HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICINES AND MEDICAL PROCEDURES IN SCHOOL

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PRINCIPLES

Some pupils at Oaktree School will have medical conditions that require support so that they can attend school regularly and take part in school activities. School is committed to meeting the needs of these pupils and will work with parents, carers and medical professionals to ensure all pupils are able to access the curriculum, enjoy, achieve and be safe and healthy in school.

This policy does not specifically cover the use of First Aid at Oaktree or Allergies and Anaphylaxis. These areas are covered in separate policies, which can be found on the school website.

Schools have a duty, acting in loco parentis, to take reasonable care of children and this includes the possibility of administering medicine. Schools are required to have policies in place on managing pupils' medications and on supporting pupils with medical needs. Some children may be unable to attend school because of their medical condition and where this happens, the school will liaise with the parents and medical professionals and advise on appropriate activities for the child to ensure the continuation of their education.

In this document the word “medicine” is used to include “medicines and prescribed drugs”, the term “medication” is used to refer to a pupil’s particular medicine regime and the term “administration” means the acts involved in giving or applying the dose of medicine.

Generally speaking, pupils in schools who require medication will fall into three broad groups:

- Those who are completing a course of prescribed treatment
- Those who have long-term medical conditions
- Those with conditions that can, often without warning, require swift emergency medication

All these pupils are regarded as having medical needs.

This policy describes Oaktree School’s approach to:

- assisting pupils with long-term or complex medical needs,
- pupils carrying and administering their own medication themselves
- the information required from parents or guardians with respect to any medication that is to be given to the child in school
- record keeping
- storage and access to medication
- emergency procedures

The Legal Position

It is recognised that school staff have legitimate concerns over their legal position in administering medicines. Staff can administer medicines and they are under a duty to obey reasonable instructions, taking into account the circumstances, the nature of the drugs concerned and their expertise and training. See DFEs guidance[1]

Whilst parents are responsible for their child's medication, it is normally the Head Teacher who decides if a school can assist a pupil who needs medication during the school day.

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Legally, it is not possible to disclaim liability for any serious adverse consequences of administering medicines in schools. In practice, any claim would lie against the employer. Oaktree School will also support any member of staff in any subsequent civil or criminal proceedings if the member of staff had followed the procedures set out in the school's guidelines.

In general, the consequences of taking no action are likely to be more serious than those of trying to assist in an emergency. To ensure that risks to health are minimised, it is essential for schools to establish safe systems that limit any opportunities for negligence.

The DfES Circular 14/96 makes it clear that children with medical needs have the same rights of admission as other children and should not be excluded from school because of these needs.

Roles and Responsibilities

The statutory guidance contained in 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions'[1] states that, "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 will be critical. An essential requirement for any policy therefore will be to identify collaborative working arrangements between all those involved, showing how they will work in partnership to ensure that the needs of pupils with medical conditions are met effectively".
Designated first aiders are responsible for providing immediate and appropriate care to individuals who are injured or unwell, in line with their training. They must ensure that first aid is administered promptly, that incidents are recorded accurately, and that further medical help is sought when necessary. First aiders are also expected to maintain their certification and ensure that first aid supplies are adequately stocked and accessible.

Role of the NHS School Nurse at Oaktree School

Due to the nature of our pupils' needs and disabilities the level of required medication or medical intervention is much greater than in mainstream schools. At Oaktree School there is an *NHS School Nurse* on site whilst the pupils are in school. The School Nurse is Registered to have access to the pupils' NHS records and liaise with other medical professionals who contribute to the pupils' health care. The School Nurse also plays a key role in liaising with pupils' parents and carers to ensure the school has relevant and up-to-date information regarding a pupil's health care plans. The Nursing team will obtain 'Consent to treatment' and 'Consent to share information from parents/carers for children and young people'.

The School Nursing team[2] are employed and managed by the NHS. They all have an Enhanced Disclosure Barring check in place.

Both the School Nurse and the Health Care Assistants are trained to administer medication and to deal with health care emergencies in line with NHS protocols. The administration of medicines to pupils on site is part of their respective job descriptions.

[2] The school nursing team here refers to the NHS school nurse and the Senior Leading Learning Support Assistant or as the medical officer or welfare officer.

The School Nursing team obtains consent annually (or as changes occur) from parents and carers for all pupils who require medication whilst in school.

Role of School Staff

Most of the daily administration of medicines is carried out by the The School Nursing team. However, there may be occasions when school staff are better placed to administer medication, especially in an emergency, eg asthma attack and anaphylactic shock. This is especially so during educational visits when pupils are off site (*please see below re. administration of medicines on educational visits).* A medical bag containing the pupil's medicines should accompany the child at all times away from the school grounds. When within the school grounds it will be held in a locked cupboard/room.

