



Scoil Bhríde, Straffan

Policy on Administration of Medicines in School

Introduction

This policy was drafted through a collaborative process involving staff, parents and the Board of management. This policy deals with the administration of medicines to pupils and the supervising of self-administration by pupils of medicine, both in the school and off the school premises on school-related activities. 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.

Rationale

The policy was put in place to:

- Clarify areas of responsibility
- Give clear guidance about situations on administering medicines
- Indicate the limitations to any requirements which may be notified to teachers and school staff.

Relationship to school Ethos:

Our school promotes positive home-school communication in relation to all aspects of school life especially with the welfare of the children. 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.

Roles and Responsibilities:

1. **Board of management (BOM)** has overall responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of the school policy on administration of medicines.
 - The BOM has a duty to safeguard the health and safety of pupils when authorised to be on school premises or engaged in authorised school activities elsewhere.
 - However, this does not impose a duty on teachers or administrative staff of the school to undertake personally the administration of medicines to pupils.
 - The BOM is committed to fostering a school environment that is welcoming and inclusive to all pupils, including those pupils who may have a chronic condition or may be temporarily ill.

- The BOM recognises that pupils may require to be administered medication or to self-administer medication under supervision during the school day.
 - The BOM may authorise staff members to administer prescribed medication to a pupil in accordance with the doctor's instructions or to supervise the self-administration of medication by a pupil. **However, no staff member can be compelled to administer prescription medicines to a pupil.**
 - **The Board of Management supports staff to be trained in First Aid every 2 years.**
2. **The Principal** is the day to day manager of routines contained in the policy with the assistance of all staff members.
3. **Staff** are required to:
- Familiarize themselves with the Healthcare register for chronic illnesses in their class, which is on the school drive under **Healthcare Plans.**
 - Teachers should attend meetings with parents to discuss the Healthcare Plans and keep parents informed if their child has been unwell during the day.
 - Ensure all medicines should be kept in the medicine cabinet in their classroom during the school day. No medicine should be kept in a child's school bag during the school day.
 - If the class needs to leave the room, i.e. for PE or a school trip all medicines should be brought with the class by the class teacher.
 - If a child is taking medicine without the BOM permission, it is the class teacher's responsibility to make the Principal aware of this.
 - Record medicine taken by a child if this is part of an agreed Health Care Plan with the parents and authorised by the BOM
 - Familiarise themselves with the [Managing Chronic Health Conditions in Schools.](#)
4. **Parents** are required to:
- inform the school of any medical conditions which their child may have at the time of enrolment or at the time of the onset of a particular medical condition.
 - ensure that the school is kept up to date regarding any medical conditions which their child may have at the time of enrolment or develop subsequently.
 - ensure that the school has up to date contact details, including details of at least one alternative emergency contact person.
 - arrange for the administration of prescribed medicines outside of school hours. If this is not possible, then it should be established if the parents/guardians could come to the school to administer the prescribed medication or supervise the self-administration of the same.
 - If this is not possible, the following procedure must be followed by parents who want their children to be administered medication during the school day or to self-administer medication under supervision of a member of school staff.
 - Parents/guardians should be aware that morning medication (first dose), other than emergency medication, must be administered before coming to school. If the child is being administered medications in the school day, within reason, the child will be given their medication as close to the time as possible.
 - Familiarise themselves with the [Managing Chronic Health Conditions in Schools.](#)

In School Procedures for Administration of Medicines

This policy outlines the procedures that need to be followed to ensure that children's medicinal needs are catered for under chronic and non-chronic illnesses

<h3>Illness Types</h3>

1. Chronic	A. Pupils who require regular or ongoing medical treatment such as children with special needs or children with a chronic condition
	B. Emergency treatment of a child with a chronic condition
2. Non Chronic	A. A pupil who is finishing a short course of prescribed medication for an occasional/ non chronic illness

1. Steps for parents Seeking Approval from the Board of Management for Chronic Illnesses:

The Board of Management understands that some pupils may have chronic conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy or anaphylaxis, which may be serious and can be potentially life threatening if not effectively managed.

