



PONTARDDULAIS COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL  
YSGOL GYFUN PONTARDDULAIS



# Administration of Medicines

## Rhoi Meddyginiaethau

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This guidance should be read in conjunction with Welsh Office Circular 34\97 which reflects extensive consultation with teacher unions, LEAs, Health Services and voluntary organisations and supporting pupils with medical needs - Welsh Office December 1997.

### **1. Key Principles**

- (i) Pontarddulais Comprehensive School supports teachers and support staff who are prepared, in a voluntary capacity, to administer prescribed medicines which are necessary for pupils to attend school regularly and to participate fully in school life.
- (ii) The Authority advises Governing Bodies to accept and follow the guidelines produced by the Authority.
- (iii) Pupils who have long term medical conditions, which if not properly managed could limit their access to education, should have an identified health care plan.
- (iv) The administration of medicines should form part of the school's Health and Safety policy.

### **2. Role of Headteacher**

- (i) The Headteacher is responsible for implementing the Governing Body's Policy and for developing detailed procedures
- (ii) The Headteacher should ensure that staff who volunteer to administer medicines should receive support and training where necessary.
- (iii) The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that parents are aware of the school's policy and procedures.
- (iv) The Headteacher should ensure that all staff who may need to deal with an emergency know about a child's medical needs - this includes supply teachers.
- (v) Headteacher should ensure that appropriate work experience is arranged for pupils with particular medical conditions and if relevant pupils should be encouraged to share relevant medical information with the employer.
- (vi) Headteacher should ensure that the school nurse should receive support and training where necessary to maintain and update her/his knowledge of clinical expertise.



### **3. Support for staff administering medication**

- (i) It is recognised that there is no legal or contractual duty on school staff to administer medicine or supervise a pupil taking it except for members of support staff who have been specifically employed with a contract to provide medical assistance to the pupil, i.e. registered general nurse.
- (ii) However, school staff have a common law duty to act as any reasonable prudent parents would to ensure that pupils are healthy and safe and this might in exceptional circumstances extend to administering medicine with parents/guardians consent and/or taking action in an emergency. The Children Act provides scope for teachers to do what is reasonable for the purpose of safeguarding or promoting children's welfare.
- (iii) The Authority's insurance cover provides liability cover for staff undertaking the administration of medicines during the course of their duties either in school or on educational visits.
- (iv) Headteachers should seek advice from their school Doctor if they require advice or training regarding particular medication or treatment.
- (v) It is recommended that if staff agree to administer medication there should be a written agreement with the parents and that a record should be kept of when it is administered. Examples of forms which could be used for this purpose are attached in Appendix A and B.
- (vi) Pontarddulais Comprehensive School nurse documents name of drug, dosage and timing on School SIMS system.
- (vii) An Information/treatment sheet is always documented, (if pupil has received medication) and given to the child to take home for parents/guardians to be informed.

### **4. School Policies**

Policies for the administration of medicines should as far as possible enable regular school attendance. All policies should be understood by staff, parents and pupils and regularly communicated to them. School policies should include the following information.



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- Whether or not the school accepts responsibility, in principle, for school staff giving or supervising children taking prescribed medication or Over the Counter (OTC) by registered nurse at school
- The school's policy on assisting pupils with long term or complex medical needs at school
- The need for prior written agreement from parents for any medication to be given to a pupil.
- The circumstances in which pupils may take non-prescription medication e.g. Analgesics

NB - a child under 12 years should never be given an aspirin unless prescribed by a Doctor. A child with asthma and/or cardiac problems, gastric problems should never be given ibuprofen unless prescribed by a doctor.

- Policy on pupils carrying and taking their medication
- Record keeping- Storage and access to medication
- Staff training
- The school's emergency procedures

### 5. Role of Parents

It is very important to ensure that parents are aware of the school's policy and the role of parents within that policy.

