

Christians' request to keep baby's life support on fails

A BRAIN-DAMAGED baby should have his life support switched off, a judge has ruled as he rejected his Christian parents' appeal to "let God decide".

Specialists at King's College Hospital said giving further intensive care treatment to 11-month-old Isaiah Haastrup was "futile, burdensome and not in his best interests".

They told a judge that he had suffered "catastrophic" brain damage due to being deprived of oxygen at birth and they asked the court for the go-ahead to provide only palliative care.

Takesha Thomas and Lanre Haastrup, Isaiah's parents, who are both 36 and from Peckham, south-east London, wanted treatment to continue.

Last week, Miss Thomas told Mr Justice MacDonald that she accepted that her son was severely disabled, but she thought his life was "worth preserving".

"I am a Pentecostal Christian," she said. "For me, I don't think it is right to say who should live or who should die. If God wants to take the person, He will."

However, the judge ruled yesterday

that doctors could stop providing life-support treatment. Mr Justice MacDonald, who had analysed evidence at the High Court in London earlier this month, said he had reached his decision with "profound sadness".

Mr Haastrup said he and Miss Thomas were disappointed and would discuss the judge's ruling with lawyers.

During the trial, Mr Haastrup told Mr Justice MacDonald that the trust had "harmed" Isaiah at birth, and said a "negligence case" was under way.

"There have been failings," he said. "But for them, Isaiah would be at home having a lovely meal with me, with his lovely mum, playing around."

In a written ruling, Mr Justice MacDonald said: "I am satisfied that it is not in his best interests for life-sustaining medical treatment to be continued.

"It is my hope that, in due course, the parents will be able to derive some small measure of comfort from the knowledge that they have done all they can for their much-loved and cherished son."

