

ST MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL



Medication Policy 2023

Rationale

Legally, schools are not compelled to administer medication to children, because of the risks involved and the possible legal implications. However, it is the school policy whenever possible to assist children and parents by administering medicines in school time if the teacher concerned is prepared to do so. Prescribed medication will only be administered in school **24 hours after** first taking the medicine.

The Board of Governors and staff of St. Mary's Primary School wish to ensure that pupils with medication needs receive appropriate care and support at school. The Principal will accept responsibility in principle for members of the school staff giving or supervising pupils taking prescribed medication during the school day **where those members of staff have volunteered to do so. Medicine will only be prescribed in the presence of 2 members of staff.**

This policy has been reviewed and adjusted using DENI / DHSSNI guidance "Supporting Pupils with Medication Needs". Please note that parents should keep their children at home if acutely unwell or infectious.

Responsibilities

Parents, as defined in the Education Act 1944, are a child's main carers and are responsible for providing the Principal with comprehensive information regarding the pupil's condition and medication. The school should be made aware of any condition on the Sims Data Capture form provided at the beginning of the year.

A parent should fill in the appropriate forms. If in doubt all conditions must be brought to the attention of the principal. All information regarding the medical need should be provided by the parent to the school where possible.

Special Cases.

In isolated cases an agreement may be made for a child who is able to attend school despite having a condition which is likely to persist over a period of months or years.

In such cases the school may deem it necessary to consult the child's GP. However, **in most cases**, the school will expect the parent or carer to make their own arrangements to provide the medication. Parents who insist that their child must receive medication must realise that it is their responsibility in the first instant.

Painkiller & Non-prescribed Medicines.

School staff **cannot** take responsibility for administering painkillers and other such non-prescribed medication. If a pupil is in pain it is our belief that the pupil is probably better off at home. On occasion if the teacher is prepared to do so and the duplicate 'St. Mary's P.S Parental Agreement Forms for Administration of Medicines' booklet is filled in a teacher will administer non-prescribed medicine. A parent must submit any drugs to the teacher which they are requesting to be administered. Children will not be allowed to carry painkillers around the school.

Quantities of medicine.

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

Labelling Medicines

Each item of medication must be delivered to the Class Teacher, 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.**

Pupils must accept responsibility for reminding the teacher of the necessary times of administering medicine.

Securing Medicines

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 located in the Staff room.

Refusal to take Medicines.

If a child refuses 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.

End of Treatment.

It is the responsibility of parents to notify the school in writing/email if the pupil's need for medication has ceased.

Medication Supply.

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.

Disposal.

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.

Medication Plan.

For each pupil with long-term or complex medication needs, the Principal, will ensure that a Medication Plan and Protocol is drawn up, in conjunction with the appropriate health professionals and if an agreement has been reached where the school agrees to take on this responsibility.

Self Administration.

Where it is appropriate to do so, pupils will be encouraged to administer their own medication, under staff supervision. Parents will be asked to confirm in writing/email if they wish their child to carry their medication with them in school. Many pupils may need to take an antibiotic or apply a lotion at some time in their school life. It is helpful if, where possible, medication can be prescribed in dose frequencies which enable it to be taken outside school hours. Parents should ask the prescribing doctor or dentist about this.

Asthma.

Nowadays, Asthma is a very common ailment and in many cases children miss a lot of valuable school days because the asthma cannot be controlled on a daily basis. A primary 1 to 4 child with asthma may be allowed to administer the drug him/herself under the supervision of the teacher and a Primary 5, 6 & 7 child will be allowed to carry his/her own asthma inhalers. However, parents of asthma sufferers must contact the principal and fill in the appropriate forms.

Training.

Staff who volunteer to assist in the administration of medication will receive appropriate training/guidance through arrangements made with the School Health Service.

School Trips.

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.

Asthma

Inhalers should be clearly labelled with the name of the pupil, the dose of the drug and the frequency of the administration.

