



Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions and Medication in School Policy

Swakeleys School for Girls

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Rationale

Swakeleys School for Girls has a duty to make arrangements to support pupils at school with medical conditions. The aim is to ensure that all children with medical conditions, in terms of both physical and mental health, are properly supported in school so that they can play a full and active role in school life, remain healthy and achieve their academic potential.

Parents of children with medical conditions are often concerned that their child's health will deteriorate when they attend school. This is because pupils with long-term and complex medical conditions may require on-going support, medicines or care while at school to help them manage their condition and keep them well. Others may require monitoring and interventions in emergency circumstances. It is also the case that children's health needs may change over time, in ways that cannot always be predicted, sometimes resulting in extended absences. It is therefore important that parents feel confident that school will provide effective support for their child's medical condition and that pupils feel safe.

In addition to the educational impacts, there are social and emotional implications associated with medical conditions. Children may be self-conscious about their condition and some may be bullied or develop emotional disorders such as anxiety or depression around their medical condition. In particular, long-term absences due to health problems affect children's educational attainment, impact on their ability to integrate with their peers and affect their general wellbeing and emotional health.

Swakeleys School for Girls will work effectively with local authorities, health professionals and other support services to ensure that children with medical conditions receive a full education. In some cases this will require flexibility and involve, for example, programmes of study that rely on part time attendance at school in combination with alternative provision.

Children and young people with medical conditions are entitled to a full education and have the same rights of admission to school as other children. This means that no child with a medical condition should be denied admission or prevented from taking up a place in school because arrangements for their medical condition have not been made.

However, in line with their safeguarding duties, Swakeleys School for Girls will ensure that pupils' health is not put at unnecessary risk from, for example infectious diseases. The school will not accept a child in school at times where it would be detrimental to the health of that child or others to do so.

Implementation

- The Deputy Headteacher will ensure that staff receive suitable training to support children with medical needs and will co-ordinate the review of healthcare plans along with the school Welfare Assistant.
- All relevant staff will be made aware of the child's condition including cover staff.
- Risk assessments for school visits, holidays, and other school activities outside of the normal timetable will be completed taking healthcare plans into account.
- When the school is notified of a medical need the Pastoral Team will call a meeting inviting parents, the pupil and appropriate healthcare professionals to draw up a healthcare plan. Individual healthcare plans can help to ensure that schools effectively support pupils with medical conditions. They provide clarity about what needs to be

done, when and by whom. They will often be essential, such as in cases where conditions fluctuate or where there is a high risk that emergency intervention will be needed, and are likely to be helpful in the majority of other cases, especially where medical conditions are long-term and complex. However, not all children will require one. The school, healthcare professional and parent should agree, based on evidence, when a healthcare plan would be inappropriate or disproportionate. If consensus cannot be reached, the headteacher is best placed to take a final view.

- In cases where a pupil's medical condition is unclear, or where there is a difference of opinion, judgements will be needed about what support to provide based on the available evidence. This would normally involve some form of medical evidence and consultation with parents. Where evidence conflicts, some degree of challenge may be necessary to ensure that the right support can be put in place.

The following information may be recorded on an individual's health plan:

- *The medical condition, its triggers, signs, symptoms and treatments;*
- *The pupil's resulting needs, including medication (dose, side-effects and storage) and other treatments, time, facilities, equipment, testing, access to food and drink where this is used to manage their condition, dietary requirements and environmental issues eg crowded corridors, travel time between lessons;*
- *Specific support for the pupil's educational, social and emotional needs – for example, how absences will be managed, requirements for extra time to complete exams, use of rest periods or additional support in catching up with lessons, counselling sessions;*
- *The level of support needed, (some children will be able to take responsibility for their own health needs), including in emergencies. If a child is self-managing their medication, this should be clearly stated with appropriate arrangements for monitoring;*
- *Who will provide this support, their training needs, expectations of their role and confirmation of proficiency to provide support for the child's medical condition from a healthcare professional; and cover arrangements for when they are unavailable;*
- *Who in the school needs to be aware of the child's condition and the support required;*
- *Arrangements for written permission from parents and the headteacher for medication to be administered by a member of staff, or self-administered by the pupil during school hours;*
- *Separate arrangements or procedures required for school trips or other school activities outside of the normal school timetable that will ensure the child can participate, eg risk assessments;*
- *Where confidentiality issues are raised by the parent/child, the designated individuals to be entrusted with information about the child's condition; and*
- *What to do in an emergency, including whom to contact, and contingency arrangements. Some children may have an emergency healthcare plan prepared by their lead clinician that could be used to inform development of their individual healthcare plan.*

Roles and responsibilities

Supporting a child with a medical condition during school hours is not the sole responsibility of one person. A school's ability to provide effective support will depend to an appreciable extent on working cooperatively with other agencies. Partnership working between school staff, healthcare professionals (and where appropriate, social care professionals), local authorities, and parents and pupils is critical.

