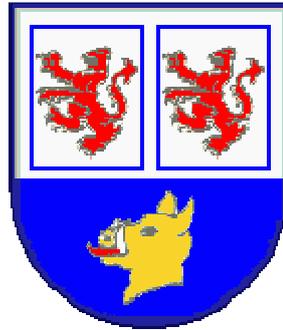


Willington Primary School



Supporting Children with Medical Needs

Pupils with medical needs

Most pupils will at some time have a medical condition that may affect their participation in school activities. For many this will be short term; perhaps finishing a course of medication.

Other pupils have medical conditions that, if not properly managed, could limit their access to education. Such children are regarded as having medical needs. Most children with medical needs are able to attend school regularly and, with some support from school, can take part in most normal school activities. However, school staff may need to take extra care in supervising some activities to make sure that these pupils, and others, are not put at risk. For these pupils, an individual health plan will be drawn up in consultation with parents and medical professionals.

At all times, staff and pupils will be encouraged to be sympathetic to children who have medical needs or who require medication at school.

Support for pupils with medical needs

Parents or guardians have prime responsibility for their child's health and should provide school with information about their child's medical condition. Parents, and the pupil if s/he is mature enough, should give details in conjunction with their child's GP or paediatrician, as appropriate. The school nurse or doctor and specialist voluntary bodies may be able to provide additional background information for school staff.

Medication

There is no legal duty which requires school staff to administer medication; this is a voluntary role.

Any member of staff who agrees to accept responsibility for administering prescribed medicines to a child, must be competent to do so and need support from the head and parents. Such staff should receive appropriate training and guidance. They should be aware of possible side effects of the medicines and what to do if they occur.

Such staff must have access to information and training and reassurance about their legal liability. The LA must ensure that their insurance policies provide appropriate cover for staff who agree to administer medicines.

Staff 'Duty of Care'

Anyone caring for children, including teachers, other school staff and day care staff in charge of children have a common law duty of care to act like any reasonably prudent parent. Staff need to make sure that children are healthy and safe.

In exceptional circumstances the duty of care could extend to administering medicines and/or taking action in an emergency. This duty also extends to staff leading activities taking place off site, such as visits, outings or field trips.

Parents and Carers

Parents, as defined in the Education Act 1996, include any person who is not a parent of a child but has parental responsibility for or care of a child, such as foster parent. They are responsible for making sure the child is well enough to attend school. Parents should provide the head with sufficient information about their child's medical condition and treatment or special care needed at school. They should, jointly with the head, reach agreement on the school's role in helping with their child's medical needs. Parents cultural and religious views should always be respected.

It only requires one parent to agree to or request that medicines are administered. As a matter of practicality this is likely to be the parent with whom the school has day-to-day contact. Where parents disagree over medical support, the disagreement must be resolved by the Courts. The school will continue to administer the medicine in line with the consent given and in accordance with the prescriber's instructions, unless and until a Court decides otherwise. (DfES Guidance 1448-2005DCL -March 2005)

The school will follow DfES guidance in determining parental responsibility.

Confidentiality

The Head and staff must always treat medical information confidentially. The Head will agree with the child where appropriate, or otherwise the parent, who else should have access to records and other information about a child and this will be detailed in their Individual Healthcare Plan.

If information is withheld from staff, they will not generally be held responsible if they act incorrectly in giving medical assistance but otherwise in good faith.

The Employer

The employer at Willington Primary School is the LA, and is responsible under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, for making sure that the school has a Health and Safety Policy. This should include procedures for supporting pupils with medical needs, including managing medication.

The Governing Body

The governing body has the general responsibility for all of the school's policies even when it is not the employer. The governing body will generally want to take account of the views of the head, staff and parents in developing a policy on assisting pupils with medical needs. At Willington Primary School the governing body should follow the health and safety policies and procedures produced by the LA as employer.

The Headteacher

The head is responsible for implementing the governing body's policy in practice and for developing detailed procedures. When teachers/staff volunteer to give help to pupils with medical needs, the head should agree to their doing this, and must - ensure that teachers/staff receive proper support and training where necessary. Day to day decisions about administering medication will normally fall to the Headteacher or School Business Manager.

Teachers and other school staff

Some school staff are naturally concerned about their ability to support a pupil with a medical condition, particularly if it is potentially life threatening. Teachers/staff who have pupils with medical needs in their class should understand the nature of the condition, and when and where the pupil may need extra attention. The pupil's parents and health professionals should provide this information. All staff should be aware of the likelihood of an emergency arising and what action to take if one occurs. Back up cover should be arranged for when a member of staff responsible is absent or unavailable. At different times of day other staff may be responsible for children, e.g. lunchtime supervisors. The school will ensure that they are provided with appropriate training and advice.

School staff giving medication

Teachers' conditions of employment do not include giving medication or supervising a pupil taking it, although staff may volunteer to do this and many are happy to do so. Any member of staff who agrees to accept responsibility for administering prescribed medication to a pupil should have proper training and guidance and be competent. He or she should also be made aware of the possible side effects of the medication and what to do if they occur. The type of training will depend on the individual case.

Others with a role

LA, Health Authorities, School Health Service, School Nurse/Doctor, GP, other Health Professionals will advise as necessary.

Short Term Medical Needs

Many pupils will need to take medication (or be given it) at school at some time in their school life. Mostly this will be for a short time only; e.g. to finish a course of antibiotics. To allow pupils to do so will minimise the time they need to be absent from school. However, medicines should only be taken in school when essential; that is where it would be detrimental to a child's health if the medicine were not administered during the school day. Parents should keep children at home if they are acutely unwell.

