

ACORN INTEGRATED PRIMARY SCHOOL

Acorn IPS Policy for the Administration of Medication in School

This policy has been developed in accordance with guidance from ‘Supporting Pupils with Medication Needs’ published by the Department of Health, Social Services & Public Safety, March 2008.

The Board of Governors and staff of Acorn Integrated Primary School wish to ensure that pupils with medication needs receive appropriate care and support at school. The Principal will accept responsibility in principle for members of the school staff giving or supervising pupils taking prescribed medication during the school day **where those members of staff have volunteered to do so.**

Please note that parents should keep their children at home if acutely unwell or infectious.

- 1 Parents are responsible for providing the Principal with comprehensive information regarding the pupil’s condition and medication.
- 2 Prescribed medication will not be accepted in school without complete written and signed instructions from the parent.
- 3 Staff will not give a non prescribed medicine to a child unless there is specific prior written permission from the parents.
- 4 Only reasonable quantities of medication should be supplied to the school (for example, a maximum of four weeks supply at any one time).
- 5 Where the pupil travels on school transport with an escort, parents should ensure the escort has written instructions relating to any medication sent with the pupil, including medication for administration during respite care.

6 **Each item of medication must be delivered to the Principal or Authorised Person, by the 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.
- Date of dispensing.
- Storage requirements (if important).
- Expiry date.

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

- 7 Medication will be kept in a secure place, out of the reach of pupils. Unless otherwise indicated all medication to be administered in school will be kept in a locked medicine cabinet.
- 8 The school will keep records, which they will have available for parents.
- 9 If children refuse to take medicines, staff will not force them to do so, and will inform the parents of the refusal, as a matter of urgency, on the same day. If refusal to take medicines results in an emergency, the school's emergency procedures will be followed.
- 10 It is the responsibility of parents to notify the school in writing if the pupil's need for medication has ceased.
- 11 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.
- 12 The school will not make changes to dosages on parental instructions.

- 13 School staff will not dispose of medicines. Medicines, which are in use and in date, should be collected by the parent at the end of each term. Date expired medicines, or those no longer required for treatment will be returned immediately to the parent for transfer to a community pharmacist for safe disposal.
- 14 For each pupil with long term or complex medication needs, the Principal will ensure that a Medication Plan and Protocol is drawn up, in conjunction with the appropriate health professionals.
- 15 Where it is appropriate to do so, pupils 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.
- 16 Staff who volunteer to assist in the administration of medication will receive appropriate training/guidance through arrangements made with the School Health Service.
- 17 The school will make every effort to continue the administration of medication to a pupil 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 pupil on a school trip if appropriate supervision cannot be guaranteed.
- 18 All staff will be made aware of the procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency.

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DEALING WITH MEDICINES SAFELY

Safety Management

- 19 All medicines may be harmful to anyone for whom they are not prescribed. Where a school agrees to administer this type of medicine the employer must ensure that the risks to the health of others are properly controlled. This duty derives from the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002, (COSHH).
- 20 The Medicines Act 1968 places restrictions on dealing with medicinal products, including their administration. In the case of prescription only medicines, anyone administering such a medicinal product by injection must be an appropriate medical practitioner, e.g. a doctor, or else must act in accordance with the practitioner's directions and authority.
- 21 There are exceptions for the administration of certain prescription only medicines by injection (in order to save a life). An example of an exception is injection by a fully assembled syringe and needle delivering a set dose of adrenaline by intramuscular injection in the case of anaphylactic shock. Examples are EpiPen® and Anapen®. There are also junior versions for use in children.

Storing Medication

- 22 In a school where staff have volunteered to administer medication and where the Principal has agreed to this, the Principal is responsible for making sure that medicines are stored safely.
- 23 Schools should not store large volumes of medication. Parents should be asked to supply weekly or monthly supplies of the doses to be taken at school. Schools should only store, supervise and administer medicine that has been prescribed for an individual child. Medicines should be stored strictly in accordance with product instructions, (paying particular note to temperature), and in the original container in which dispensed. Staff should ensure that the supplied container is clearly labelled with the name of the child, the name and dose of the medicine and the frequency of administration. This should be straightforward if medicines are only accepted in the original container as dispensed by a pharmacist in accordance with the prescriber's instructions.

- 24 Where a pupil needs two or more prescribed medicines, each should be in a separate container. Non health care staff should never transfer medicines from their original containers.
- 25 If the school locks away medication that a pupil might need in an emergency, all staff should know where to quickly obtain keys to the medicine cabinet.
- 26 Careful note should be taken of any requirements regarding the temperature at which the medication should be stored. Some medicines need to be refrigerated. Medicines can be kept in a refrigerator containing food, but should be in an airtight container and clearly labelled. If a school has to store large quantities of medicines then a lockable medical refrigerator should be considered. The school should restrict access to a refrigerator holding medicines. Ideally the fridge should be fitted with a minimum and maximum thermometer.
- 27 Local and community services pharmacists may give advice to schools about storing medicines.

Controlled Drugs

- 28 The supply, possession and administration of some medicines are controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act and its associated Regulations. Some may be prescribed as medication for use by children, e.g. methylphenidate.
- 29 Increasing numbers of children are taking methylphenidate, e.g. Riatlin[®], Equasym[®], Concerta[®], for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). These are controlled drugs and therefore care must be taken regarding its storage.
- 30 Any member of staff may administer a controlled drug to the pupil for whom it has been prescribed, provided they have received appropriate training. Staff administering medicine should do so in accordance with the prescriber's instructions.
- 31 A pupil who has been prescribed a controlled drug may legally have it in their possession. It is permissible for schools and settings to look after a controlled drug, where it is agreed that it will be administered to the child for whom it has been prescribed.

- 32 Schools and setting should keep controlled drugs in a locked non portable container and only named staff should have access. A record should be kept for audit and safety purposes.
- 33 A controlled drug, as with all medicines, should be returned to the parent when no longer required to arrange for safe disposal (by returning the unwanted supply to the local pharmacy). If this is not possible, it should be returned to the dispensing pharmacist (details should be on the label).
- 34 Misuse of a controlled drug, such as passing it to another pupil for use, is an offence. Schools should have a policy in place for dealing with drug misuse.