The Headteacher will ensure that their school's policy is developed and effectively implemented with partners. This includes ensuring that all staff are aware of the policy for supporting pupils with medical conditions and understand their role in its implementation. The Headteacher will ensure that sufficient trained numbers of staff are available to implement the policy and deliver against all individual healthcare plans, including in contingency and emergency situations. The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the development of individual healthcare plans.

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 will receive sufficient and suitable training and achieve the necessary level of competency before they take on responsibility to support 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.

Swakeleys School for Girls has access to school nursing services. They are responsible for notifying the school when a child has been identified as having a medical condition which will require support in school. Wherever possible, they should do this before the child starts at the school. They would not usually have an extensive role in ensuring that schools are taking appropriate steps to support children with medical conditions, but may support staff on implementing a child's individual healthcare plan and provide advice and liaison, for example on training. School nurses can liaise with lead clinicians locally on appropriate support for the child and associated staff training needs – for example there are good models of local specialist nursing teams offering training to local school staff, hosted by a local school. Community nursing teams will also be a valuable potential resource for a school seeking advice and support in relation to children with a medical condition.

Pupils with medical conditions will often be best placed to provide information about how their condition affects them. They should be fully involved in discussions about their medical support needs and contribute as much as possible to the development of, and comply with, their individual healthcare plan.

Parents should provide the school with sufficient and up-to-date information about their child's medical needs. They may in some cases be the first to notify the school that their child has a medical condition. Parents are key partners and should be involved in the development and review of their child's individual healthcare plan, and may be involved in its drafting. They should carry out any action they have agreed to as part of its implementation, eg provide medicines and equipment and ensure they or another nominated adult are contactable at all times.

Local authorities are commissioners of school nurses for maintained schools and academies. Under Section 10 of the Children Act 2004, they have a duty to promote cooperation between relevant partners such as governing bodies of maintained schools, proprietors of academies, clinical commissioning groups and NHS England, with a view to improving the well-being of children so far as relating to their physical and mental health, and their education, training and recreation. Local authorities should provide support, advice and guidance, including suitable training for school staff, to ensure that the support specified within individual healthcare plans can be delivered effectively. Local authorities should work with schools to support pupils with medical conditions to attend full time. Where pupils would not receive a suitable education in a mainstream school because of their health needs, the local authority has a duty to make other arrangements. Statutory guidance for local authorities sets out that they should be ready to make arrangements under this duty when it is clear that a child will be away from schools for 15 days or more because of health needs (whether consecutive or cumulative across the school year).

Providers of health services should co-operate with schools that are supporting children with a medical condition, including appropriate communication and liaison.

Staff Training

Staff who provide support to pupils with medical conditions should be included in meetings where this is discussed. The relevant healthcare professional should normally lead on identifying and agreeing with the school, the type and level of training required, and how this can be obtained. Swakeleys School for Girls may choose to arrange training themselves and should ensure this remains up-to-date.

Training should be sufficient to ensure that staff are competent and have confidence in their ability to support pupils with medical conditions, and to fulfil the requirements as set out in individual healthcare plans. They will need an understanding of the specific medical conditions they are being asked to deal with, their implications and preventative measures.

All school staff will receive annual training on the school policy, supporting pupils with individual needs and healthcare plans.

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 always constitute appropriate training in supporting children with medical conditions.

Healthcare professionals, including the school nurse, can provide confirmation of the proficiency of staff in a medical procedure, or in providing medication. The family of a child will often be key in providing relevant information to school staff about how their child's needs can be met, and parents should be asked for their views. They should provide specific advice, but should not be the sole trainer.

The child's role in managing their own medical needs

After discussion with parents, children who are competent should be encouraged to take responsibility for managing their own medicines and procedures. This should be reflected within individual healthcare plans.

Wherever possible, children should be allowed to carry their own medicines and relevant devices or should be able to access their medicines for self-medication quickly and easily. Children who can take their medicines themselves or manage procedures may require an appropriate level of supervision. If it is not appropriate for a child to self-manage, then relevant staff should help to administer medicines and manage procedures for them. If a child refuses to take medicine or carry out a necessary procedure, staff should not force them to do so, but follow the procedure agreed in the individual healthcare plan. Parents should be informed so that alternative options can be considered.