Children should not carry inhalers with them unless they are in years 5, 6 & 7 and only if an agreement has been signed by their parents. All supervising staff should be informed where the inhalers are and advised about their role. Other medication must be stored in a safe place (Staffroom). In general, the school will not keep medicines other than asthma inhalers, except in extreme special cases and in being appropriately prepared for an emergency. The principal reserves the right to refuse any administration or supervision of administration of any other types of medication.

Hygiene/Infection Control

All staff should be familiar with normal precautions for avoiding infection and must follow basic hygiene procedures. Staff should have access to protective disposable gloves and take care when dealing with spillages of blood or other body fluids and disposing of dressings or equipment. When blood has been spilt only staff members wearing appropriate protection should clean it up and dispose of dressings and soiled materials properly. (For further advice consult the school's first aider, Mrs O Hanlon)

Record Keeping.

Information on all ailments will be kept on the Secretary's computer in the first instant. A File will be kept in the office. In the file will be a list of all pupils whose parents have sent in information, written confirmation of ailments and requests for asthma supervision. Parents are responsible for supplying information about medicines. Teachers should send information about such illnesses or conditions to the office should they learn of them during a parents/teacher meeting.

When agreed medicine has been given by the teacher, the teacher will complete the duplicate 'medicine in school book' and send a slip home with the child.

Emergency Procedures.

(Refer to Critical Incident Policy)

In the case of an emergency, i.e. a child has a fit, a seizure, and some other suspected dangerous reaction due to a medical condition or behavioural difficulty the teacher is to first contact the office. The principal should be called to the class to assist and assess the situation. If necessary an ambulance should be called as soon as possible and parents contacted. Should the principal not be available, Mrs O Hanlon should be contacted to help assess the next course of action. Staff members should not in the first instance take a child in the car to the hospital. Such decisions should be made by the staff member in charge of the school at the time. Should a staff member take suddenly ill or have some seizure the same procedure as above should be followed.

Minor Accidents Procedures.

Supervisor or Teacher on duty brings child to first aider who determines the extent of the injury, if it is a minor injury a note is made in the duplicate incident/illness report slip and a copy is sent home with the child. The child is also given a First Aid sticker to act as a visual reminder for the child and parents that they have received first aid today for a minor injury.

Contact with Parents/ Carers

It is paramount that parents make sure they have supplied the school with up-to-date contact telephone numbers. Parents need to be contacted fast in an emergency and the schools ability to do so will depend on readily available up-to-date phone numbers. The risk to the child is heightened when a parent cannot be contacted and the responsibility lies with the parent to make sure that he/she can be easily contacted.

Summary

The administration of medication and medical procedures to children is the responsibility of parents, and there is no contractual requirement for any teacher to administer medication to a pupil. However, principals and their teaching staff, as persons "in loco parentis", must take appropriate action when a child in their care requires medical attention. When a parent requests that medication be administered to their child, this request should be made in writing/email. Including written

authorisation children will only be administered prescribed medicine in school 24 hours after first being administered the medicine.

However, in most cases it is likely that a regime of self-management may be agreed and only in cases where the child has a long-term condition like diabetes and asthma.

Discussions, between the parents and principal and in some cases the child's GP, are undertaken in order to establish the procedures to be followed. However, staff members will not be required to administer medicines. A teacher will not be forced to administer medicines or supervise the activities. It is not in his/her contract. If a child needs to take an antibiotic it is most likely that the child is not well enough to attend school.

The school will not undertake to accept responsibility for non-prescribed medication. The parent will be given the opportunity to undertake the administration of the medicine during the day. If this is not possible the GP can advise the parent on other possible arrangements. Such arrangements must be made clear to the principal and all procedures detailed in written form (Available from the office or the class teacher). Mrs O Hanlon is the school's named first aider. She has been trained to deal with the general day-to-day medical issues needed in a school environment.

Date
Signed: (Principal of St Mary's PS)
Date
Policy Review Date: November 2023