09 Health Policy

**09.01 Medicine Policy**

While it is not our policy to care for sick children who should be at home until they are well enough to return to the setting, we will agree to administer medication as part of maintaining their health and well-being from ongoing illness.

In many cases, it is possible for children’s GPs to prescribe medicine that can be taken at home in the morning and evening. As far as possible, administering medicines will only be done where it would be detrimental to the child’s health if not given in the setting. Parents/Carers are asked to administer medication that needs to be taken during Pre School hours. If a child has started medication, it is our policy that the parent keeps the child at home for the first 48 hours to ensure there are no adverse effects, as well as to give time for the medication to take effect.

These procedures are written in line with guidance in *Managing Medicines in Schools and Early Years Settings;* the managers are responsible for ensuring all staff understand and follow these procedures.

The managers are responsible for the correct administration of medication to children if it has to be administered during Pre School hours. This includes ensuring that parent consent forms have been completed, that medicines are stored correctly and that records are kept according to procedures.

**Procedures**

* Children taking prescribed medication must be well enough to attend the setting and have been taking the medication for 48 hours prior to attending Pre School.
* Staff will not administer medication such as Calpol or antibiotics. The parent/carer must come to Pre School to administer it if needed. Only medication prescribed by a doctor or other medically qualified person, such as a nurse or pharmacist, for long term health conditions is administered. It must be in-date and prescribed for the current condition.

*N.B. When we use the word ‘prescribed’ we mean medicine that is recommended or for which a written prescription has been issued. Most pharmacists cannot write prescriptions and can only prepare the medicine as instructed by a doctor or dentist. However, they can recommend (prescribe) over-the-counter medicines such as teething gels, when children are teething, or painkillers, when children have a temperature. Recent changes in the law mean that qualified ‘nurse independent prescribers’ and ‘pharmacist independent prescribers’, can prescribe any licensed medicine for any medical condition they have been trained to specialise in. For nurses, this includes some controlled drugs. Thus we can give medication that is recommended by a pharmacist or nurse without a written prescription, as well as any medication prescribed by a doctor, dentist or an appropriately qualified pharmacist or nurse.*

* For pain and fever relief and medicines containing aspirin will not be given by staff.
* Children's medicines are stored in their original containers, are clearly labelled and are inaccessible to the children.

**Children who Have Long Term Medical Conditions and Who May Require On-Going Medication**

* Parents give prior written permission for the administration of medication. The manager receiving the medication must ask the parent to sign a consent form stating the following information. No medication may be given without these details being provided:
* The full name of child and date of birth
* The name of medication and strength
* Who prescribed it
* The dosage to be given in the setting
* How the medication should be stored and its expiry date
* Any possible side effects that may be expected
* The signature of the parent, their printed name and the date
* The administration of medicine is recorded accurately each time it is given on the child’s medication record form and is signed by the manager. Parents are shown the record at the end of the session and asked to sign it to acknowledge the administration of the medicine. The medication records the:
* Name of the child
* Name and strength of the medication
* Date and time of the dose
* Dose given and method
* Signature of the manager
* Parent’s signature

**Storage of Medicines**

* All medication is stored safely out of children’s reach or refrigerated as required. Where the storage container or refrigerator is not used solely for storing medicines, they are kept in a marked plastic box.
* The manager responsible for First Aid will ensure that medicine is handed back to the parent at the end of the session.
* For some conditions, medication may be kept in the setting to be administered on a regular or as-and-when- required basis. The manager responsible for First Aid will check that any medication held in the setting, is in date and return any out-of-date medication back to the parent.

*Medication will be stored in a zipped hanging bag on a hook over the ‘teachers’ table’ where it is accessible by adults but not by children.*

*Medication requiring refrigeration will be stored in a labelled plastic box in the fridge which is secured with a fridge lock.*

* If the administration of prescribed medication requires medical knowledge, individual training is provided for the relevant member of staff by a health professional.
* No child may self-administer. Where children are capable of understanding when they need medication, for example with asthma, they should be encouraged to tell a teacher what they need. However, this does not replace staff vigilance in knowing and responding when a child requires medication.
* A risk assessment is carried out for each child with long term medical conditions that require ongoing medication. This is the responsibility of the Preschool management. Other medical or social care personnel may need to be involved in the risk assessment.
* Parents will also contribute to a risk assessment. They should be shown around the setting, understand the routines and activities and point out anything which they think may be a risk factor for their child.
* For some medical conditions, key staff will need to have training in a basic understanding of the condition, as well as how the medication is to be administered correctly. The training needs for staff form part of the risk assessment.
* The risk assessment includes vigorous activities and any other activity that may give cause for concern regarding an individual child’s health needs.
* The risk assessment includes arrangements for taking medicines on outings and advice is sought from the child’s GP if necessary where there are concerns.
* A health care plan for the child is drawn up with the parent; outlining the key person’s role and what information must be shared with other staff who care for the child.
* The health care plan should include the measures to be taken in an emergency.
* The health care plan is reviewed every term, or more frequently if necessary. This includes reviewing the medication, e.g. changes to the medication or the dosage, any side effects noted etc.
* Parents receive a copy of the health care plan and each contributor, including the parent, signs it.

**Managing Medicines on Trips and Outings**

* If children are going on outings, staff accompanying the children must include the key person for the child with a risk assessment, or another member of staff who is fully informed about the child’s needs and/or medication.
* Medication for a child is taken in a sealed plastic box clearly labelled with the child’s name and the name of the medication. Inside the box is a copy of the consent form and a card to record when it has been given, including all the details that need to be recorded in the medication record as stated previously.
* On returning to the setting the card is stapled to the child’s medicine record and the parent signs it.
* If a child on medication has to be taken to hospital, the child’s medication is taken in a sealed plastic box clearly labelled with the child’s name and the name of the medication. Inside the box is a copy of the consent form signed by the parent.
* This procedure is read alongside the outings procedure when there are children being taken who have long term medical conditions and who may require on-going medication.