



**POLICY, PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE ON
MEDICINES IN
THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

Russell Hill Road, Purley, Surrey, CR8 2XP

Mission Statement

To Care for, respect and value all people and our environment.

To Learn that justice and love are the foundations of our Faith.

To make these the guiding principles of our community in its commitment to academic excellence and personal integrity.

To Achieve beyond our highest expectations, creating challenging opportunities, which take us all confidently through the 21st Century.

Introduction

The staff at Thomas More Catholic School do not have a statutory duty to give medicines or medical treatment.

- However, medicines will be administered to enable the inclusion of students with medical needs and to enable regular attendance of all students. Furthermore, in an emergency, all teachers and other staff in charge of children have a common law duty of care to act for the health and safety of a child in their care – this might mean giving medicines or medical care.
- There is no legal or contractual duty on school staff to administer medicine or to supervise a student taking it. This is a purely voluntary role and is recognised as such by the DfES. While teachers have a general legal duty of care to their students, this does not extend to a requirement to administer medicines routinely.
- Staff should be particularly wary about agreeing to administer medicines where: the timing of its administration is crucial to the health of the child; or some technical or medical knowledge is required; or intimate contact with the student is necessary (this would include administration of rectal valium, assistance with catheters or use of equipment for children with tracheotomies).
- Staff who do volunteer to administer medicines should not agree to do so without first receiving appropriate information and training. The local NHS Trust or Health Authority is in a position to advise schools on the source of the support required. In many areas this support will be provided through the School Health Service. In accordance with the *National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services*, all schools and educational settings have access to training provided by health professionals on all medical conditions. Further details on this can be found in Section 10, *Standard 10 of Medicines Management for Children and Young People* (DH, 2004).
- The Governors will fully support any members of staff who do not wish to administer medicines or who feel that they are being unfairly pressurised to do so.
- The Governors recognise that it is desirable for children with long term recurring health problems, such as asthma, epilepsy and diabetes and eczema, to be accommodated within school in order that they can continue their education. For this to be done, however, proper and clearly understood arrangements for administration of medicines must be made.
- Parents should be encouraged to provide maximum support and assistance in helping the school accommodate the student. This would include measures such as self administration (where necessary and only after approval from a GP) or parental supervision as outlined below.
- Any member of staff who is prepared to administer medicines should only do so under strictly controlled guidelines, fully confident that the administration will be safe.
- Every reasonable precaution must be taken.
- Clear instructions about medicines requiring regular administration must be obtained and strictly followed.

- There should be two members of staff involved – one to administer, one to witness.
- Any decision to agree to administer medicines has to be a matter of individual choice and judgement. Apart from the obvious distress to a member of staff who makes an error, all members of staff who agree to administer medicines take on a legal responsibility to do so correctly. There is consequently always the risk that the staff member might be named in a legal claim for negligence.
- Generally, however, any member of staff acting in accordance with agreed procedures would be regarded as acting in the interests of the employer and, since the employer would also be the subject of the action, the member of staff would therefore be effectively indemnified against personal liability by the rules of ‘vicarious liability’.
- In cases of accident and emergency, teachers must, of course, always be prepared to help as they and other school staff in charge of students have their general legal duty of care to act as any reasonably prudent parent would. In such emergencies, however, teachers should do no more than is obviously necessary and appropriate to relieve extreme distress or prevent further and otherwise irreparable harm. Qualified medical treatment should be secured in emergencies at the earliest opportunity.
- Parents are responsible for their child’s medication and children who are genuinely unwell should not attend school.
- Head teachers are, however, responsible for deciding whether the school can assist a student who needs medication during the school day.
- Travel sickness tablets should be handed to a teacher at the beginning of the trip, with an explanatory note from a parent or carer. Children should be allowed to self administer travel sickness tablets as necessary.
- Sun screen should be self applied by children. This activity can be supervised by an adult.
- Many students with long-term medical conditions will not require medication during school hours. Those that do may be able to administer it themselves. If this is not the case then wherever possible, parents should be asked to make arrangements to come into school or for students to return home at lunchtime for medication.

