

Medicine Policy

RATIONALE

Clearly illegal drugs have no place in schools. However, there are instances when other drugs may legitimately be in school, for example, if a student has been prescribed medicines to be taken during the school day. This school has a vital role to play in providing a sound basis for ensuring that children with medical needs receive proper care and support in a school setting.

AIMS

To implement effective procedures for managing prescription medicines which need to be taken by pupils during the school day or on school trips and outings.

PROCEDURES/RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents

It is the parents' responsibility to give information about their child's medical condition, the treatment she will need at school and any special needs or conditions that pertain.

- A written request from a parent must be received that prescription (or non-prescription) medication may be administered.
- Prescribed medication will not be accepted in school without complete written and signed instructions from the parent.
- The principle generally accepted is that medication should go to school only when absolutely essential. Often doctors can prescribe in a manner which allows the dose to be taken before and after school.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring their children have an adequate supply of appropriate medication with them at school at all times.
- Clear written instructions on how to use these medications should be provided in the original container as dispensed by a pharmacist and include the prescriber's instructions for administration.
- The schools will not store large volumes of medication. The parent or pupil should bring in the required dose each day unless otherwise arranged.
- It is the parents' responsibility to renew the medication when supplies are running low and to ensure that the medication supplied is within its expiry date.
- Each item of medication must be delivered to the Principal or Authorised Person, in normal circumstances by the parent, **in a secure and labelled container as originally dispensed.**
- Each item of medication must be clearly labelled with the following information:
 - Pupil's Name
 - Name of medication
 - Dosage
 - Frequency of administration
 - Date of dispensing
 - Storage requirements (if important)
 - Expiry date

- **The school will not accept items of medication in unlabelled containers**

School

- Medication will be kept in a secure place, out of the reach of pupils. Unless otherwise indicated all medication to be administered in school will be kept in a locked medicine cabinet.
- The school will keep records, which they will have available for parents.
- If children refuse to take medicines, staff will not force them to do so, and will inform the parents of the refusal, as a matter of urgency, on the same day. If a refusal to take medicines results in an emergency, the school's emergency procedures will be followed.
- It is the responsibility of parents to notify the school in writing if the pupil's need for medication has ceased.
- The school will not make changes to dosages on parental instructions.
- School staff will not dispose of medicines. Medicines, which are in use and in date, should be collected by the parent at the end of each term. Date expired medicines or those no longer required for treatment will be returned immediately to the parent for transfer to a community pharmacist for safe disposal.
- For each pupil with long-term or complex medication needs, the Principal/or designated person responsible for medical issues, will ensure that a Medication Plan and Protocol is drawn up, in conjunction with the appropriate health professionals.
- Where it is appropriate to do so, pupils will be encouraged to administer their own medication, if necessary under staff supervision. Parents will be asked to confirm in writing if they wish their child to carry their medication with them in school.
- Staff who volunteer to assist in the administration of medication will receive appropriate training/guidance through arrangements made with the School Health Service.
- The school will make every effort to continue the administration of medication to a pupil whilst on trips away from the school premises, even if additional arrangements might be required. However, there may be occasions when it may not be possible to include a pupil on a school trip if appropriate supervision cannot be guaranteed.
- All staff will be made aware of the procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency.

Pupils

- The school encourages self-management of medication by pupils.
- As schools are in the business of educating pupils for life, it is good practice, with parental consent, to allow children who are capable to manage their own medication whenever necessary.
- Pupils must have access to their medicine when required.
- It is important to make sure that medicines are only accessible to those for whom they are prescribed.
- A designated area will be set aside for those children who self medicate.

Staff

- School staff should not keep or supply non-prescription medicines such as Paracetamol and aspirin. The potential for damage is high, as staff in school will not know what previous medication may have been taken nor what the reaction may be.
- Staff should never put themselves in the position where they may be seen to be 'prescribing' medication either to their pupils or to fellow staff.
- If the school locks away medication that a pupil might need in an emergency, all staff should know where to obtain keys to the medicine cabinet.
- 'School staff should not dispose of medicines.
- Medicines must only be administered in accordance with the prescriber's instructions, as displayed on the container/packaging.

- Record Keeping - it is important to keep an accurate record of when medicines have been given or if a student has refused their medication. Records offer proof that schools have followed appropriate procedures.

SELF-MANAGEMENT

In deciding whether pupils can carry and administer their own medicines, schools will want to ensure that pupils have ready access to essential medicines, such as asthma inhalers, and that medicines are only accessible to those for whom they have been prescribed.

Staff, pupils and parents should be aware of the potential misuse of medicines. Medicines that have been prescribed for an individual must only be used by them. They must not be given or passed to a third party. Misuse of drugs is included in the school's drug policy.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

With regard to any allergy to medication or to a severe reaction, emergency procedures will automatically take precedence.

A copy of the emergency procedures has been given to all staff and includes the following information:

- Guidance for calling an ambulance.
- Name(s) of key staff with responsibility for emergencies.
- The school should ensure that a pupil travelling in an ambulance to hospital should be accompanied by a member of staff who stays until the parent or guardian arrives.
- Taking pupils to hospital in a member of staff's car is not advisable but, in the case of an emergency, another adult should be present. The driver should also check she/he has 'business use' specified on his/her car insurance or she/he may not be covered in the case of an accident while travelling.
- Pupils under 16 should not be given any treatment or medication without written parental consent. If they refuse medication, they must not be forced but parents should be notified and the emergency service called if necessary.
- A pupil over 16 may give consent to any surgical, medical or dental treatment (or withhold their consent).
- In the case of younger pupils, obtaining parental consent does not normally cause a problem. But where the need is urgent and the parent cannot be contacted, the decision about the competence of the child to give (or withhold) consent must be the responsibility of the doctor.

This policy was last reviewed by the Leadership Team: May 2018

Due to be Reviewed: May 2020