Parents are required to complete a section on Health/ Medication in the application form when enrolling their child/ren to school. No teacher is obliged to administer medicine or drugs to a pupil and any teacher willing to do so works under the controlled guidelines outlined below:

1) Request for approval or authorisation

Parents/guardians who wish members of staff to administer medicine to their child or to supervise self-administration by the child of medicine should:

1. Write to the Board of Management requesting it to authorise staff member(s) to administer the prescribed medicine or to supervise self-administration by the child of medication, as the case may be.
2. Non prescribed medicine will not be administered unless directed by the child's treating Health Care Professional Team in typed written instructions.
3. This letter of request should be accompanied by:
 - a. A completed Healthcare Plan as set out in **Appendix 1**
 - b. Preferably typed instructions from a Health Care Professional Team, preferably typed, setting out clearly the procedure to be followed in the administration of the medication. These instructions should contain:
 - The full name of the Student
 - The name and brand of the medication to be administered
 - The expected duration of the course of medication
 - The exact dosage to be administered and the frequency of dosage
 - Specific instructions regarding the method of administration
 - Storage requirements
 - Any other essential information
 - Parent to inform the Board of management if the child is able to self administer.

2) Consideration by the Board of Management

The Board of Management will consider all requests by parents/guardians to authorise staff to administer medicine to their child or to supervise self-administration of medicine provided that parents/guardians submit the required documentation.

As part of the child's Health Care Plan:

- Parents/guardians must confirm their consent for the disclosure of sensitive personal information relating to the child to appropriate staff members.
- In the Event that the child has been prescribed medication for emergency purposes, Parents/guardians must confirm their consent for the administration of such medication by staff members.

The Board of Management may authorise staff members to administer prescribed medication to a pupil in accordance with the Health Care Professional Team instructions or to supervise the self – administration of medication by a pupil. **However, no staff member can be compelled to administer prescription medicines to a pupil.**

The Board of Management may request the guardian/parent to organise a demonstration of the administration of the prescribed medicine by a medical professional or the Board may organise training of staff in the administration of the prescribed medicine.

Where the Board of Management approves the request, it will inform the school's insurers.

3) Supply and Storage of Medication

Non-prescribed medication will not be held by the school or administered by staff unless on the written instructions of the child's Health Care Professional Team or emergency medication such as epilepsy medication or epipens.

Parents/guardians are responsible for the provision of the medication and ensuring that it is in date. They must also advise on the appropriate storage instructions for the medication. The school will only store medication in its original packaging. All medication will be returned to the parents at the end of the school year.

Parents/guardians should hand the medication to a nominated staff member and be signed in to a Medication Book. Emergency medication should **never be left in the child's school bag. If a child can self-administer inhalers, then that medication can stay in the child's bag.**

Arrangements will be made, by the class teacher, for the safe storage of prescribed medication in accordance with the recommendations from the Health Care Professional Team. Secure First Aid boxes are available in each room for storage of medicines.

Parents/guardians are responsible for the disposal of out of date medication and must supply and dispose of sharps boxes if required.

4) Administration of medicine

Any member of staff who administers prescribed medicines should only do so in accordance with the instructions of the child's Health Care Professional Team and any guidelines supplied by the parents/guardians. Every reasonable precaution must be taken on the part of the member of staff to discharge the responsibility correctly.

In administering medication to pupils, staff should exercise the standard of care of a reasonable and prudent parent

Record forms to be kept in the First Aid Medicine Box.

Staff will take all reasonable steps to administer medicine to the child or encourage the child to self-administer medicine under supervision. However, staff will not force a child to take medicine in circumstances where the child refuses to take medication, other than in an emergency situation. In the event that a child refuses to take medicine, parents/guardians will be notified at the earliest opportunity and this will be recorded on the Record of Administration of Medication Form.

5) Changes and Updates

Parents/Guardians are required to renew the request for the administration of medication at the beginning of each school year and to confirm that all information held by the school is up to date. Parents/Guardians are responsible for notifying the school of any changes to the emergency contact details or information concerning any medical condition/allergy which their child may have.

In the event there are any alterations to amount of dosage or time or frequency of dosage, parents/guardians must write a letter to the Board of Management requesting such changes. A copy of written update instructions from the child's treating doctor must be included with the request.

No medicine will be administered by any member of staff without prior written approval and authorisation by the Board of Management.

Emergency treatment of a child with a chronic condition

Where a child with a chronic condition which may require emergency medication or emergency treatment, it is essential that the school is fully informed regarding the pupils condition.

