



Health & Safety policy

Section: Administration of medicines and medical procedures in school

Principles

Some pupils at The Village School will have medical conditions that require support so that they can attend school regularly and take part in school activities. School is committed to meeting the needs of these pupils and will work with parents, carers and medical professionals to ensure all pupils are able to access the curriculum, enjoy, achieve and be safe and healthy in school.

Schools have a duty, acting in loco parentis; to take reasonable care of children and this includes the possibility of administering medicine. Schools are required to have policies in place on managing pupils' medications and on supporting pupils with medical needs. Some children may be unable to attend school because of their medical condition and where this happens school liaises with the parents and medical professionals and advises on appropriate activities for the child to ensure the continuation of their education.

In this document the word "medicine" is used to include "medicines and prescribed drugs", the term "medication" is used to refer to a pupil's particular medicine regime and the term "administration" means the acts involved in giving or applying the dose of medicine.

Generally speaking, pupils in schools who require medication will fall into three broad groups

- Those who are completing a course of prescribed treatment
- Those who have long-term medical conditions
- Those with conditions that can, often without warning, require swift emergency medication

All these pupils are regarded as having medical needs.

This policy describes The Village School's approach to

- assisting pupils with long-term or complex medical needs,
- pupils carrying and administering their own medication themselves
- the information required from parents or guardians with respect to any medication that is to be given to the child in school

- its commitment to school staff training in Brent with medical needs
- record keeping
- storage and access to medication
- emergency procedures

The Legal Position

- It is recognised that school staff have legitimate concerns over their legal position in administering medicines. Staff can administer medicines and they are under a duty to obey reasonable instructions, taking into account the circumstances, the nature of the drugs concerned and their expertise and training. See DFE's guidance.
- Whilst parents are responsible for their child's medication, it is normally the Head Teacher who decides if a school can assist a pupil who needs medication during the school day.
- Legally, it is not possible to disclaim liability for any serious adverse consequences of administering medicines in schools. In practice, any claim would lie against the employer. The Village school will also support any member of staff in any subsequent civil or criminal proceedings if the member of staff had followed the procedures set out in the school's guidelines.
- In general, the consequences of taking no action are likely to be more serious than those of trying to assist in an emergency. To ensure that risks to health are minimised it is essential for schools to establish safe systems that limit any opportunities for negligence.
- The DfES Circular 14/96 makes it clear that children with medical needs have the same rights of admission as other children and should not be excluded from school because of these needs.

Roles and Responsibilities

Brent Council guidance states that, "In most cases the responsibility for managing the administration of medicines should be assigned to one nominated person, preferably a person who is able to act safely and promptly in an emergency situation and someone who is well organised and has the ability to maintain simple records. In some cases this may not be possible, especially if teachers have pupils in their class who suffer from severe allergies that can be potentially life threatening. Back up staff should be arranged for when the member of staff responsible is absent or unavailable. In the first instance and thereafter at reasonable intervals, the nominated person should carry out an assessment of the risks that are entailed".

- **Role of the NHS School Nurses at The Village School**
 - Due the nature of our pupils' needs and disabilities the level of required medication or medical intervention is much greater than in mainstream schools. At The Village School there are *NHS School Nurses* on site whilst the pupils are in school. The School Nurses are Registered Nurses and have access to the pupils' NHS records and liaise with other medical professionals who contribute to the pupils' health care. The School Nurses also play a key role in liaising with pupils' parents and carers to ensure the school has relevant and up to date information regarding a pupil's health care.

- The Nursing team will obtain 'Consent to treatment' and 'Consent to share information from parents/carers for children and young people.
 - The School Nursing team are employed and managed by the NHS. They all have an Enhanced Disclosure Barring check in place.
 - Both the School Nurse and the Health Care Assistants are trained to administer medication and to deal with health care emergencies in line with NHS protocols. The administration of medicines to pupils on site is part of their respective job descriptions.
 - The nursing team obtain consent annually (or as changes occur) from parents and carers for all pupils who require medication whilst in school.
- **Role of School Staff**
 - Most of the daily administration of medicines is carried out by the NHS Special School Nursing team. However, there may be occasions when school staffs are better placed to administer medication, especially in an emergency, e.g. asthma attack and anaphylactic shock. This is especially so during educational visits when pupils are off site (*please see below re: administration of medicines on educational visits*). A medical bag containing the pupil's medicines should accompany the child at all times unless in the child's classroom where it will be held in a locked cupboard/room.
- **Carers Assigned to Individual Pupils**
 - From time to time a pupil may be admitted who requires constant supervision throughout the school day in order to meet his/her health care needs. The Head Teacher works with the relevant medical professionals, including the School Nurses, to create a risk assessment and NHS Health Care Plan upon admission to ensure the child's needs can be fully met. Such pupils may need to be assigned a Health Care Assistant, by the NHS, who is responsible for meeting the pupil's health care needs throughout the day. This person is not part of the Special School Nursing Team.
- **Parents and Carers**
 - Parents have a responsibility to ensure that they provide relevant and up to date information to help school to care for their child and to provide any medication and other apparatus necessary to meet the pupil's health care needs. Parents must sign and/or agree to a pupils NHS Health Care Plan.
- **The Pupil**
 - There is a potential for some pupils to administer their own medication. These pupils may be given the responsibility of administering their own medication. However, should this need arise, the School Nurse would discuss this with the parents, class staff and of course with the pupil in ways s/he can understand. The agreed outcomes would be

