

St Conor's Primary School & Nursery Unit



Policy for the Administration of Medication

Policy last reviewed	October 2015
Policy last ratified by Board of Governors	5 th October 2015
Policy due for review	October 2017

Rationale:

The Board of Governors and staff of St. Conor's Primary School & Nursery Unit wish to ensure that pupils with medication needs receive appropriate support and care at school.

It is important to note however, that there is no legal duty that requires school staff to administer medication. Staff cannot be directed to administer medication; rather it is a voluntary role. The administration of medication to children remains the responsibility of the parent or those with parental responsibility.

Prescribed medication should only be taken to school when absolutely essential and with the agreement of the Principal. Staff will not be able to administer non-prescribed medication to a child.

"Parents should be encouraged to request, where possible, that medication be prescribed in dose frequencies which enable it to be taken outside school hours e.g. medicines that need to be taken three times a day could be taken in the morning, after school hours and at bedtime".

'Supporting Pupils with Medication Needs' (February 2008) DENI/DHSSPS

Roles/Responsibilities:

The 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
- Medication will be kept in a secure place, out of reach of pupils. Unless otherwise indicated, all medication to be administered in school will be kept in a locked cabinet

- The school will keep records, which they will have available for parents (Form **AM4**)
- If children refuse 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.
- All staff will be made aware of the procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency.
- The school will not make changes to dosages on parental instructions.
- School staff will not dispose of medicines (including epi-pens). 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.
- 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.
- Staff who volunteer to assist in the administration of medication will receive appropriate training/guidance through arrangements made with the School Health Service.
- 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.

Parents

- Parents should keep their children at home if acutely unwell or infectious.
- Parents are responsible for providing the Principal with comprehensive information regards the pupil's condition and medication. (Form AM1).
- Prescribed medication will not be accepted in school without complete written and signed instructions from the parent. **(Form AM2).**
- Staff will not give a non-prescribed medicine to a child.
- Only reasonable quantities of medication should be supplied to the school (for example, a maximum of four weeks supply at any one time).
- Where the pupil travels on school transport with an escort, parents should ensure the escort has written instructions relating to any medication sent with the pupil, including medication for administration during respite care.
- Each item of medication must be delivered to the Principal or Authorised Person, 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 requirement (if important).
- Expiry Date.

The school will not accept items of medication in unlabelled containers.

- It is the responsibility of parents to notify the school in writing if the pupil's need for medication has ceased
- 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 e.g. epi-pens
- Where it is appropriate to do so, pupils will be encouraged to administer their own medication, if necessary under staff supervision. Parents will be asked to confirm in writing if they wish their child to carry their medication with them in school. **(Form AM3).**

Access to Medication

- Pupils must have access to their medicine when required. They should know where their own medication is kept and who holds the key.
- Some medicines, such as inhalers for asthma, must be readily available to pupils and should not be locked away. In most cases pupils can carry their own inhalers.
- If a pupil is likely to suffer a severe allergic reaction, EpiPens®/ Anapens®) are kept in a suitable, safe, yet accessible place.

- Other medicines are generally kept in a secure place not accessible to pupils.
- It is also important to make sure that medicines are only accessible to those for whom they are prescribed.

Disposal of Medicines

- School staff should not dispose of medicines.
- Medicines, which are in use and in date, should be collected by the parent at the end of each term.
- Parents are responsible for disposal of date expired medicines. Date expired medicines or those no longer required for treatment should be returned to the parent immediately for transfer to a community pharmacist for safe disposal.
- Sharps boxes should always be used for the disposal of needles. Collection and disposal of the boxes should be arranged with local authority's environmental services.

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.

Educational Trips

Reasonable steps will be taken by our school to encourage pupils with medication needs to participate in school trips, wherever safety permits. This might include reviewing and revising the Educational Trips Policy and procedures so that planning arrangements will include the necessary

steps to include children with medication needs. It might also include risk assessments for such children. It should be accepted, however, that there may be occasions when it may not be possible to include a pupil on a school trip if appropriate supervision cannot be guaranteed.

Sometimes the school may need to take additional safety measures for outside visits. Arrangements for taking any necessary medication will also need to be taken into consideration. If a child who needs medication is being taken on an overnight trip or journey the parent must provide detailed instructions and written consent for the administration of the medication for the period of the trip.

If the pupil has a Medication Plan this may be adapted through discussion with the pupil and parents, the school and health professionals, to identify the specific issues that need to be considered during the trip. Where possible the responsibilities of the pupil, parents and the school staff should be made explicit.

Staff supervising excursions should always be aware of any medication needs, and relevant emergency procedures. Sometimes an additional supervisor or parent might accompany a particular pupil. If staff are concerned about how they can provide for a pupil's safety, or the safety of other pupils on a trip, the school will seek medical advice from the School Health Service, the child's GP or the Community Paediatrician as to what steps should be taken to ensure the medical needs are met.

A copy of any Medication Plan should be taken on visits in the event of the information being needed in an emergency.

Sporting Activities

Most pupils with medical conditions can participate in extra-curricular sport or in the PE curriculum, which is sufficiently flexible for all pupils to follow in ways appropriate to their own abilities. For many, physical activity can benefit their overall social, mental and physical health and

well-being. Any restrictions on a pupil's ability to participate in PE should be included in their individual Medication Plan. All adults should be aware of issues of privacy and dignity for children with particular needs.

Some activities, however, may need to be modified or precautionary measures may need to be taken, before or during exercise and pupils should be allowed immediate access to their medication if necessary. For example, children with asthma may need to take their reliever inhaler before exercise. Staff supervising sporting activities should consider whether risk assessments are necessary for some children and be aware of relevant medical conditions and emergency procedures.

Monitoring and Evaluation of the Policy

The Policy will be available to all parents and will be monitored and reviewed bi-annually.