

Administration of Medication

This policy was updated and ratified by the Board of Management on 26th November 2012.

No teacher can be required to administer medicine or drugs to a pupil. While the Board of Management has a duty to safeguard the health and safety of pupils when they are engaged in authorised school activities, this does not imply a duty upon teachers to personally undertake the administration of medication.

Any teacher/SNA who is willing to administer medicines will only do so under strictly controlled guidelines, fully confident that the administration will be safe. In general this will be limited to emergency situations only.

A teacher/SNA who does take responsibility for administering medicines takes on a heavy legal duty of care to discharge the responsibility correctly and so every reasonable precaution must be taken.

Clear instructions about the administration of the medicine will be obtained and strictly followed.

A parent requesting the administration of medicine must write to the Board of Management requesting the Board to authorise a member of the teaching staff/SNA to administer the medication. The request must contain written instructions of the procedure to be followed in administering the medication and details of storage of medicine.

The Board of Management, having considered the matter, may authorise a teacher/SNA to administer medication to a pupil. If the teacher/SNA is so authorised she/he will be properly trained by the Board of Management.

No teacher/SNA will administer medication without the specific authorisation of the Board.

In administering medication to pupils, teacher/SNAs will exercise the standard of care of a reasonable and prudent parent.

The Board of Management will inform the school's insurers accordingly and will seek an indemnity from the parent(s) in respect of any liability that may arise regarding the administration of the medication.

Arrangements will be made by the Board of Management for the safe storage of medication and procedures for the administration of medication in the event of the authorised teacher/SNA's absence.

It is the parent's responsibility to check each morning whether or not the authorised teacher/SNA is in school unless an alternative arrangement is made locally. *It is also the parent's responsibility to ensure that any supplies necessary for the administration of the medication are available as required and in a location that is appropriate to the needs of the child.*

In emergencies teacher/SNAs will do no more than is obviously necessary and appropriate to relieve extreme distress or prevent further and otherwise irreparable harm. Qualified medical treatment will be secured in emergencies at the earliest opportunity.

Where possible the school will request that medical practitioners will arrange times for medication so that these don't coincide with school time.

In general terms the Board of Management will request parents to ensure that teacher/SNAs are made aware in writing of any medical condition suffered by any children in their class. An opportunity to do this is provided on the school registration form but parents must notify teacher/SNA/school of relevant information that subsequently comes to light. *(Parents should take particular care to ensure that new class teacher/SNAs and other teacher/SNAs who may work with the child, e.g. resource teacher/SNAs are made aware of the necessary information relating to the child's medical needs – this is particularly important at the beginning of each school year).*

Parents will be asked to identify symptoms in order that treatment can be given by an appropriate person if necessary.

The Board of Management requests parents to ensure that staff members are made aware in writing of any medical condition suffered by their child. This information should be provided at enrolment or at the development of any medical conditions at a later date.

Medication in this policy refers to medicines, tablets and sprays administered by mouth *and other medications that are not administered by mouth.*

Where teacher/SNAs have been given medication to administer in cases of emergency e.g. adrenaline in case of anaphylaxis, this medication should be the smallest dose possible to ensure recovery until a medical expert can take over. At no time should an emergency dose be such that it could harm the child if inappropriately administered. Confirmation of this should be obtained in writing from the medical practitioner responsible for the child before a school would agree to hold such life-saving medication in its care. Where possible, injection needles should not be held on the premises and epipen type injections should be used.

Where children are suffering from life-threatening conditions such as the above, parents should outline clearly in writing, what can and can't be done in a particular emergency situation, with particular reference to what may be a risk to the child.