incorporated into the pupil's NHS Health Care Plan and the pupil would be provided with the necessary training by the School Nurse and parents.

Practice

• Staff Training

- School has an extensive programme of First Aid training to ensure that there is full school coverage. *Please see The Village School First Aid at Work policy.*
- All teaching support staff are regularly trained in basic awareness of epilepsy, asthma, diabetes and anaphylactic shock by the School Nursing team.
- Staff who are trained in enteral feeding can administer feeds to pupils via gastrostomies, naso-gastric tubes and jejunostomy tubes. The School Nursing team is responsible for ensuring that school staffs meet the required level of competency at time of assessment.
- A dated record is kept of staff training and stored in their personnel file in school. The School Nursing team also has a list of staff who are trained and competent in administering feeds.

• Pupil NHS Health Care Plans

- Pupils with medical needs will have an individual NHS Health Care Plan as appropriate which identifies the level of support that is needed, both to support the pupil and to support the school to ensure the pupil's wellbeing. The NHS Health Care Plan can also help to identify particular safety measures in relation to health care that need to be taken to support the pupil. Pupils who suffer from anaphylaxis must have an NHS Health Care Plan that gives more detailed information relating to the pupil and the condition, since each pupil's symptoms and allergens will vary (*see below*).
- Pupils' NHS Health Care Plans are very important documents. They are compiled by the School Nurses in consultation with the parents, staff and other professionals as necessary. These plans detail the procedures and medications necessary to ensure the pupil's wellbeing and to meet his/her medical needs in school and during off site activities. Some confidential medical diagnoses are not detailed, but any necessary procedures or medicines are. These plans are reviewed annually or sooner as required by the School Nursing team. Parents have a responsibility to keep school informed of any changes to their child's condition, medication and medical needs which may require changes to the NHS Health Care Plan, updates are signed or agreed by parents/carers
- The NHS Health Care Plan may also highlight training issues. Staff must not give medication without appropriate training from a relevant professional. This training may not need to be formal training but could be instructions from the Head Teacher or a competent person or written instructions from a Doctor. At The Village School the training is most likely to be provided by our School Nursing team.

- **Administration of Prescribed and Non-Prescribed Medicines**

- Generally, schools cannot be expected to administer medication which could be given before and after school. In these circumstances, the merits of each case are considered by the School Nursing team.
- The only medicines that should be administered are those which are prescribed by NHS doctors (sometimes private GPs) and where clearly written instructions are provided by the parent or carer and are in accordance with the doctor's instructions. The School Nurse will contact parents when medicine is sent into school via the pupil to ensure that the correct written information is supplied before any medication is given. Should school staff find medication in the pupil's school bag, it is brought *immediately* to the School Nurse. Unless transit meds between home and respite then school are responsible for storage.
- The medicine must be provided by the parents in bottles/packets which are clearly labelled with the pupil's name and the required dosage and the administration is recorded in line with the recording of prescribed medicines.
- In line with NHS protocols the School Nurse, HCA and school staff will not give non prescribed medicine to pupils. However, the School Nurses can administer infant/child temperature lowering (eg Calpol) when the she considers it vital to the pupil's well-being following written/verbal consent from parents/carers. Anti-histamine and other 'over the counter' medicines may be administered but only if prescribed and parents have previously provided specific written permission. The School Nurse will also phone the parents to determine the time of any earlier dosage given. If the parents are not contactable, the School nurse will act using her professional judgement.
- If prescribed/non prescribed medicines are to be administered by staff, in agreement with the school nurse and in accordance with the policy guidelines outlined in the preceding paragraph, the school will obtain permission from the parents and record the administration of medicines using the documents "Templates Supporting pupils with medical conditions, May 2014".

This can be found at the web site address <http://tvs.eschools.co.uk/website/policies/144472>

- All medicine dosages will be drawn up by the school nurse or an appropriately trained health professional.
- In summary, when administering medicines school follows the NHS protocols agreed by LNWH Special Schools Medicines Policy.
- Procedures for the Administration of Medication are outlined in the clinical policies attached:
 - Special Schools Medicines Policy 2013
 - Decanted medicines cannot be given at any time.
 - Homeopathic medicines and herbal medicines cannot be given unless prescribed by an NHS doctor.

