

PARENTS, STUDENTS & STAFF

FND at school, college and university

Education settings can support young people and students with FND when they understand fluctuation, recovery time and cognitive load. This sheet helps families and staff start that conversation.

What staff should know

- Symptoms are real and may not be visible all the time
- A student can look well and still be close to a crash
- Exams, corridors, noise and PE can all increase load
- Belief and a written plan reduce missed learning and anxiety

Adjustments to discuss

School / college

- Rest space and exit pass
- Exam access arrangements
- Phased timetable / reduced days
- Catch-up plan after absences

University

- Disability services referral
- DSA assessment where eligible
- Deadline flexibility policies
- Recording lectures / notes support

Evidence that helps

A short clinical letter describing functional impact (not only the diagnosis name), plus the student's own description of bad-day needs, often works better than long medical jargon.

Safety

If episodes occur on site, staff need a simple first-aid and when-to-call-999 plan agreed with the family/student. See also the functional seizures leaflet if relevant.

Continue overleaf for practical next steps, a personal plan and sources →

SCHOOL & COLLEGE · NEXT STEPS

Build a usable support plan

Agree a named contact, what happens during an episode, access to a quiet space and how the student returns to learning afterwards. Include the student's preferences and relevant clinical advice. Decide what supply staff need to know while protecting privacy. Keep a copy accessible and review it after significant changes.

Arrange assessment support early

Talk to the school's SENCO, equivalent support lead or college disability team well before exams. Access arrangements depend on evidence and the relevant awarding-body rules, rather than diagnosis alone. At university, contact disability services about study support and any eligible funding; processes differ across the UK.

Plan for attendance and transitions

Discuss missed learning, travel, practical lessons and movement between rooms. Any temporary timetable change should have a clear purpose and review. The Department for Education source below applies to England; ask the setting for the appropriate national guidance elsewhere. Plan handovers between schools, college or university with the student's involvement.

My next steps — discuss with your care team

The named education contact and review date

The biggest barrier to learning and proposed support

Sources and further reading

- Department for Education: medical conditions at school (England)
www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3
- Neurosymptoms: occupational therapy
neurosymbols.org/en/treatment/occupational-therapy/

More practical help: School topic · Young people leaflet · Teen Space