- Where possible, medicines should not be given in school – parents are encouraged to ask the prescriber to prescribe dose frequencies which enable the medicine to be taken outside school hours. For example, medicines that need to be taken three times a day could be taken in the morning, after school and at bedtime.
- Where possible, parents should come to school to dispense medicines. Only prescribed medicines (prescribed by a doctor/dentist/nurse) will be administered at school.

School will not administer non-prescribed medicines to a child
If a child suffers regularly from frequent or acute pain the parents are encouraged to refer the matter to the child's GP.

- Parents must complete a parent authorisation form before any medication can be given.

Policy on Administering Medicines

All medicines must be in their original container as originally dispensed.

They must be clearly labelled with the child's name and the appropriate dose.

School will not accept medicines that have been taken out of their original container as dispensed nor make changes to doses on parental instruction.

A spoon/measuring syringe must be provided if needed.

No child at school will be given medicines without parental consent

Any member of staff giving medicines will check:

- The child's name
- Prescribed dose
- Expiry date
- Written instructions provided by the prescriber on the label or container.
- Sign the record each time they administer medicine to the child.

Storage and Disposal of Medicines

Medicines will be stored securely in the school office. Certain medicines will be stored in the fridge if advised to do so by parents.

Controlled drugs will be kept in a locked, non-portable container and only named staff will have access to this. A record will be kept for audit and safety purposes.

All medicines will be returned to the parent when no longer required, so that they can arrange for safe disposal. If this is not possible it will be returned to the dispensing chemist.

Record Keeping

Parents must complete and sign form a permission form before medicines can be administered

The school will complete *agreement to administer medicines, Record of medication administered in school and care plans where applicable.*

Long Term Medical Needs

It is important for the school to have sufficient information about the medical condition of any pupil with long term medical needs. If a pupils needs are inadequately supported, this can have a significant impact on a child's academic attainment and/or lead to emotional and behavioural problems. For pupils who attend regular hospital appointments, special arrangements may be necessary.

For pupils with long term medical needs, we will draw up an individual health care plan. (IHCP)

Individual Health Care Plans (IHCP)

The main purpose of an IHCP is to identify the level of support that is needed at school for an individual pupil. This written agreement with parents clarifies for staff, parents and the pupil the help the school can provide and receive. These plans will be reviewed annually or more frequently at the request of parents or the school.

An IHCP will include:

- details of the child's condition
- special requirements e.g dietary needs, pre-activity precautions
- any side effects of medicines
- what constitutes an emergency
- what action to take in an emergency
- what not to do in the event of an emergency
- who to contact in an emergency
- the role the staff can play

A copy will be given to parents, class teacher and a copy will be retained in the medical needs file in the office. The general medical information sheet given to all staff will indicate that the pupil has an IHCP.

Teachers/Team leaders must notify supply and support staff to the medical needs of pupils in their care.

Self Management

We recognise that it is good practice to encourage children, who are able, to take responsibility to manage their own medicines. This will be discussed and agreed with parents, children and health professionals as appropriate. Any decisions regarding self medication will be outlined in the individual health care plan, depending on the child's maturity and with regard to the safety of other children.

Parents will support children in understanding the safety issues involved in carrying their own medication. If a child is too young to carry their medication safely, it will be stored in a location that is easily accessible at all times.

Refusing Medication

If a pupil refuses to take medication, it is the policy of the school not to force them to do so. This will be noted in the records and procedures as outlined in the individual care plan will be followed. Parents will be contacted as a matter of urgency. If necessary, the school will call the emergency services.

Administering medicine to children with long term needs

Parents must tell the school about the medicines their child needs to take and provide written details of any changes to the prescription or the support required. Staff should make sure that any instructions match those of the prescriber.

School will keep written records of any medicines administered.

Medicines must be provided in their original container as dispensed by the pharmacist and must include the prescriber's instructions.

In all cases staff will check that written details include:

- name of child
- name of medicine
- dose
- Method of administration
- Any side effects
- Expiry date

Sporting Activities

We recognise that most children with medical needs can participate in physical activities and extra curricular sport. Any restrictions in a child's ability to participate in PE should be recorded in their IHCP. All staff should be aware of issues of privacy and dignity for children with particular needs.

Emergency Procedures

A file detailing actions to be taken in a range of emergencies is located in the school office. Each team has a copy of these procedures and staff should make themselves aware of where to locate this information.

References:

Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs - a good practice guide DfEE & Dept of Health

Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs in School - Circular 14/96

School Trips

We recognise that it is good practice to encourage children with medical needs to participate in safely managed visits.

When preparing risk assessments staff will consider any reasonable adjustments they might make to enable a child with medical needs to participate fully and safely on visits.

Sometimes additional safety measures may need to be taken for outside visits and it may be that an additional supervisor, a parent or other volunteer might be needed to accompany a particular child. Arrangements for taking any medicines will need to be planned or as part of the risk assessment and trip planning process. A copy of individual health care plans should be taken on trips and visits in the event of information being needed in an emergency.

All staffs taking pupils out of school are required to take the Trips Bag. The bag is located in the school office, it contains a travelling first aid kit. Staffs are required to take emergency contact forms and the mobile phone. Pupils with inhalers must bring them on trips and staff must check they have them with them. Additional measures may be necessary for individual pupils. These will be specified in the child's individual health plan.