

Rowlands Gill Primary School

Medicine in School Policy and Support for Pupils with Medical Conditions

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Next Review Date: October 2026



Policy Review:

Review Date	Changes Made	By Whom	Date Shared
October 2024	none	LC	October 2024
October 2025	None	LC	October 2025

Introduction

The Headteacher, Governing Body and employees at Rowlands Gill Primary School wish to ensure that pupils with medical needs receive appropriate care and support at school and during school activities. This policy has been produced to ensure the safe administration of medication or medical procedures when in school care.

At Rowlands Gill Primary School employees are not legally required to administer medicine, supervise a child taking it, or to undertake medical procedures. The primary responsibility for a pupil's health rests with parents; **(the term 'parents' in this policy includes guardians and carers)** who are responsible for making sure their children are well enough to attend school.

It is generally accepted that school staff may support pupils with administration of medication or support a medical need whilst acting in *'loco parentis'*. However, this does not imply a duty upon school staff.

Each request to support a pupil with a medical need will be considered on an individual basis. Parents should liaise with the school to reach an agreement on the School's role in supporting their child's medical needs.

No medication will be administered without prior written permission from the parents.

Children should remain at home when they are unwell. Medicines will only be administered when it would be detrimental to a child's health if the medicine is not administered during the school day.

Legislation and Legal Responsibilities

The Children and Families Act 2014 (section 100) introduced new duties on Governing Bodies to support children with medical conditions. The aim of this legislation was to ensure that children who have a medical condition are able to play a full and active role in school life, remain healthy whilst in education and achieve their full potential.

The Act ensured that no child with a medical condition could be denied admission or be prevented from taking up a place in school because arrangements for their medical condition have not been made. This includes training staff to be aware of the child's condition, knowing what to do in an emergency, supervising a child to take their own medication, administering medicines daily or being prepared to administer medication in an emergency.

However, teachers and other school staff in charge of pupils have a common law duty to act in *'loco parentis'* and must ensure the safety of all pupils in their care. To this end, we reserve the right to refuse admittance to a child with an infectious disease (in line with the medical guidelines administered to all schools), where there may be a risk posed to others, or to the health of the child involved.

It should be noted that this legislation does not place a legal duty on teachers or school staff to administer medication, this is a voluntary task.

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 makes employers responsible for the health and safety of employees and anyone else on the premises, including pupils in their care. In the case of pupils with special medical needs, the responsibility of the employer is to make sure that safety measures cover the needs of all pupils at the school. In this case, individual procedures may be required.

The Headteacher will ensure that there is adequate insurance in place to cover the administration of medicines and medical procedures undertaken in the school. In some cases, additional cover will be provided.

Procedures to be Followed

Parents must complete and sign the school form 'Request for school to issue prescribed medication' stating the dose, method of administration, the time and frequency of administration, other treatment and any special requirements. The form is available from the main office.

All essential medication should be brought to school by the parent. It should be delivered personally to the school office staff.

All medication taken in school must be as originally dispensed, with prescription label attached.

Only in exceptional cases will employees administer non-prescribed medicine to a child and only when there is specific written consent from the parent.

Where appropriate, information, instruction and training will need to be provided by health professionals for employees who volunteer or are contractually involved in the administration of medicines or supporting pupils with medical needs. Other staff should also be trained, for example; to recognise symptoms or early warning signs of an asthma attack, or epilepsy.

Where practicable, the School will ensure that alternative arrangements are in place for those occasions when employees who provide support for pupils with medical needs are absent or unavailable.

A record will be completed each time medication is given or medical procedures are carried out.

Responsibility of Parents

Parents **must** provide the school with detailed information about their child's medical condition, whether this is **before** the child starts school or if a **condition develops** whilst the child is attending school. A relevant form is included in the application pack for starting school so that parents can share this information at an early opportunity.

Medication will not be accepted in school without written and signed instructions from the parent.

All medication must be delivered to the school office by a parent in a secure and labelled container as originally dispensed. Each item of medication must be clearly labelled with the following information:

- Pupil's name
- Name of medication
- Dosage
- Frequency of administration and any special instructions e.g. take with food
- Date of dispensing
- Storage requirements
- Expiry date

The school will not accept prescription medication which doesn't have a prescription label (or is unreadable), has been altered or tampered with or that has been removed from the original container.

Parents should:

- Request that the prescriber where clinically appropriate, prescribes in dose frequencies which enable the medicine to be taken outside school hours. If frequencies are three times a day, then there is no need for medication to be administered at school. It can be given by parents at breakfast

time, straight after school and at bedtime. If marked four times a day (or more), then additional doses can be given during school time

- Provide the school with comprehensive information regarding their child's condition or medical need and about the medication or support their child needs whilst in school
- Complete the relevant forms as requested by the school
- Inform the school in writing of any changes to the prescription, the administration regime or the support required. This should be provided in conjunction with the GP or other medical professional as appropriate
- For pupils on long-term medication, the request form should be renewed following any changes or at the beginning of each new school year
- Collect medication, which is usually kept in school, at the end of each term and return it at the start of the new term, via the school office
- Collect and dispose of any unused or expired medicine at the end of each school year
- Ensure that medicines provided have not passed the expiry date
- Where appropriate, provide written permission for their child to self-administer medicine or carry his/her own medication
- Renew the medication when supplies are running low.

