learn about HuK?

A friend who is also a teacher knew about this organisation and informed us when our daughter was in a better phase. We made contact with HuK and Nora was provided with support without the necessity of bureaucratic problems.

2. What did you consider as the most important factor of our services?

- It was important for me that Nora did not fall behind despite not being able to attend all lessons due to her illness and therefore received support from the HuK.
- The choice of teachers who come to the pupils at home and the support: even if it is only a little help needed at a later stage or a break is required.
- The HuK provided us with support, spoke to teachers to inform them about the situation and provided relief for both our daughter and ourselves as parents.
- The open-minded support for any problem and the provision of the appropriate solution.

3. What would you have additionally desired?

We are highly satisfied: no wishes have remained unfulfilled.

Pupil's answer:

1. How did you learn about HuK?

A friend of my mother who is also a teacher talked us about this topic and helped us to make contact with the HuK.

2. What did you consider as the most important factor of our services?

The most important aspect for me was that I was not aware of how much I could actually achieve on my own and that the HuK even had to rein me in slightly. In retrospect it was better that way as I would otherwise not have coped with everything else that was necessary beyond the confines of school. The teachers were informed about the burdens I had had to cope with during the past three months: this enabled the time factor to become slightly more simplified and compromises and support were both permitted. Even just the organisational aspect was a great help; as was the extra tuition, as I would otherwise have had to repeat the year and would maybe not have even managed to reach the sixth form.

3. What would you have additionally desired?

I am completely satisfied: no wishes have remained unfulfilled.