Where this is not feasible, the following procedure is recommended:

- a) The smallest possible dose should be brought to the school, preferably by the parent, labelled with the name of the student in addition to clear written instructions for administration - including any possible side effects.
- b) Note – Department of Health guidelines state that it is not safe practice for staff managing medicines to follow relabelled/re-written instructions or to receive and use repackaged medicines other than as originally dispensed.
- c) Medicines should be stored safely until needed in line with the DfES advice set out below and any local authority guidelines.

- d) The medicine should be self-administered if possible, under the supervision of an adult; this may be the head teacher or someone acting with the head teachers' authority. It is advisable to keep a written record of the date and time of the administration – (early years settings must do so by law).
- e) Staff managing medicines should ensure that the administration of the medicine is carried out and recorded in line with school/local authority policies.
- f) If in doubt about any procedure staff should not administer the medicines but check with the parents or a health professional before taking further action. DfES/DH guidance gives the following advice in relation to storage of medication.

The employer must ensure that health risks arising from medicines are properly controlled, in line with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH).

- The head teacher is responsible for ensuring the safe storage of medicines.
- Only prescribed medicines should be brought into school. Non prescription remedies such as Calpol, Paracetamol, cough or throat lozenges or any herbal remedies, should not be in school without written permission.
- Where two or more medicines are required by a particular child, each should be kept in a separate container.
- Schools should not store large volumes of medication. As far as is practicable, the smallest possible dose of medicine should be brought into school. Doses of liquid medicines should not, however, be transferred from the original bottle as this would result in the loss of some of the medicine on the sides of the bottle.
- Medication should be stored strictly in accordance with product instructions, taking particular account of the correct storage temperature.
- Students should know where their own medication is stored and how to obtain it.
- Medicines should be stored in their original containers, clearly labelled with the name of the student, the name and dose of the drug, the frequency of administration, any likely side effects, and the expiry date. Parents are responsible for ensuring that this information is provided.
- Medicines should - subject to the exceptions below - be stored in a secure place such as a locked cupboard or a labelled airtight box in a refrigerator with restricted access.
- Some medicines, such as asthma inhalers and Epipens, must be readily available to students and must not be locked away.
- Children who are capable of carrying their own inhalers should be allowed to do so, following consultation between parents and the Head teacher.
- Parents should complete an inhaler information form, copies of which will be held in the student's file and in the school office.

- Schools should not continue to store surplus or out-of-date medicines. Parents should be asked to collect the containers for delivery back to the chemist, and should routinely collect medicines held by the school at the end of each term.
- If parents do not collect all medicines, they should be taken to a local pharmacy for safe disposal.
- Sharps boxes (obtained by parents on prescription) should always be used for the disposal of needles.
- Local pharmacists can give advice about storing medicines.

Members of staff may need to bring their own medication into school. This should be safely locked away. It does not need to be stored with students' medicines, but must not be kept in classrooms or in any area to which children have access. If possible all medicine should be locked away.

Staff should never volunteer to give non-prescribed medicines to children unless there is specific prior written permission from parents; and it is carried out in accordance with this policy.

N.B. Children under 16 should never be given aspirin or medicines containing ibuprofen unless prescribed by a doctor.

Prescription Medicines

Medicine should only be brought to school when it is essential to administer it during the school day. In the vast majority of cases, doses of medicine can be arranged around the school day thus avoiding the need for medicine in school.

- Antibiotics for example are usually taken three times a day, so can be given with breakfast, on getting home from school and then at bedtime.
- If a GP prescribes a medicine has to be taken during the school day parents will need to contact the school to give information about the medication and ensure that instructions are given to the child regarding the administration of these.
- When school staff administer medicines, the parent must supply the medicine in the original pharmacist's container to the school office and must complete a 'Request for school to administer medicine' form (Form 3 A or B). On no account should a child come to school with prescribed medicine without informing a member of staff. (Mrs Downer in the Main Office / Mrs Kellingley in the FLC)

Non-prescription Medicines

- Non-prescription medicines are not administered at school and students should not bring them to school for self-administration.
- Non-prescription travel sickness medication will be administered by staff providing they are supplied in the original packaging and accompanied by a 'Request for school to administer medicine' form. It must be suitable for the student's age. It must be supplied

by the parent (not the school) and must be in its original packaging, with manufacturer's instructions included. Staff will check that the medicine has been administered without adverse effect to the child in the past and parents must certify this is the case – a note to this effect should be recorded on the consent form. The medication will be stored and administration recorded as for prescription medicines.

