



**St. Ita's and St. Joseph's
Primary and Post-Primary School**

**Administration of Medication
Policy**

Introduction

This policy was drafted in line with best practice in relation to the administration in our school. This policy was discussed with relevant personnel from our school community to include alternative perspectives on the administration of medication in the best interests of our pupils. As our school is a special school, we endeavour to support pupils with medical needs in so far as is practical. The support of parents in accommodating same is essential in relation to the administration of medication.

Rationale

The policy as outlined was put in place to:

- Clarify areas of responsibility.
- To give clear guidance about situations where it is not appropriate to administer medicines.
- To indicate the limitations to any requirements which may be notified to teachers and school staff.

Relationship to School Ethos

The school promotes positive home-school contacts, not only in relation to the welfare of children, but in relation to all aspects of school life. This policy is in keeping with the school ethos through the provision of a safe, secure and caring school environment and the furthering of positive home-school links.

Aims of this Policy

The aims and objectives of the policy can be summarised as follows:

- Minimise health risks to children and staff on the school premises.
- Provide a framework within which medicines may be administered in cases of emergency or in instances where regularised administration has been agreed with parents/guardians.

In –School Procedures

Parents are required to complete a number of consent and medical forms in our application form for admission to our school (please see the appendix in our Admissions and Participation Policy available on our website). No teacher/classroom assistant is obliged to administer medicine or drugs to a pupil and any teacher willing to do so works under the controlled guidelines outlined below:

- Prescribed medicines will only be administered after parents of the pupil concerned have asked their doctor to complete the relevant form (available in the appendix of our Admission and Participation Policy). This form requires that full details of the medication prescribed for their child are provided. It is also necessary to complete this form which seeks permission from parents/guardians to administer the medication in school.
- Under no circumstance will non-prescribed medicines be either stored or administered in the school. The Board will seek indemnity from parents in respect of any liability arising from the administration of medicines.
- In general, medicines will be administered by the parents/guardians outside of school hours.
- The school generally advocates the self-administration (e.g. inhalers) of medicine under the supervision of a responsible adult, exercising the standard of care of a prudent parent. A small quantity of prescription drugs will be stored in the teacher's filing cabinet if a child requires self-administering daily and parents have requested storage facilities. Parents are responsible for the provision of medication and notification of change of dosage.
- Pupils with a diagnosis of Epilepsy will have a pouch containing their prescribed medication and instructions to be followed in an emergency situation. Each pupil's pouch will be stored in the teacher's filing cabinet and the classroom assistant allocated to that class will ensure that the child carries the pouch with them at all times.

- In relation to pupils with heart difficulties, if medical equipment is utilised, the equipment will be stored either on the child's person (in a pouch) or in the teachers filing cabinet (whichever has been agreed on the Intimate Care Plan which is completed by the parents and staff during the IEP/PPP Meeting). Clear instructions which have been agreed should accompany the equipment.
- Teachers have a professional duty to safeguard the health and safety of pupils, both when they are authorised to be on the school premises and when they are engaged in authorised school activities elsewhere.
- The Board of Management requests parents to ensure that teachers be made aware of any medical condition suffered by any child in their class.
- This does not imply a duty upon teachers personally to undertake the administration of medicines or drugs.

Long Term Health Difficulties

Where there are children with long-term health difficulties in school, proper and clearly understood arrangements for the administration of medicines must be made with the relevant staff in school. This is the responsibility of the parents/guardians. It would include measures such as self-administration, administration under parental supervision or administration by school staff. Parents are requested to participate in the development of a care plan for their child at the Individual Education Plan meeting annually and more frequently if necessary. It is a matter for parents to bring the necessity of such a plan to the attention of the class teacher. If changes to the plan are required, it is the responsibility of the parent to bring this to the immediate attention of the class teacher.

Life Threatening Condition

Where children are suffering from life threatening conditions, parents/guardians must clearly outline what should be done in a particular emergency situation, with particular reference to what may be a risk to the child. If emergency medication is necessary, arrangements must be made with the Board of Management. An indemnity form (see appendix of the Admission and Participation Policy) must be signed by the parents in respect of any liability that may arise regarding the administration of medication.