Carers Assigned to Individual Pupils

From time to time a pupil may be admitted who requires constant supervision throughout the school day in order to meet individual student's health care needs. The Head Teacher works with the relevant medical professionals, including the School Nurse, to create a risk assessment and NHS Health Care Plan upon admission to ensure the child's needs can be fully met. Such pupils may need to be assigned a Health Care Assistant, by the NHS, who is responsible for meeting the pupil's health care needs throughout the day. This person is not part of the School Nursing Team.

Parents and Carers

Parents have a responsibility to ensure that they provide relevant and up-to-date information to help school to care for their child and to provide any medication and other apparatus necessary to meet the pupil's health care needs. Parents must sign and/or agree to a pupil's NHS Health Care Plan.

The Pupil

There is a potential for some pupils to administer their own medication. These pupils may be given the responsibility of administering their own medication. However, should this possibility arise, the School Nurse would discuss this with the parents, class staff and of course with the pupil in ways that they can understand. The agreed outcomes would be incorporated into the pupil's NHS Health Care Plan and the pupil would be provided with the necessary training by the School Nurse and parents.

PRACTICE

Staff Training

School has an extensive programme of First Aid training to ensure that there is full school coverage. *Please see Oaktree School First Aid at Work policy*.

All teaching support staff are regularly trained in basic awareness of epilepsy, asthma, diabetes and anaphylactic shock by the School Nursing team.

Staff who are trained in enteral feeding can administer feeds to pupils via gastrostomies, nasogastric tubes and jejunostomy tubes. The School Nursing team is responsible for ensuring that school staff meet the required level of competency at time of assessment.

A dated record is kept of staff training and stored in their personnel file in school. The School Nursing team also has a list of current staff who are trained and competent in administering feeds.

Pupil NHS Health Care Plans

Pupils with medical needs will have an individual NHS Health Care Plan as appropriate which identifies the level of support that is needed, both to support the pupil and to support the school to ensure the pupil's wellbeing. The NHS Health Care Plan can also help to identify particular safety measures in relation to health care that need to be taken to support the pupil. Pupils who suffer from anaphylaxis must have an NHS Health Care Plan that gives more detailed information relating to the pupil and the condition, since each pupil's symptoms and allergens will vary (*see below*).

Pupils' NHS Health Care Plans are very important documents. They are compiled by the School Nurses in consultation with the parents, staff and other professionals as necessary. These plans detail the procedures and medications necessary to ensure the pupil's wellbeing and to meet their medical needs in school and during off site activities. Some confidential medical diagnoses are not detailed, but any necessary procedures or medicines are. These plans are reviewed annually or sooner as required by the School Nursing team. Parents have a responsibility to keep school informed of any changes to their child's condition, medication and medical needs which may require changes to the NHS Health Care Plan, updates are signed and agreed by parents/carers.

The NHS Health Care Plan may also highlight training issues. Staff must not give medication without appropriate training from a relevant professional. This training may not need to be formal training but could be instructions from the Head Teacher or a competent person or written instructions from a Doctor. At Oaktree School the training is most likely to be provided by the Senior Leading Learning Support Assistant.

Administration of Prescribed and Non-Prescribed Medicines

Generally, schools cannot be expected to administer medication which could be given before and after school. In these circumstances, the merits of each case are considered by the School Nursing team.
The only medicines that should be administered are those which are prescribed by NHS doctors (sometimes private GPs) and where clear written instructions are provided by the parent or carer and are in accordance with the doctor's instructions. The School Nurse will contact parents when medicine is sent into school via the pupil to ensure that the correct written information is supplied before any medication is given. Should school staff find medication in the pupil's school bag, it is brought *immediately* to the School Nurse. Unless medication is in transit between home/ respite, the school is responsible for storage.

The medicine must be provided by parents in clearly labelled bottles or packets with the pupil's name and dosage. Administration must be recorded according to the guidelines for prescribed medicines.

In line with NHS protocols the School Nurse, HCA and school staff will not give non-prescribed medicine to pupils. However, staff can administer infant/child temperature

lowering (eg Calpol) when they consider it vital to the pupil's well-being following written/verbal consent from parents/carers. Antihistamine and other 'over-the-counter' medicines may be administered but only if prescribed and parents have previously provided specific written permission. The School Nurse will also phone the parents to determine the time of any earlier dosage given. If the parents are not contactable, the School nurse will act using her professional judgement.
All medicine dosages will be drawn-up by the school nurse or an appropriately trained health professional.
In summary, when administering medicines school follows NHS protocols.

