



## MEDICATION POLICY

Responsibility	Zoe Budding
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### MEDICINES - ADMINISTRATION

There is no legal requirement for staff in schools, units or centres to administer medicines to pupils, but it is acknowledged that many agree to do so. The Headteacher does not expect staff to administer medicines to students unless they have indicated their willingness to do so.

This policy encompasses the following principles set out in 'Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions'

- Medicines should only be administered at school when it would be detrimental to a child's health or school attendance not to do so
- Where clinically possible, medicines should be prescribed in dose frequencies which enable them to be taken outside school hours
- No child under 16 should be given prescription or non-prescription medicines without their parent's written consent – except in exceptional circumstances where the medicine has been prescribed to the child without the knowledge of the parents. In such cases, every effort will be made to encourage the child or young person to involve their parents while respecting their right to confidentiality.
- A child under 16 should never be given medicine containing aspirin unless prescribed by a doctor. Medication, e.g. for pain relief, should never be administered by school staff without first checking maximum dosages and when the previous dose was taken. Parents will be informed
- Wherever possible children who are competent to do so should be encouraged to take responsibility for management of their own medicines and procedures. Some children may require an appropriate level of supervision.

### Conditions for Storage and Administration of Medicines

The following procedures are to be complied with.

- a) Only medicines prescribed by a GP with a pharmacy label OR clearly marked with the child's full name and date of birth and in original packaging will be accepted by school.
- b) Prescribed medicines should only be administered following a written request from parents or guardians which clearly states the name and tutor group of the student, together with the dose and the time(s) of day at which it should be taken and any special conditions for the storage of the medicine (eg. to be kept in a refrigerator). Prescribed medicines will not be administered until a written request (e-mail or letter) from parents has been received. Non prescribed medicines should not be administered.

- c) Medicines should be clearly marked with the name and tutor group of the student, together with the dose and the time(s) of day at which it should be taken.
- d) Medicines should be kept in a locked drawer, cupboard or fridge as appropriate in a secure central position in the school (eg. school office or medical inspection room) rather than by class teachers. (See note below on Ritalin.)

An exception to this rule should be made, however, for medicines provided for emergency treatment such as reliever inhalers for asthmatic pupils, epipens for anaphylaxis or glucose tablets for diabetics, which should be kept close to the pupil(s) concerned for immediate use.

Insulin dependent diabetics are required to provide an emergency pack of dextrose/slow release carbs/dextrose gel to be stored in the school office.

- e) Medicines should only be accepted in relatively small quantities (2 or at most 3 days' supply) and note should be taken of any requirements for special storage conditions.

## **Analgesics**

**Pain killers (eg. aspirin or paracetamol, including "junior" forms such as Calpol) must never be administered to pupils, even at the request of parents.** They can mask symptoms in the event of injury and it is possible to inadvertently administer too large a dose if a pupil had already taken some without the knowledge of the school (eg. before leaving home). The only exceptions to this are students for whom pain killers have been prescribed, especially those with long-term medical conditions.

Where possible students should take any non-prescribed painkillers (such as paracetamol) before and/or after school and not during school hours. Where it is absolutely necessary to take painkillers in school time, the SMALLEST POSSIBLE dose should be brought into school.

If a parent requires medical staff to supervise a student taking painkillers, they should be brought to the medical room with the written instructions of a parent or guardian. A parent will be contacted by telephone before the dose will be released to the student.

## **Controlled drugs, including Ritalin**

Drugs based on methylphenidate hydrochloride (which include Ritalin, Concerta XL, Equasym XL) atomoxetine (Strattera), dexamfetamine (Dexedrine) and related amphetamine drugs used for the management of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) are Class B Controlled Drugs under the Misuse of Drugs Act, 1971 and the Misuse of Drugs Regulations, 1985. It is therefore a legal requirement that:

- The drugs are kept in a locked container inside a locked cupboard (or similar)
- A register of receipt and issue must be kept, with double entry records.

In practice this means that:

- The tablets must be kept in a locked container (such as a lockable cash box) inside a locked cupboard. Keeping them in a filing cabinet in a locked office is not adequate.
- The register must be a bound book – not loose-leaf. Entries must be made in ink and must not be altered or destroyed.

- Each time new stock is received, it must be entered and signed for by two people.
- Each time a tablet is given, it must be recorded and signed for by two people.
- The dose given, the date and time, the name of the pupil receiving the dose and the number of tablets remaining must be recorded.

Suitable headings for the register could be:

Date	Time	Name of drug	Quantity (No. of tablets)	Received from	Administered to	Received / administered by	Witnessed by	Balance remaining
01.11.09	08.55	Ritalin	10	Mrs S Green	-	Sue Brown	Jane White	10
01.11.09	09.05	Ritalin	1	-	John Green	Sue Brown	Jane White	9
01.11.09	13.30	Ritalin	1	-	John Green	Jane White	Sue Brown	8

Officers from the Home Office have the right to inspect the register at any time.

It is important that the staff issuing the tablets to students actually see them take the tablets, partly because they have a high street value if resold illegally but also because they are of great benefit to children who do have ADHD.