School Responsibilities

Key responsibilities of staff for administering medication:

- Understand the nature of a pupil's medical condition and be aware of situations where they may need additional support e.g. before physical activity for asthmatic pupils
- Administer medication as directed
- Supervise pupils who self-administer medication
- Understand and adhere to the safe storage of medication
- Be aware if there is a Health Care Plan (HCP) in place and understand what needs to be done and by whom, together with any emergency procedures detailed in the plan
- Maintain accurate administration records using the correct form, including recording when medication has been returned to a parent
- Liaise with parents as necessary
- Report any issues or concerns immediately to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher

The prime responsibility for a child's health lies with the parent, who is responsible for the child's medication and must supply the school with all relevant information needed in order for proficient care to be given to the child and to safeguard the wellbeing of other staff, pupils and visitors in the school. The school will take and seek advice and guidance from a range of sources, including the School Nurse, Health professionals and the child's GP in addition to the information provided by parents in the first instance, where applicable. This enables us to ensure we assess and manage risk and minimise disruption to the learning of the child and others who may be affected.

Pupils Who Need Medication

There are three main categories for pupils who need medication:

- Short-term prescribed medication for acute conditions
- Long term condition which requires regular medication to alleviate symptoms or control the condition
- Emergency medication required – such a pupil would have a medical record information form outlining what a medical emergency is in their context of their condition

Medication Categories

Medications fall into one of four categories and are easily identifiable by the code marked on the packaging:

1. General Sales List (marked GSL) which include medicines such as cold and flu remedies, throat lozenges, paracetamol
2. Pharmacy medicines (marked P) which are only available behind the pharmacy counter and from where a professional can give advice e.g. codeine, lactulose
3. Prescription Only Medication (marked POM) which requires a prescription from a doctor or a dentist. The includes medicines such as antibiotics, anti-depressants
4. Controlled Drugs (marked POM & CD) these are the most serious category of medication as they have powerful effects on the body and can harm or cause addiction. There are strict restrictions on how these drugs should be prescribed, dispensed, stored and administered. Examples include Morphine, Fentanyl and Methylphenidate which used to treat ADHD.

Medications labelled PRN (pro re nata) means they should be taken when needed. It will state on the label how many should be taken e.g.; take one as required.

Administration of Medication

There are 3 main routes for administering medication:

1. Orally – through the mouth e.g. tablets, lozenges, liquids
2. Topically – applied to the skin e.g. creams, gels including eye drops, nasal sprays
3. More intrusive routes – injections or rectal administration. Specialist training from an NHS practitioner must be completed before undertaking this type of administration e.g. by a school nurse

If a prescription label says 'swallow whole', the pupil must do this to avoid causing further medical problems e.g. stomach irritation, ulcers, mouth irritation. If tablets are labelled to take before or with food this should also be followed to prevent stomach irritation. These medications can be administered with a snack if it is not to be administered after lunchtime.

If a label says 'use as directed' you cannot use it without also having the prescriber's instructions.

Some medications require using sharp instruments e.g. syringes. A yellow sharps bin is located in the First Aid Room and should be used carefully to prevent infection, or the transfer of blood borne viruses. The contract to service the yellow sharps bin is with Interserve, provided through Equans, our facilities management company.

Administration Procedures

These procedures must be followed to avoid dangerous practice which would place the pupil, you and your organisation at risk.

Always follow the '6 Rights':

- ✓ Right Pupil – ask the pupil to say their name and check it against the name on the medicine container
- ✓ Right Medicine – check the name on the actual medicine with the name stated on the medicine plan or administration sheet to ensure they are the same. Check to see if the pupil is taking more than one medicine which you also need to administer and always check the expiry date before administering
- ✓ Right Dose – check the written instruction on the label every time you administer
- ✓ Right Route – check to see if medication is given orally, rectally or buccal (placed inside the cheek, next to the gum)

- ✓ Right Time – check the frequency of giving the medicine, check the time and check the pupil has not already received the medication
- ✓ Right to Refuse – if a pupil refuses to take the medication you should not force or coerce them to (*see information below*)

‘Covert administration’ – the giving of medication without the pupil knowing may on occasion be necessary. This is when medication may be deliberately concealed in food and drinks. It is only ever used in extenuating circumstances and when directed by the outcome of a Best Interests Meeting involving relevant medical professionals.

Controlled drugs should only ever be administered when there is witness present to verify the medication and administration of it.