- (i) Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child is well enough to attend school i.e. parents should not send children to school who are too ill to attend.
- (ii) Parents should provide the Headteacher and school nurse with sufficient relevant information about their child's medical condition and treatment and should jointly agree with the Headteacher the school's role in meeting their child's medical needs. It should be made clear to the parents which staff in the school will need to know about the child's condition and that confidentiality will otherwise be kept. Where possible parents should be encouraged to arrange for the child to take medicine out of school hours e.g. antibiotics.

A specimen form is appended in Appendix C which describes the information which it is reasonable to expect a parent to provide if they wish the school to administer medicine. This form is included in Health care Plans which are given to all parents to complete.





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- No pupil under 16 should be given medicine without written parental consent
- Any member of staff administering medicine should check:
  - The pupil's name
  - Date of birth
  - Dosage of drug
- Written instructions by parents or Doctor
- Prescribed dose
- Correct timing of medication
- Expiry date of medicine

If a Headteacher has any concern about medication which they are asked to administer they should discuss with their school nurse, parent/guardian.

- If a pupil refused to take medication, then the parent should be informed as a matter of urgency. Pupils should not be forced to take medication
- If a child is able to carry and administer their own medicine (bearing in mind the safety of the other pupils) they should be encouraged to do so but parents should give their written consent to present to the nurse.

### **6. Storage of Medication**

- Any medication brought into school should be in its original, appropriately labelled container with the name of the pupil, name and dosage of drug and frequency of administration and the expiry date of medication
- If a pupil requires more than one medicine each should be stored in separate containers.
- Staff should never transfer medicines from their original containers
- Pupils should know where their own medication is stored and who has the key. A few medicines e.g. asthma inhalers should not be locked away but should be readily available to pupils. Inhalers to have name of pupil on packaging and expiry date
- Medicines should otherwise be kept in a secure place not accessible to pupils
- If medicine is kept locked up all staff should know where the key is kept



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- Medicines which need to be kept refrigerated can be kept in a refrigerator containing food (including in a school kitchen) but should be in an airtight container and clearly labelled (e.g. empty ice cream container)
- The Welsh Office recommends that schools use a lockable medicine cabinet which complies with BS2881/1989 and of a security to exceed "level 1 testing" of that standard
- Staff should not dispose of unneeded medication but should return to parents

Staff must dispose of any sharps i.e. glucometer lancets needles in an appropriate sharps box

- Staff should have access to protective disposable gloves and take care when dealing with spillages of body fluid and when disposing of dressings or equipment
- Staff should follow basic hygiene procedures
- Staff to adhere to Infection Control Procedure, i.e. isolating pupils with an infectious illness to a safe monitored area until picked up by parent to go home.

### 7. Health Care Plans

- (i) All children may from time to time need to take medicine or receive treatment at school but some children have medical conditions that require careful managing if they are to attend school regularly. Head teachers/School nurse/parents should consult their school doctor when drawing up a Health Care Plan. A written agreement with parents clarifies for staff, parents and pupil the help that the school can provide and receive. The plan should be jointly reviewed at least once a year or sooner if the health need changes.
- (ii) Contributors to the plan should include - Headteacher, parent, child (if sufficiently mature) class teacher/head of year/TA/form teacher, care assistant, support staff or school nurse (if applicable) - any other staff who have agreed to administer medication or to be trained in emergency procedures. School Health Service, G.P. or other relevant health care professionals - depending on the level of support required by the school.



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- (iii) It is recommended that a Headteacher gives responsibility to one member of staff for coordinating and disseminating information or an individual pupil with medical needs. The role of this person would be to be the first contact for parents and staff and to liaise with other agencies. In Pontarddulais Comprehensive School this would be the responsibility of the school nurse and ALNCo.

The document: Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs: A Good Practice Guide Welsh Office 1997 contains useful information about Asthma, Epilepsy, Diabetes and Anaphylaxis, addresses of voluntary support groups for certain conditions and a pro-forma for the administration of rectal Diazepam.