



CHILDREN WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS

GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS



LEGISLATION

- Children and Families Act 2014
- Education Act 2002
- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Equality Act 2010
- Medicines Act 1968
- Human Medicines Regulations 2012
- Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002
- Education (School Premises)(England) Regulations 2012

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

- Develop a policy for supporting pupils with medical conditions
- Determine the support that a child with a medical condition requires
- Consider the legal obligations for inclusion, disability, health & safety
- Ensure that all interested parties are consulted when making a decision
- Develop an individual healthcare plan that will support the pupil
- Ensure staff receive adequate information, instruction and training to implement the healthcare plan
- Ensure that medicines are accepted, stored and administered according to the school policy and healthcare plan/s
- Ensure that appropriate emergency procedures are in place as part of the healthcare plan

INTRODUCTION

Most children will at some time have short-term medical needs whilst others may have longer term medical needs and require medicines on a more permanent basis. Others may require medicines in particular circumstances, such as children with severe allergies who may need an adrenaline injection.

Children with medical needs have the same rights of admission to a school or setting as other children. Where clinically appropriate, medicines for children should be prescribed in dose frequencies which enable it to be taken outside school hours.

There may be occasions where the parent cannot administer the dosage, where it must be taken in school time or the child has a chronic need of medication. In such circumstances, establishments should ensure appropriate procedures are adopted.

LEGAL POSITION

Section 100 of the Children and Families Act 2014 places a duty on governing bodies of maintained schools, proprietors of academies and management committees of PRUs to make arrangements for supporting pupils at their school with medical conditions.

Some children with medical conditions may also be disabled. Where this is the case governing bodies must comply with their duties under the Equality Act 2010.

The governing body must ensure that arrangements are in place to support pupils with medical conditions. In doing so they should ensure that such children can access and enjoy the same opportunities at school as any other child

Governing bodies should ensure that the appropriate level of insurance is in place and appropriately reflects the level of risk.

DEVELOPING A SCHOOL POLICY

A clear policy understood and accepted by staff, parents and children provides a sound basis for ensuring that children with medical needs receive the most appropriate care and support.

Governing bodies should ensure that the arrangements they set up include details on how the school's policy will be implemented effectively, including a named person who has overall responsibility for policy implementation.

The policy should also set out the procedures to be followed whenever a school is notified that a pupil has a medical condition.

Further details on developing a policy are contained in Government guidance detailed below.

DETERMINING NEEDS OF A CHILD

Parents have the prime responsibility for their child's health and should provide schools and settings with information about their child's medical condition.

Co-ordinating and sharing information on an individual pupil with medical needs can be difficult. The head teacher should decide which member of staff has specific responsibility for this role. This person can be a first contact for parents and staff, and liaise with external agencies.

For a child with medical needs, the head will need to agree with the parents exactly what support can be provided.

Close co-operation between schools, parents, health professionals and other agencies will help determine how best a child can be supported, taking account of legislative requirements and what is deemed to be reasonable or reasonably practicable.

Where parents' expectations appear unreasonable, the Head should seek advice from the school nurse or doctor, the child's GP or other medical advisers and, if appropriate, the employer.

HEALTHCARE PLANS

An individual healthcare plan clarifies for staff, parents and the child the support that can be provided. The Healthcare Plan should be reviewed annually and/or if major changes to the care given is required.

Home to school transport providers may find it helpful to be aware of a pupil's individual healthcare plan and what it contains, especially in respect of emergency situations. This may be helpful in developing transport healthcare plans for pupils with life threatening conditions.

Under the Data Protection Act medical documents are deemed sensitive information. The information in the care plan needs to be disseminated to relevant staff but balanced with the need to keep confidential information secure.

Ideally, the Head Teacher should seek parents' agreement before passing on information about their child's health to other school or LA staff.

Further information on completion of the Healthcare Plan can be found in the guidance detailed below.

STAFF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The governing body should ensure that the school's policy clearly identifies the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the arrangements they make to support pupils at school with medical conditions.

Any member of school staff may be asked to provide support to pupils with medical conditions, including the administering of medicines, although they cannot be required to do so.

Although administering medicines is not part of teachers' professional duties, they should take into account the needs of pupils with medical conditions that they teach.

School staff should receive sufficient and suitable training and achieve the necessary level of competency before they take on responsibility to support children with medical conditions.

Staff must not give prescription medicines or undertake health care procedures without appropriate training (updated to reflect any individual healthcare plans). A first-aid certificate does not constitute appropriate training in supporting children with medical conditions.

Any member of school staff should know what to do and respond accordingly when they become aware that a pupil with a medical condition needs help.

MANAGING MEDICINES

The governing body should ensure that the school's policy is clear about the procedures to be followed for managing medicines.

Further details on managing medicines on school premises can be found in the guidance detailed below.

EDUCATIONAL VISITS AND SPORTING EVENTS

Teachers should be aware of how a child's medical condition will impact on their participation, but there should be enough flexibility for all children to participate according to their own abilities and with any reasonable adjustments.

Schools should make arrangements for the inclusion of pupils in such activities with any adjustments as required unless evidence from a clinician such as a GP states that this is not possible.

Schools should consider what reasonable adjustments they might make to enable children with medical needs to participate fully and safely on visits. It is best practice to carry out a risk assessment so that planning arrangements take account of any steps needed to ensure that pupils with medical conditions are included.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Where a child has an individual healthcare plan, this should clearly define what constitutes an emergency and explain what to do, including ensuring that all relevant staff are aware of emergency symptoms and procedures.

Other pupils in the school should know what to do in general terms, such as informing a teacher immediately if they think help is needed.

In an emergency situation, teachers and other staff are expected to use their best endeavours at all times. All staff should also know who is responsible for carrying out emergency procedures in the event of need, as detailed in the Healthcare Plan.

The Department of Education guidance is for schools to consider purchasing a defibrillator as part of their first aid equipment. If schools install a defibrillator for general use they should notify the local NHS ambulance service of its location.

From 1st October 2014, schools are able to hold asthma inhalers for emergency use. This is entirely voluntary, and the Department of Health is producing a protocol which will provide further guidance.

RECORDING KEEPING

Records offer protection to staff and children and provide evidence that agreed procedures have been followed.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Department for Education: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3>