Self-Administration

Where it is appropriate to do so, pupils will be encouraged to administer their own medication, in school this will be under staff supervision. Self-administration should only happen with parental agreement and following a risk assessment which will consider the child’s age, access to medicines and competence.

Pills / tablets are marked with instructions on how many to take and how often to take them.

Refusal of Medication or Medical Procedure

If a child refuses to take their medication, staff will not force them to do so. Parents will be informed as soon as possible and contacted to enable them to administer the medicine or medical procedure themselves. The school will contact the emergency services if necessary. Refusal to take medication will be recorded and dated on the child’s record sheet.

Storage

Medication will be kept in a secure place, out of reach of pupils, including if necessary within a fridge.

Controlled drugs (marked POM & CD) should be stored in a lockable container and only accessible to named staff. No one else should have access to them.

Emergency medication e.g. Epi-pens and inhalers may be needed quickly so they should be stored in an unlocked container. They will be located in the class medical bag. Emergency Epi-pens are kept in the staff room.

Inhalers

Inhalers need to be accessible by the children and are kept in the class medical bag. Inhalers should be clearly labelled with pupil’s name and dosage. Relevant paperwork relating to their asthma will also be kept in the medical bag for reference which will include what triggers an attack and what action should be taken.

We have an emergency inhaler in the First Aid room cupboard. Parents of children who have asthma will be asked to sign a consent for use of the emergency inhaler.

Administration of Analgesics

Staff will administer school supply of paracetamol for children (e.g. Calpol) for unexpected, short term or mild illness (e.g. headache, high temperature, pain relief following an injury). Aspirin, ibuprofen or any

medicines that contain these products must not be given to a child under 16 unless prescribed by a doctor under medical guidance (and in this case it would then be given under the normal administration of medication policy).

Written permission from parents must be given before a child is given any school supply of analgesia. Once written permission has been given, it does not have to be provided on each occasion. Before giving analgesic, staff should check if the child has been given a dose of analgesia within the last 4-6 hours. If staff are not able to ascertain this, then they should not administer another dose.

The record of Paracetamol administration form must be completed and a notification text (not in-app message) must be sent to the parent to tell them the time it was given.

Health Care Plan

Where appropriate, a personal Health Care Plan (HCP) will be drawn up in consultation with the school, parents and health professionals. The HCP will outline the child's needs and the level of support required in school. This is usually only needed when a pupil has complex health needs, needs specialist treatment or have known circumstances where they may need emergency care. Anyone supporting a pupil with a HCP must be familiar with the plan and any updates made to it. Training will be provided, by a healthcare professional, for any specialist medication e.g. use of Epi-pen.

The HCP will include:

- The name of the pupil;
- Their date of birth;
- The known condition;
- Care requirements;
- Contact details of their GP/specialist;
- Emergency contact details.

Educational Visits

To ensure that as far as possible, all children have access to all activities and areas of school life, this school will make every effort to continue the administration of medication to children whilst on educational outings or residential visits. This is however something that will be discussed with parents on an individual basis. A risk assessment will be undertaken to ensure the safety of all children and staff. It may be that self-medication (and keeping their own medication with them) may be required e.g. use of own inhaler in dormitory – appropriate risk assessment for this will be undertaken. Appropriate records will be kept of administration of medication, even when off-site.

Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions/Health Needs who are unable to attend school

The governing body must check that schools are compliant in following statutory guidance for ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs. This guidance can be found using the following link:

<https://educationgateway.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/DfE-Ensuring-a-good-education-for-children-who-cannot-attend-school-because-of-health-needs-January-2013.pdf>

Supporting Staff and Visitors Who Have Medical Conditions

Staff and visitors to school may also have medical conditions that require them to take medication during their working day or in emergency situations. All medication brought into the school should be stored safely and securely where pupils cannot access it.

On induction to the school, enquiries should be made as to whether anyone, either staff or visitor has a medical condition which we need to be aware of. However, if they do not wish to disclose this information, their privacy must be respected.

Confidentiality

Pupil medical information will be treated as confidential and protected. However, it is vital that all information concerning pupils with medical conditions and those requiring medicines within core hours is shared with all relevant staff. This includes those immediately concerned with the pupils' medical support and those who may need to intervene either routinely or in an emergency. The sharing and co-ordinating of pupil information is for pupil safety.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of a medical emergency a first-aider must be called upon. Named first aiders are listed in the first aid room, staff handbook and staff room. They can be contacted via walkie-talkie or at the office.

A member of the senior leadership team should be alerted to the emergency as soon as is reasonably possible.

If a child needs hospital treatment, a member of staff should always accompany the child, taking with them a printout of the child's key details and emergency contacts and should stay until the parent arrives.

Complaints

Should parents or pupils be dissatisfied with the support provided, they should discuss their concerns directly with the school. If, for whatever reason, this does not resolve the issue, they may make a formal complaint via the school's existing complaints procedure.