Managing medicines on school premises

- Medicines should only be administered at school when it would be detrimental to a child's health or school attendance not to do so
- No child under 16 should be given prescription or non-prescription medicines without their parent's written consent - except in exceptional circumstances where the medicine has been prescribed to the child without the knowledge of the parents. In such cases, every effort should be made to encourage the child or young person to involve their parents while respecting their right to confidentiality.
- A child under 16 should never be given medicine containing aspirin unless prescribed by a doctor. Medication, eg for pain relief, should never be administered without first checking maximum dosages and when the previous dose was taken. Parents should be informed
- Where clinically possible, medicines should be prescribed in dose frequencies which enable them to be taken outside school hours
- Swakeleys School for Girls will only accept prescribed medicines that are in-date, labelled, provided in the original container as dispensed by a pharmacist and include instructions for administration, dosage and storage. The exception to this is insulin which must still be in date, but will generally be available to schools inside an insulin pen or a pump, rather than in its original container
- All medicines will be stored safely. Children should know where their medicines are at all times and be able to access them immediately. Where relevant, they should know who holds the key to the storage facility. Medicines and devices such as asthma inhalers, blood glucose testing meters and adrenaline pens should be always readily available to children and not locked away. They will be kept in Welfare and pupils are encouraged to carry medication such inhalers and epipens in their bags. This is particularly important to consider when outside of school premises eg on school trips
- A child who has been prescribed a controlled drug may legally have it in their possession if they are competent to do so, but passing it to another child for use is an offence. Monitoring arrangements may be necessary. Swakeleys School for Girls will otherwise keep controlled drugs that have been prescribed for a pupil securely stored in a non-portable container and only named staff should have access. Controlled drugs should be easily accessible in an emergency. A record should be kept of any doses used and the amount of the controlled drug held in school
- School staff may administer a controlled drug to the child for whom it has been prescribed. Staff administering medicines should do so in accordance with the prescriber's instructions.
- The school will keep a record of all medicines administered to individual children, stating what, how and how much was administered, when and by whom. Any side effects of the medication to be administered at school will be noted.

- When no longer required, medicines should be returned to the parent to arrange for safe disposal. Sharps boxes should always be used for the disposal of needles and other sharps

Record keeping

Swakeleys School for Girls will ensure that written records are kept of all medicines administered to children. Records offer protection to staff and children and provide evidence that agreed procedures have been followed. Parents should be informed if their child has been unwell at school.

Emergency procedures

If a child needs to be taken to hospital, staff should stay with the child until the parent arrives, or accompany a child taken to hospital by ambulance.

Day trips, residential visits and sporting activities

Swakeleys School for Girls will 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. This will require consultation with parents and pupils and advice from the relevant healthcare professional to ensure that pupils can participate safely.

Unacceptable practice

Swakeleys School for Girls believes that it is unacceptable practice to:

- Prevent children from easily accessing their inhalers and medication and administering their medication when and where necessary;
- Assume that every child with the same condition requires the same treatment;
- Ignore the views of the child or their parents; or ignore medical evidence or opinion, (although this may be challenged);
- Send children with medical conditions home frequently or prevent them from staying for normal school activities, including lunch, unless this is specified in their individual healthcare plans;
- If the child becomes ill, send them to the school office or welfare unaccompanied or with someone unsuitable;
- Penalise children for their attendance record if their absences are related to their medical condition eg hospital appointments;
- Prevent pupils from drinking, eating or taking toilet or other breaks whenever they need to in order to manage their medical condition effectively;
- Require parents, or otherwise make them feel obliged, to attend school to administer medication or provide medical support to their child, including with toileting issues. No parent should have to give up working because the school is failing to support their child's medical needs; or
- Prevent children from participating, or create unnecessary barriers to children participating in any aspect of school life, including school trips, eg by requiring parents to accompany the child.

Liability and indemnity

The school is insured through RPA. The policy number is 136631.

Staff are covered by the policy to administer medicines provided they have been prescribed by a doctor and the person administering has been received First Aid training and has an awareness of the school policy. The school will endeavour however to ensure that staff administering medicines have training over and above a first aid course as outlined in this policy.

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 complaints procedure. Making a formal complaint to the Department for Education should only occur if it comes within scope of section 496/497 of the Education Act 1996 and after other attempts at resolution have been exhausted. In the case of academies, it will be relevant to consider whether the academy has breached the terms of its Funding Agreement*, or failed to comply with any other legal obligation placed on it. Ultimately, parents (and pupils) will be able to take independent legal advice and bring formal proceedings if they consider they have legitimate grounds to do so.

*The contractual relationship between academies and the Department for Education

Evaluation

This policy will be evaluated by the health and safety committee who will scrutinise school medical records and healthcare plans.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years. Next review November 2026.