In addition to completing the Healthcare Plan, parents/guardians should attend a meeting with the school principal and the child's teacher and provide specific information regarding their child's condition and, in particular the circumstances in which emergency medication may be required to be administered. This information should be recorded in an Emergency Plan, which should be signed by the parents/guardians and the Principal.

The Emergency Plan should specify signs and symptoms of a potential emergency specific to their child; the dosage of emergency medication to be administered in the case of an emergency and set out any further guidelines in relation to the emergency treatment of the pupil. The plan should also specify where the emergency medication will be stored, which preferably would be in a secure but accessible place in, or near the child's classroom.

Staff members should be trained in best practice in the management of the condition and the administration of emergency medication as arranged by the parents.

The Emergency plan should be brought to the attention of all staff members who have responsibility for the child with a chronic condition, including substitute teachers and SNA's. This plan will also be available on the Google Drive under Healthcare Plans. There is also a Healthcare Register.

2. Non Chronic Illness

General recommendations

- As a general rule, children who are sick and clearly unwell should not be in school and parents will be rang and asked to bring their sick children home. Requests from parents to keep their children in at break time are not encouraged. (See Supervision Policy)

- Occasionally, it may arise that a child who has been absent from school due to ill health may have made sufficient recovery to return to school but still require to finish a short term course of medicine.
- It is preferable if a parent/guardian or other family member attends at the school for the purposes of administering the medication or supervising the self-administration of the same. However, where this is not possible, guardians/parents **should formally request permission as laid out in the procedures below.**
- Where the course of treatment is short, it may not be practicable for a request to be considered by the Board of Management. In the case of short courses of treatment, the Principal will deal with requests for administration of medication or the supervised self-administration of medication.
- If agreed with the Principal, parents are requested to ensure that the morning dose of medication is given prior to attendance at school.

Request for Authorisation by the Principal

Where Parents/guardians are unable to attend at the school in order to administer the medication themselves, the parent/guardian should contact the Principal to make a formal request for the administration or supervised self-administration of medication.

Parents/guardians should be aware, however, that teachers have no contractual duty to administer medication in such circumstances and cannot be compelled to do so by the Principal or Board of Management.

A Principal will only consider such a request where:

1. The request is in writing containing the following:
 1. The full name of the Student
 2. The name and brand of the medication to be administered
 3. The expected duration of the course of medication
 4. The exact dosage to be administered and the frequency of dosage
 5. Specific instructions regarding the method of administration
 6. Storage requirements
 7. Any other essential information
2. A consent form must also be completed by the parent/guardian stating if the child is able to self-administer. See Appendix 3

Consideration by the Principal

- Where the Principal or other staff member agrees to administer or supervise the self-administration of medicine, this will be confirmed to the parent/guardian in writing.
- Parents/guardians should hand the medication to the staff member identified in the Health Care Plan and be signed in to a Medication Book. **Medication except for inhalers should never be left in the child's school bag. Medicine will be kept in the class First Aid box. If a child is unable to self administer their inhaler, then that medication should be kept in the First Aid Box too.**
- In administering medication to pupils, staff should exercise the standard of care of a reasonable and prudent parent.
- The name and dose of medication being administered will be checked by a second staff member and a written record of the time and date of administration will be co-signed and kept on the child's file in accordance with the Record of Administration of Medication Form, which is Appendix 2.

- Staff will take all reasonable steps to administer medicine to the child or encourage the child to self-administer medicine under supervision. In the event that the child refuses to allow medication to be administered or to self-administer his/her medication, he/she will not be forced to do so. Parents/guardians will be notified of the refusal as soon as practicable
- In the event that the child becomes unwell, parents/guardians will be contacted as soon as practicable by the school and will collect or arrange for the collection of their child at the earliest opportunity.
- **If the request for the administration of medicine is not approved, by the BOM or the Principal no medication should be brought to the school.**

First Aid Boxes:

Medical boxes are installed in all classrooms to store children's medicines safely.

A full medical kit is taken when children are engaged in out of school activities such as tours and sporting activities etc.

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 the parents/ guardians.

Ratification and Review

This policy was ratified by the BOM in November 2020. It will be reviewed in the event of incidents or on the enrolment of children with significant medical conditions, but no later than 2023.