

Ashgrove Primary School

Policy
for the
Support of Children
with
Medication
Needs

3 September 2009
Version 2:1

Policy for Supporting Children with Medication Needs

Rationale

This policy has been written to meet the medical needs of children under the terms set out in “Supporting Pupils with Medication Needs” (Department of Education & Department of Health & Social Services, and Public Safety, 2008).

The Board of Governors and staff of Ashgrove Primary School wish to ensure that children with medication needs receive appropriate care and support at school. There is no legal duty that requires school staff to administer medication, however, the principal will accept responsibility in principle for members of school staff administering prescribed medication, or supervising children self-administering, during the school day **where those members of staff have volunteered to do so.**

Principles

Parents/guardians should keep their children at home if acutely unwell or infectious.

Administration of medication is the responsibility of parents/guardians and any help given by school is on a voluntary basis.

Only essential medication with a dosage that cannot be taken outside school hours should be sent to school. These are likely to fall within three areas:

- Short-term or acute, such as a chest infection;
- Long-term such as asthma or ADHD; and
- Medical emergency which is unexpected or related to some known condition.

Parents/guardians are responsible for providing the principal with comprehensive information regarding the child’s condition and treatment, for providing any medication required and for its safe removal at the end of term and/or treatment and/or shelf-life.

School does not keep a stock of painkillers, nor will it diagnose, prescribe and administer painkillers to children who become unwell.

Prescribed medication cannot be accepted by school without specific written and signed instructions from the parent/guardian.

Neither aspirin nor ibuprofen should be sent to school.

Staff cannot administer a non-prescribed medicine (eg Calpol) to a child unless there is specific written permission from the parent/guardian.

School staff cannot force children to take medication.

The school cannot accept items of medication in unlabelled containers.

The school will make every effort to continue the administration of medication to a child during trips away from school premises, even if additional arrangements might be required. However, there may be occasions when it may not be possible to include a child on a school trip if appropriate supervision cannot be guaranteed.

Medication plans will normally be drawn up by a health professional and all relevant parties briefed ie child, parents/guardians, teacher, classroom assistant, senior supervisory assistant, principal.

Members of staff will exercise appropriate confidentiality and sensitivity.

Members of staff are indemnified:

“If a member of staff administers medication to a pupil, or undertakes a medical procedure to support a pupil and, as a result, expenses, liability, loss, claim or proceedings arise, the employer will indemnify the member of staff provided all of the following conditions apply:

- a. The member of staff is a direct employee.
- b. The medication/procedure is administered by the member of staff in the course of, or ancillary to, their employment.
- c. The member of staff follows:
 - the procedures set out in this guidance;
 - the school’s policy;
 - the procedures outlined in the individual pupil’s Medication Plan, or written permission from parents and directions received through training in the appropriate procedures.
- d. Except as set out in the Note below, the expenses, liability, loss, claim or proceedings are not directly or indirectly caused by and do not arise from fraud, dishonesty or a criminal offence committed by the member of staff.

Note: Condition d. does not apply in the case of a criminal offence under Health and Safety legislation.” (DENI & HSSPS, 2008, p.2-3)

Procedures

A parent/guardian seeking support with a child’s medication in school should speak to the principal and provide signed permission, details and instructions. The principal will then ask a willing and appropriate member of staff to take responsibility for administering the correct dosage at the correct time, for monitoring any response, for recording the details and for the addition of signatures by an adult witness and self.

Medication in School

Reasonable quantities of medication should be supplied to the school (for example, a maximum of four weeks supply at any one time).

Each item of medication must be delivered by the parent/guardian to the principal or other willing member of staff, **in the original secure container and labelled as dispensed**. Information should include:

- child's name;
- name of medication;
- dosage;
- frequency of administration;
- date of dispensing;
- storage requirements (if important); and
- expiry date.

Medication will be kept in a secure place, out of the reach of children. Unless otherwise indicated, all medication to be administered in school will be kept in a locked medicine cabinet in the school's hygiene room. Keys will remain with the principal other than during administration by an authorised member of staff: vice-principal, teacher, senior supervisory assistant.

With some forms of medication, such as "EpiPens", it may be appropriate to keep one lot of medication in a secure place in the child's classroom and a second lot in the central medicine cabinet.

Copies of medication plans and related forms will be taken on educational visits as appropriate, and always on residential trips.

The school will keep records, which they will make available for parents/guardians upon request.

Administration

Where it is appropriate to do so, children will be encouraged to administer their own medication (eg asthma inhaler), under staff supervision if necessary. Parents/guardians will be asked to confirm in writing if they wish their child to carry such medication and to self-administer.

Staff will give due attention to hygiene, washing hands and wearing gloves as appropriate. Children whose parents/guardians wish them to administer their own medication will be encouraged to do likewise.

The school will not make changes to prescribed dosages on instructions from parents/guardians.

If a child refuses to take medicines, staff will not force them to do so, but will inform the parents/guardians 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.

Where training is required, members of staff who volunteer to assist in the administration of particular medication will receive any necessary training/guidance through arrangements made with the School Health Service and/or British Red Cross.

For each child with long-term or complex medication needs, the principal will ensure that an individual care plan is drawn up in conjunction with the appropriate health professionals.

All staff will be made aware of the procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency.

The Role of Parents and Guardians

Medication is the responsibility of parents/guardians. They should renew the medication when supplies are running low and ensure that the medication supplied is within its expiry date. Parents/guardians should also notify the school in writing if the child's need for medication has ceased.

The disposal of medicines is the responsibility of parents/guardians. Medicines, which are in use and in date, should be collected at the end of each term. Date-expired medicines or those no longer required for treatment should be collected for transfer to a community pharmacist for safe disposal.