Short-term ailments

Pupils suffering from short term ailments who are clearly too unwell to access the curriculum should not be in school and the Head Teacher is within her rights to ask parents or carers to keep them at home or collect them from school. It is a schools' responsibility to send children home not the nurses. Some parents may seek to send their children to school with non-prescribed medicines (e.g. cough mixtures) and schools cannot be expected to accept responsibility for administering medicines of this nature.

Chronic illness or disability

Some of our pupils have chronic illness or conditions which require the administration of regular prescribed medicines during the school day. This is detailed the pupil's NHS Health Care Plan. Health care plans will be devised on an individual basis

Asthma

Pupils with asthma have airways that narrow as a reaction to various triggers. The triggers vary between individuals but common ones include viral infections, cold air, grass pollen, animal fur and house mites. Exercise and stress can also precipitate asthma attacks in susceptible people. The narrowing or obstruction of the airways causes difficulties in breathing and can be alleviated with treatment. Pupils with asthma have the triggers, symptoms and treatment, including accessibility to inhalers, detailed in their NHS Health Care Plans. Most of our pupils are unable to recognise and communicate when they need their inhaler and rely on staff observing and responding to the onset of symptoms.

Due to the recent change in legislation (Human Medicines (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2014) allowing schools to purchase asthma inhalers for emergency use only, The Village School will have at least one inhaler at each of the 3 sites where Village schools pupils are placed. The use of these will be subject to advice given in the legislation.

Inhalers for Asthma.

Inhalers are used to prevent wheezing as well as treatment for wheezy episodes. Staffs working with pupils with asthma have immediate access to their inhalers. The inhaler should be clearly marked with the pupil's name. Most of our pupils are unable to take responsibility for their inhaler, therefore staffs ensure that it is stored in a safe but readily accessible place and staffs take responsibility for its use.

The use of inhalers by all pupils is recorded by the School Nursing team.

Advising the Parents

An agreement will be made between the School Nursing team and the pupil's parents as to when and how the parents are informed that their child has experienced an asthma attack. However, if it is a first incident or it is significantly worse than usual, the School Nursing Team will advise the parents as soon as possible after the incident.

Epilepsy

Epilepsy is a common condition and the Village School has considerable experience in meeting the health care needs of pupils with epilepsy. Epileptic seizures may be recurrent or infrequent and the nature, frequency and severity of the seizure will vary greatly between individuals. Most, but not all, of our pupils with epilepsy take anti-convulsant medicines and the symptoms of most are well controlled by individually tailored medication regimes. Seizures may be unpredictable or have known triggers, e.g. ill health, tiredness, emotional state, hormonal changes, flashing or flickering lights, video games and computer graphics (photosensitive epilepsy). Certain geometric shapes or patterns can also trigger seizures in some individuals.

Screens and/or different methods of lighting can be used to enable photosensitive pupils to work safely on computers and watch TV.

What to do when a pupil has a seizure

All our educational staff are trained to respond appropriately and safely to a pupil having a seizure and all pupils diagnosed with epilepsy have an NHS Emergency Care Plan. The specific nature, triggers and management of a pupil's epilepsy is detailed in his/her NHS Emergency Care Plan, but in general nothing must be done to alter the course of a seizure once it has begun. The area immediately surrounding the pupil must be made safe to reduce any possibility of harm to the pupil or others during the seizure. The pupil should *not* be restrained and there should be no attempt to put anything into the pupil's mouth. Pupils in postural seating and other postural equipment must not be moved unless they are unsafe. The time of onset of the seizure must be noted and the School Nurse advised. Pupils may require medication at the onset or during the seizure. Many pupils are prescribed orally administered Buccal Midazolam, thereby avoiding the need to administer medication rectally. The School Nursing team would administer the prescribed medication in school, however appropriately trained staff can do so too as required.

Some pupils may require immediate medication or action and the School Nursing team should be called at once to respond to the situation. This may, for example, include administering medication.

School staff can and must call 999 if they deem it necessary before calling a nurse.

Pupils with epilepsy are not excluded from any school activity. Extra care and supervision may be needed to ensure their safety in some activities such as swimming or in playground activities. Concerns about any potential risks should be discussed with the Head Teacher, School Nursing team and the pupil's parents/carers.

Calling an ambulance

Nursing staff attending to the pupil may call 999 as directed by the Emergency care plan or as deemed, by the nurse, clinically necessary. ***School staff can and must call 999 if they deem it necessary before calling a nurse.***

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Revision history

Date	Details	Author
Sept 2016	Reviewed – no changes	

