

Administration of Medicines Policy

Introduction:

This policy was recently redrafted through a collaborative school process and was ratified by the Board of Management on.....

The policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Health and Safety Statement.

Rationale:

The policy, as outlined, was put in place to;

- Clarify areas of responsibility
- To give clear guidance about situations where it is/is not appropriate to administer medicines
- To provide clear, structured procedures for staff to help deal with any need to administer medication to a child
- To indicate the limitations to any requirements which may be notified to teachers and school staff
- To ensure appropriate communication between parents and school staff regarding the administration of medicines
- To outline procedures for storage and administration of medication
- To ensure that there is thorough documentation and recording of any medication administered

Legislation and regulatory requirements

- Having a clear, written policy and procedure to ensure the safe storage of medication and the safe administration of medication to a child attending the service is a requirement under Regulation 10 of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.
- Parent/guardian consent for the administration of medication is required under Regulation 16 (1) (j) of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.
- Under the Safety Health and Welfare at Work Acts 2005 and 2010 and the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007, employers have a duty to ensure the employees' safety, health and welfare at work as far as is reasonably practicable and to carry out risk assessments and provide safety statements

Children's needs

Children need:

- A policy to ensure that staff responsible for their care have the information and guidance required for the safe storage and administration of medication.
- Their parents to be kept fully informed of any administration of medication to them and any issues relating to it.

Parents/Families' needs

Parents and families need:

- To be confident that procedures are in place in the service that ensure that the service is a safe place for their child and their child's medication needs will be properly met.
- To clearly understand the school's role and responsibilities regarding administration and storage of medication including the need for sharing information.
- To clearly understand their own role and responsibilities in relation to the administration of medication for their child, including the need for sharing information.
- To know that should any incident relating to the administration of medication involving their child occur in the school, they will be contacted at the earliest possible time and appropriate action will be taken by staff to ensure their child's wellbeing, for example calling the emergency services if required.
- To know that, following any investigation, all relevant information will be shared with them.

Staff needs

The staff members need:

- Absolute clarity on the service's approach to dealing with the administration and storage of any medications
- To be competent to administer and safely store medication.
- To know that they will receive appropriate training if required. This may be from a professional (nurse, doctor, pharmacist) if necessary to ensure their confidence and ability to store and administer medications safely,
- To be clear on:
 - what consent must be obtained;

- the information to be recorded;
- how this information is to be recorded (in what format); and
- who must be informed/notified of any matter relating to administration of medication, what information must be notified, when and in what way.

Management needs

Management needs:

- To know that this policy provides the information and clarity that both staff members and parents/guardians need in order to ensure that medication is stored and administered correctly thereby maintaining the safety, health and welfare of the children while in the care of the service.

To ensure that any safety issues and/or notifications of any incidents related to the storage or administration of any medications are brought to their attention, that all required reporting and notifications are carried out appropriately and efficiently.

Relationship to School Ethos:

The school promotes positive home-school contacts, in relation to the welfare of children and 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
- Fulfil the duty of the Board of Management in relation to Health and Safety requirements
- 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

Policy Statement

Parents are required to complete a Health/Medication form when enrolling their child/ren in the school and renew it annually thereafter.

Where there are children with long-term health problems in school, proper and clearly understood arrangements for the administration of medicines must be made with the Board of Management. 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 have the prime responsibility for their child's health and should provide the school with information about their child's medical needs including information on medicines their child needs as well as contact information for their child's GP.

Where children are suffering from life threatening conditions, parents/guardians must clearly outline, in writing, 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. A letter of indemnity must be signed by the parents in respect of any liability that may arise regarding the administration of medication.

The **written** consent of the parent(s)/guardian(s) must be obtained in all cases using the consent form attached. The consent form must be completed in full.

Individual staff members are not obliged to administer medication, and may not do so without the consent of the Board of Management, however every effort will be made by the school to ensure that children who need medication will have it administered.

All medications will be administered by a staff member competent and authorised to do so. All medications will be stored safely away from children's reach and according to manufacturer's instructions including refrigeration if required. All medication received from parents/guardians, administered to children and/or returned to parents/guardians will be fully and accurately recorded (see Appendix B for a Medication Administration Record Form).

In respect of those children who have long-term medical needs such as chronic conditions (e.g. asthma, epilepsy, diabetes, severe allergic reactions), written consent of parents/guardians must be renewed when any change to the administration of the medication is made.

Parents remain responsible for ensuring that the school has adequate supplies of the medication their child needs and renewing any medication for chronic conditions.

The Board will seek indemnity from parents in respect of any liability arising from the administration of medicines

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.

Guidelines for the Administration of Medicines

1. The parents of the pupil with special medical needs must inform the Board of Management in writing of the condition, giving all the necessary details of the condition. The request must also contain written instruction of the procedure to be followed in administering the medication. (Appendix 1, 2 or 3)
2. Parents must write requesting the Board of Management to authorise the administration of the medication in school
3. Written details should include 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.
4. Where specific authorisation has been given by the Board of Management for the administration of medicine, the medicines must be brought to school by the parent/guardian/designated adult
5. If possible, two adults should be present when medication is being administered.

