

The Right Honourable Gordon Brown
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London

Dear Mr Brown,

I am writing to ask for better support for children with type one diabetes in schools. The situation in my school, xxxxxx School, is better than in other schools, but there is still room for improvement. I am very fortunate that my school employs a full time nurse. It has been arranged that I can leave my diabetic supplies with the nurse, and that if I have any problems then I can visit the nurse. I also have a system in place whereby I test my blood glucose before each exam that I do, and if my blood glucose is not in the appropriate range in which I can achieve my full potential, then I go to see the nurse and wait until my blood glucose is in range before I do the exam. However, not all diabetic students in my school have the same provision of care that I receive. My mother arranged everything with the nurse, which is why the care I receive is specifically tailored for my personal needs. Other parents do not arrange these sorts of things with the nurse, and therefore the students are not achieving their full potential within the academic boundaries.

I feel very strongly about the care of type one diabetics in school, having experienced my fair share of problems because of my condition. Some people think I have Type 2 Diabetes which is related to lifestyle and make rude comments how I have brought this on myself, when in fact I have an auto immune disorder which is no one's fault. School teachers have told me off for eating to treat a low blood sugar or insisted I move when I am hypo which is very dangerous. When I was at primary school no one would help me when my Diabetic team said I needed to do a lunchtime injection. I was only 8 years old and had Diabetes for 10 months, and the school expected me to have sole responsibility for calculating the carbohydrate in my lunch and the right dose of insulin, and giving myself insulin. My parents bought me a mobile phone and arranged that I would phone my mother at lunchtime and do the injection while she listened so she knew I had done it and got the dose right. I am very lucky that I have a mother who is a qualified nurse, and therefore is well acquainted with the condition and the sort of care that it requires. She contacts the school and insists that they do risk assessments for things like offsite cross country. She works with the school so that I can go on school trips and residential trips safely. But there are 6 other students in my school who are diabetic and no one does this for them. I don't think it should be left to the parents to nag the school into doing things, as that means the care you get in school depends on how knowledgeable and educated your parents are, and how persistent.

I think schools should be made to take better care of children like me, so that all children get the best care while they are in school.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. I look forward to hearing from you how exactly your Government are going to support children with health conditions in schools.

Yours sincerely

Xxxxx Xxxxx, aged 14