Students with Long-term or Complex Medical Needs

- Parents or carers should provide the Head teacher with sufficient information about their child's medical condition and treatment or special care needed at school. Arrangements can then be made, between the parents, head teacher, school nurse and other relevant health professionals to ensure that the student's medical needs are managed well during their time in school. For students with significant needs, arrangements will be documented in a Health Care Plan. Guidance on the four most significant chronic conditions (asthma, epilepsy, diabetes and anaphylaxis) is provided in *Managing Medicines in Schools and Early Years Settings* and arrangements will be agreed in accordance with this guidance.

The Head teacher is the key person who will administer or supervise students taking prescribed medicines during the school day and accepts responsibility, in principle for members of staff who volunteer to give, or supervise students taking medicines during the school day.

Parents are responsible for providing the Headteacher with comprehensive information regarding the student's condition and medication. Prescribed medication will not be accepted in school without complete written instructions from the parent.

Staff will only administer prescribed medication that is required to be taken four times daily and does not need to be refrigerated. Parents/carers will be encouraged to request from the GP for medication to be prescribed on a three times a day dosage. Staff will not give a non-prescribed medicine to a child unless there is specific prior written permission from the parents.

Only reasonable quantities of medication should be supplied to the school.

Each item of medication must be handed in by the parent/carer, **in a secure and labelled container as originally dispensed.**

Each item of medication must be clearly labelled with the following information:

- . Student's Name.
- . Name of medication.
- . Dosage.
- . Frequency of administration.
- . Date of dispensing.
- . Storage requirements (The school is unable to administer any medication that requires refrigeration)
- . Expiry date.

The school will not accept items of medication in unlabelled containers.

Medication will be kept in a secure place, out of the reach of students.

The school will keep records, which they will have available for parents.

If children refuse to take medicines, staff will not force them to do so, and will inform the parents/Carers of the refusal, as a matter of urgency, on the same day. If a refusal to take medicines results in an emergency, the school's emergency procedures will be followed.

It is the responsibility of parents to notify the school in writing if the student's need for medication has ceased.

It is the parents' responsibility to renew the medication when supplies are running low and to ensure that the medication supplied is within its expiry date.

The school will **not** make changes to dosages on the basis of **verbal** parental instructions.

School staff will not dispose of medicines. Medicines, which are in use and in date, should be collected by the parent/carer at the end of each term.

Date expired medicines or those no longer required for treatment will be returned immediately to the parent/carer for transfer to a community pharmacist for safe disposal.

For each student with long-term or complex medication needs, the Head teacher, will ensure that a Medication Plan and Protocol is drawn up, in conjunction with the appropriate health professionals.

Where it is appropriate to do so, students will be encouraged to administer their own medication, if necessary, under staff supervision. Parents will be asked to confirm in writing if they wish their child to carry their medication with them in school.

Staff who volunteer to assist in the administration of medication will receive appropriate training/guidance through arrangements made with the School Health Service.

The school will make every effort to continue the administration of medication to a student whilst on trips away from the school premises, even if additional arrangements might be required. However, there may be occasions when it may not be possible to include a student on a school trip if appropriate supervision cannot be guaranteed.

No prescribed medicine will be administered to a child unless the following documentation is completed by the parent / guardian / carer prior to the first dosage being administered.

A contact number must be supplied.

Parents should attend the school to speak to a trained First Aider / Head teacher in order for this to be processed.

No medicine will be accepted unless it meets the above criteria.



**MEDICINES IN
THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

Information to be supplied by Parents / Guardians

My child Date of birth

Needs to take the following medication (list each item)

1.
2.
3.
4.

For the following complaint / condition

.....

At the following times (please be specific about times and dosage)

.....

Until (insert date)

I accept responsibility for ensuring that my child knows when to attend the medical room to take his / her medication.

Signed..... (Relationship to child).....

Emergency contact number /s.....

I understand that Thomas More Catholic School will do what is reasonable in terms of administering my child's medication but that it is **not liable** for any missed medications.