Both staff members must confirm:

- That appropriate consent has been given
- That the child's identification is in accordance with the medication to be administered
- The date and time the medication was last given
- Recipient's name
- Prescribed dose
- Expiry date
- Written instructions provided by the prescriber on the label/container as dispensed by the pharmacist
- Any possible side effects

Both staff members must confirm:

- The correct medication
- Medication is given to the correct child.
- The medication is given at the correct time and date.
- The correct dose is given.
- The correct route of administration.
- Appropriate equipment is used to administer the medication dose – for liquids the correct measuring tool provided with the medication.

The dignity and privacy of the child is ensured as appropriate.

A written record of the date and time of administration must be kept by the person administering it. (See Medication Administration Record.)

After administration of medication

- Observe child for any possible side effects.
 - Where appropriate observe their response to medication administered
 - Medication returned to appropriate storage.
 - Appropriate management or disposal of any equipment used in administration.
6. Parents/Guardians are responsible for ensuring that emergency medication is supplied to the school and replenished when necessary
 7. Emergency medication must have exact details of how it is to be administered
 8. The Board of Management must inform the school's insurers of all appropriate details.
 9. 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
 10. All correspondence related to the above are kept securely in the school.

Further Guidelines on the Administration of Medicines

- Non-prescribed medicines will neither be stored nor administered to pupils in school.
- In general, non-emergency prescribed medications should be administered by parents.
- Teachers/SNAs in the school will only administer prescribed medication when arrangements have been put in place
- Arrangements for the storage of certain emergency medicines, which must be readily accessible at all times, must be made with the Principal
- All staff members including substitute teachers will be made aware of the location of emergency medications.

- A teacher/SNA must not administer any medication without the specific authorisation of the Board of Management
- 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.

Storage of Medications

- All medications brought into the setting are stored according to the manufacturers' instructions paying particular note to temperature, sources of moisture, light and sources of contamination and safely out of the reach of children.
- Medicines are stored safely in a secure container, accessible to authorised persons.
- Emergency medication such as asthma inhalers and adrenaline pens must be readily accessible to authorised staff members in case of an emergency when time is of the essence. A copy of the consent form for administration of medication and clear, precise details of the action to be taken should be immediately accessible.
- Medications requiring refrigeration should be clearly marked and separated from food in an airtight container marked 'Medications'. Access to the fridge should be restricted.
- Medicines must never be transferred from their original container as dispensed by a pharmacist which includes the prescriber's instructions for administration.
- Staff members should only bring their own medication to work when it is absolutely necessary (either prescribed or over the counter). They must ensure that these medications are stored securely so that others do not have access to these medications. This includes for example medications held on the person, held at desks, in their bags, coats etc.

Disposal of Medications

- Medication should be returned to the child's parents whenever:
 - The course of treatment is complete
 - Labels become detached or unreadable
 - Instructions are changed by a health care professional
 - The expiry date has been reached
 - When the child ceases to attend in the service
- To ensure a complete record all medication returned, even empty bottles, should be recorded.
- If a parent has not picked up unused medication by 14 days after the required use or it is not possible to return a medicine to the parent, then it should be taken to a community pharmacy for disposal. No medicine should be disposed of into the sewerage system or in the refuse.

The following guidelines are in place with regard to pupils with a food allergy

1. Staff and students in that pupil's class will avoid having the food in question in the classroom
2. Parents will be asked to refrain from including that particular food in school lunches
3. Children will be advised not to offer or exchange foods, sweets, lunches etc.
4. If going off-site, medication must be carried.

Emergencies:

In the event of an emergency, teachers should implement procedures appropriate to the condition, i.e. epileptic seizure, allergic reaction, asthma attack, injury etc. Qualified medical treatment should be secured in emergencies at the earliest opportunity.

Parents will be contacted simultaneously.

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.

Accidents and Incidents Involving Medications

- Where a child refuses to take the medication prescribed for them, they must not be forced to do so but parents/guardians must be informed as a matter of urgency. If the child not taking the medication leads to an emergency situation, the emergency services and the parents must be called.
- Failure to administer medication at the time prescribed as requested by a health care professional or parent/guardian should be noted on the Medication Administration Form (Appendix B) with a written explanation of why the medication was not given.
- If a child is mistakenly given another child's medication, a doctor must be called immediately and the advice given must be followed. The parents of the child who mistakenly received the medication must be called as soon as possible.
- The poisons information line number, GP, Pharmacist and other emergency numbers must be readily available at all times.

First Aid Boxes:

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

Two large First Aid Boxes are located in the school, in.....

Additional supplies if ice packs, wipes and plasters are stored in the office and staff room.

General Recommendations:

We recommend that any child who is unwell should be kept at home. Requests from parents to keep their children in at lunch break are not encouraged. A child too unwell to play with peers in the yard is generally too unwell to 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
- Good communication between home and school on all health related matters.

Ratification and Review:

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on It will be reviewed in the event of incidents or on the enrolment of child/children with significant medical conditions, but no later than 2025.

Implementation:

Staff, parents and management will co-operate in the implementation of this policy.