



ROWHILL SCHOOL MEDICINES POLICY

Head Teacher

Geoff Bartrum

Chair of Governors

Stephen Jefferys

Policy ratified

March 2020

Policy Review

March 2022

Medicines in School Policy

There is no legal or contractual duty on school staff to administer medicine or to supervise a pupil taking it. This is a purely voluntary role and is recognised as such by the DfES. While teachers have a general legal duty of care to their pupils, this does not extend to a requirement to routinely administer medicines.

Staff should be particularly cautious and seek further guidance from the Head Teacher before agreeing to administer medicines where:

The timing of its administration is crucial to the health of the child; or
Some technical or medical knowledge is required; or
Intimate contact with the pupil is necessary (this would include administration of rectal Valium, assistance with catheters or use of equipment for children with tracheotomies)

Staff who do volunteer to administer medicines should not agree to do so without first receiving appropriate training and information. On-line training is available on the SSPD website.

The Governors will fully support any members of staff who do not wish to administer medicines or who feel that they are being unfairly pressurised to do so.

The Governors recognise that it is desirable for children with long term recurring health problems such as asthma, epilepsy and diabetes and eczema, to be accommodated within school in order that they can continue their education.

For this to be done, however, proper and clearly understood arrangements for administration of medicines must be made. Parents should be encouraged to provide maximum support and assistance in helping the school accommodate the pupil.

Staff who do volunteer to administer medicines should not agree to do so without first receiving appropriate information. The local NHS Trust or Health Authority is in a position to advise schools on the source of the support required. In many areas this support will be provided through the School Health Service. In accordance with the *National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services*, all schools and education settings have access to training provided by health professionals on all medical conditions. Further details can be found in Section 10, Standard of Medicines Management for Children and Young People (DH 2004)

Any member of staff who is prepared to administer medicines should only do so under strictly controlled guidelines, fully confident that the administration will be safe. It is wise to limit this willingness to emergency situation only. Every reasonable precaution must be taken. Clear instructions about medicines requiring regular administration must be obtained and strictly followed. There should be two members of staff involved – one to administer, one to witness.

Any decision to agree to administer medicines has to be a matter of individual choice and judgement. Apart from the obvious distress to a member of staff who makes an error, all members of staff who agree to administer medicines take on a legal responsibility to do so correctly. There is consequently always the risk that the staff member might be named in a legal claim for negligence.

Generally, however, any member of staff acting in accordance with agreed procedures would be regarded as acting in the interests of the employer and, since the employer would also be the subject of the action, the member of staff would, therefore, be effectively indemnified against personal liability by the rules of 'vicarious liability'.

In cases of accident and emergency, teachers must, of course, always be prepared to help as they and other school staff in charge of pupils have their general legal duty of care to act as any reasonably prudent parent would. In such emergencies, however, teachers should do not more than is obviously necessary and appropriate to relieve extreme distress or prevent further and otherwise irreparable harm. Qualified medical treatment should be secured in emergencies at the earliest opportunity.

Parents are responsible for their child's medication and children who are genuinely unwell should not attend school. Head Teachers are, however, responsible for deciding whether the school can assist a pupil who needs medication during the school day.

Travel sickness tablets should be handed to a teacher at the beginning of the trip, with an explanatory note from a parent or carer.

Sun screen should be self applied by children. This activity will be supervised by an adult.

Many pupils with long-term medical conditions will not require medication during school hours. Those that do will have it administered by school staff in accordance with the Health Care Plan as agreed by the school and parent/carer.

The following procedure is recommended:

- a. The smallest possible dose should be brought to the school, preferably by the parent, labelled with the name of the pupil in addition to clear written instructions for administration – including any possible side effects. Note – Department of Health guidelines state that it is not a safe practice for staff managing medicines to follow relabelled/re-written instructions or to receive and use repackaged medicines other than as originally dispensed.
- b. Medicines should be stored safely until needed in line with the DfES advice and any local authority guidelines.
- c. the administration of the medicine is carried out and recorded in line with school/local authority policies.

- d. If in doubt about any procedure staff should not administer the medicines but check with the parents or a health professional before taking further action.