Guidelines for the Administration of Medicines

1. The parents of the pupil with special medical needs must inform the school of the condition, giving all the necessary details of the condition. Parents must also provide instructions of the procedure to be followed in administering the medication.
2. Parents must complete the necessary forms when enrolling their child requesting the school to authorise the administration of the medication in school.
3. Where specific authorisation has been given by the school for the administration of medicine, the medicines must be brought to school by the parent/guardian/designated adult.
4. A written record of the date and time of administration must be kept by the person administering it.
5. Parents/Guardians are responsible for ensuring that emergency medication is supplied to the school and replenished when necessary.
6. Emergency medication must have exact details of how it is to be administered.
7. The school will inform the school's insurers accordingly of medication for life threatening conditions.
8. Parents are further required to indemnify the Board of Management and members of the staff in respect of any liability that may arise regarding the administration of prescribed medicines in school and during school related activities.
9. All correspondence related to the above are kept in the school.

Medicines

- Where possible, the parents should arrange for the administration of prescribed medicines outside of school hours.
- Non-prescribed medicines will neither be stored nor administered to pupils in school.
- Teachers/classroom assistants in the school will only administer prescribed medication when arrangements have been put in place as outlined above.
- Arrangements for the storage of certain emergency medicines, which must be readily accessible at all times, must be made with the class teacher and the Principal.
- A teacher/classroom assistant must not administer any medication without the specific authorisation of the Board of Management.
- The prescribed medicine must be self-administered if possible, under the supervision of an authorised teacher/classroom assistant if not the parent.
- No teacher/classroom assistant can be required to administer medicine or drugs to a pupil.
- In an emergency situation, qualified medical assistance will be secured at the earliest opportunity and the parents contacted.
- It is not recommended that children keep medication in bags, coats, etc.
- Children should be responsible for their own medication with due regard to the age and ability of the child.

Emergencies

In the event of an emergency, teachers should do no more than is necessary and appropriate to relieve extreme distress or prevent further and otherwise irreparable harm. Qualified medical treatment should be secured in emergencies at the earliest opportunity.

Where no qualified medical treatment is available, and circumstances warrant immediate medical attention, designated staff members may take a child into Accident and Emergency without delay. Parents will be contacted simultaneously.

In addition, parents must ensure that teachers are made aware of any medical condition which their child is suffering from. For example, children who have epilepsy, diabetes etc. may have a seizure at any time and teachers must be made aware of symptoms in order to ensure that treatment may be given by appropriate persons.

Details are required from the parents/guardians and family doctor/pharmacist outlining the child's personal details, name of medication, prescribed dosage, whether the child is capable of self-administration and the circumstances under which the medication is to be given. Parents should also outline clearly proper procedures for children who require medication for life threatening conditions.

The school maintains an up to date register of contact details of all parents/guardians including emergency numbers. This is updated in September of each new school year. It is a prerequisite for parents to inform the school if there is any change in their contact details.

First Aid Boxes

A full medical kit is taken when children are engaged in out of school activities such as school tours, swimming, soccer/ basketball games and athletic activities.

General Recommendations

We recommend that any child who shows signs of illness should be kept at home; requests from parents to keep their children in at lunch break are not encouraged. A child too sick to play with peers should not be in school.

Roles and Responsibilities

The BoM has overall responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of the school policy on Administration of Medication. The Principal is the day to day manager of routines contained in the policy with the assistance of all staff members.

Success Criteria

The effectiveness of the school policy in its present form is measured by the following criteria:

- Compliance with health and safety legislation
- Maintaining a safe and caring environment for children
- Positive feedback from parents/teachers
- Ensuring the primary responsibility for administering remains with parents/guardians.

Ratification, Review and Communication

This policy was ratified by the BoM on It will be reviewed in the event of incidents or on the enrolment of child/children with significant medical conditions. All our policies are available on our website.