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Medicines in School Policy

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This policy is based upon guidance issued to schools by Norfolk County Council, which itself is based on the 2015 DFE document, 'Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions'.

Many children will, at some time, have short-term medical needs, perhaps entailing the finishing off a course of medicine such as antibiotics. Some children may require medicines on a long-term basis, such as those with well-controlled asthma or epilepsy. These children are usually able to attend school regularly, and take part in normal school activities. Individual Healthcare Plans are drawn up with the help of the school nursing service where required.

This policy explains how we can support children with medical needs within school.

Prescribed Medicines

Medicines should only be brought into school when essential; that is, where it would be detrimental to a child's health if the medicine were not administered during the school day.

Medicines should only be administered in school if they are on prescription from a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist prescriber. These medicines should be provided to the school in the original container with the prescriber's instructions for administration and dosage. We would expect that in sending medicine to school, parents/carers would either be following the advice of a doctor in deciding that a child who is completing a course of treatment (e.g. antibiotics) is well enough for school, or that the medicine is for the treatment of a long term condition such as asthma or epilepsy. In either case, parents/carers are welcome to come into school to administer the dose themselves.

Prescribed medicines, such as antibiotics, that need to be administered 4 times a day, will be given to the child at lunchtime as long as the parent or carer has completed the relevant form. Medicines that are prescribed to be administered three times a day will not normally need to be given at lunchtime and should not be brought into school except in exceptional circumstances where supported by medical advice. It remains the parent/carer's responsibility to ensure that medicine is given at the correct times. Medicines must not be given for longer than 3 days for most pain relief and must not exceed the stated time to be taken on the prescription label. Calpol, Nurofen and most pain relief is ONLY permitted to be given for 3 days (as specified on box/bottle). After this point, a doctor's note is required in order for staff to give for any longer period of time. Medicines containing aspirin may only be given if prescribed by a health care professional.

In all cases, written permission on the appropriate forms must be given (see attached form).

Non-Prescription Medicines

Staff cannot give children non-prescribed medicines unless there is prior written permission from a parent/carer. We do hold non-prescription medicines for administration when a child feels unexpectedly unwell (e.g. has a headache or toothache) but can only do so with written permission on the appropriate forms.

Long term medical needs

If a child has long term medical needs, the school will seek the advice of the appropriate medical professional in drawing up an Individual Healthcare Plan. This will include information relevant to the care of the child concerned.

Administering Medicines

1. All Medicines should be clearly labelled with the child's name; the first dose should be accompanied by the 'Consent to administer medicine in school' form (see attached). This states that it is necessary for the medicine to be taken in school hours and a request is being made for the school to administer it. The note should give clear instructions about the dose required. **No child under 16 can be given medicines without their parent/carer's written consent.**
2. In the case of inhalers for asthma sufferers, please have one set of equipment in school and another at home to avoid the problem of forgetting to bring it in or take it home.
3. The medicine should be given to the school's secretary or nursery manager and should be taken only under supervision. A written record of medicines taken will be kept.
4. Children should 'self-administer' medicines under the supervision of an adult at the school wherever this is possible. In the case of analgesics such as Calpol (required for pain relief in a specific requested situation). Single dose sachets should be used so that self-administration is possible.
5. Written consent is required for the administration of all medicines.
6. Parents of children who require the school to keep prophylactic medicines (such as adrenalin injectors and asthma inhalers) are responsible for ensuring that medicines remain 'in date'.
7. When giving medicine, the child's name and age must be confirmed with the child before giving it to them.
8. If a child refuses medication, the staff should not force them to take it, but should make a note in the records regarding the refusal. Parents/carers will be informed on the same day.
9. If parents may not be aware at what time a medicine had been given (e.g. in cases where medicine is kept for migraine sufferers or allergy sufferers etc.) we should ensure and document the time of the dose and provide the child with a slip and sticker with the time the dose was given to inform the parent so that they do not give an additional dose to the child.

All medicines are stored securely in the school office/nursery staff room. Individual Healthcare Plans for children with long term conditions are available in the school / nursery office. For children who may need to use an adrenalin injector, there will be an identification picture in the staff room. The children to whom this relates always keep the adrenalin injector with them in school.

There is no legal obligation that requires staff to administer medicines, but the school seeks to ensure all children who are able to attend school – including those who may need medication – can do so. To this end, staff are trained to administer medicines in accordance with the schedule above.

The person administering medicine to a child must check the name of child, name of medicine, dose, method of administration, time of administration and expiry date of medicine. The Record of Medicines Administered must be completed.

Asthma Care

- Inhalers will be kept with the child at all times whilst they are in school in labelled bags.
- The children must be allowed to use their inhaler whenever they need to.
- Inhalers must be taken on school trips and the teacher in charge is responsible for ensuring it is returned to school safely.
- It is the parents responsibility to ensure it is in date.

Many of the school staff are trained first aiders with four '4-day' first aid trained members of staff. In the event of an emergency, all staff are clear about what action to take.

Sporting Activities

Where children need to take precautionary measures before or during exercise (e.g. use of inhalers), staff supervising such activities should be aware of relevant medical needs and, if necessary, carry out risk assessments.

Educational Visits

We encourage children with medical needs to participate in educational visits where it is safe for them to do so. Where children need to take medicines that are normally administered at home, parents/carers should send full written instructions for administration along with the medicines in their original containers. All medicines must be labelled with the child's name. The administration of all medicines is recorded on a visit sheet. Where necessary, detailed discussion between the parent/carer and the visit leader will take place; if a child has an Individual Healthcare Plan, a copy of this will be taken on the visit.

The school seeks to facilitate all children attending school for the maximum number of days possible in the school year but parents/carers should be clear that children who are ill should not be sent to school. This includes children with temperatures controlled by analgesics and those who have only just begun a course of antibiotics. This policy addresses the management of children who are – fundamentally – well, but who have specific long or short –term medical needs.