Procedures for the administration of medication are outlined in the clinical policies attached:
Supporting Students at School With Medical Conditions 2015
(https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3)

Decanted medicines cannot be given at any time.

Homeopathic medicines and herbal medicines cannot be given unless prescribed by an NHS doctor.

Short-term ailments

Pupils suffering from short-term ailments who are clearly too unwell to access the curriculum should not be in school and the Head Teacher is within his rights to ask parents or carers to keep them at home or collect them from school. It is the schools' responsibility to send children home not the nurse's. Some parents may seek to send their children to school with non-prescribed medicines (e.g. cough mixtures) and schools cannot be expected to accept responsibility for administering medicines of this nature.

Chronic illness or disability

Some of our pupils have chronic illness or conditions which require the administration of regular prescribed medicines during the school day. This is explained in the pupil's NHS Health Care Plan. Health care plans will be devised on an individual basis.

Asthma.

Pupils with asthma have airways that narrow as a reaction to various triggers. The triggers vary between individuals but common ones include viral infections, cold air, grass pollen, animal fur and house mites. Exercise and stress can also precipitate asthma attacks in susceptible people. The narrowing or obstruction of the airways causes difficulties in breathing and can be alleviated with treatment. Pupils with asthma have the triggers, symptoms and treatment, including accessibility to inhalers, detailed in their NHS Health Care Plans. Most of our pupils are unable to recognise and communicate when they need their inhaler and rely on staff observing and responding to the onset of symptoms.

Inhalers for Asthma.

Inhalers are used to prevent wheezing as well as treatment for wheezy episodes. Staff working with pupils with asthma have immediate access to their inhalers. The inhaler should be clearly marked with the pupil's name. Most of our pupils are unable to take responsibility for their inhaler, therefore, staff ensure that it is stored in a safe but readily accessible place and staff take responsibility for its use.

The use of inhalers by all pupils is recorded by the School Nursing team and staff

Advising the Parents

An agreement will be made between the School Nursing team and the pupil's parents as to when and how the parents are informed that their child has experienced an asthma attack. However, if it is a first incident or it is significantly worse than usual, the School Nursing Team or the Senior Leading Learning Support Assistant will advise the parents as soon as possible after the incident.

Epilepsy

Epilepsy is a common condition and Oaktree School has considerable experience in meeting the health care needs of pupils with epilepsy. Epileptic seizures may be recurrent or infrequent and the nature, frequency and severity of the seizure will vary greatly between individuals. Most, but not all, of our pupils with epilepsy take anti-convulsant medicines and the symptoms of most are well controlled by individually tailored medication regimes. Seizures may be unpredictable or have known triggers, e.g. ill health, tiredness, emotional state, hormonal changes, flashing or flickering lights, video games and computer graphics (photosensitive epilepsy). Certain geometric shapes or patterns can also trigger seizures in some individuals. Screens and/or different methods of lighting can be used to enable photosensitive pupils to work safely on computers and watch TV.

What to do when a pupil has a seizure

All our educational staff are trained to respond appropriately and safely to a pupil having a seizure and all pupils diagnosed with epilepsy have an NHS Emergency Care Plan. The specific nature, triggers and management of a pupil's epilepsy is detailed in their NHS Emergency Care Plan, but in general nothing must be done to alter the course of a seizure once it has begun. The area immediately surrounding the pupil must be made safe to reduce any possibility of harm to the pupil or others during the seizure. The pupil should *not* be restrained and there should be no attempt to put anything into the pupil's mouth. Pupils in postural seating and other postural equipment must not be moved unless they are unsafe**.** The time of onset of the seizure must be noted and the Senior Leading Learning Support Assistant or a member of the SLT advised. Pupils may require medication at the onset or during the seizure. Many pupils are prescribed orally administered Buccal Midazolam, thereby avoiding the need to administer medication rectally. The School Nursing team would administer the prescribed medication in school, however appropriately trained staff can do so too as required.

Some pupils may require immediate medication or action and the School Nursing team should be called at once to respond to the situation. This may, for example, include administering medication. **School staff can and must call 999 if they deem it necessary before calling a nurse or another member of staff.**

Pupils with epilepsy are not excluded from any school activity. Extra care and supervision may be needed to ensure their safety in some activities such as swimming or in playground activities. Concerns about any potential risks should be discussed with the Head Teacher, the School Nursing team and the pupil's parents/carers.

Calling an ambulance

Nursing staff attending to the pupil may call 999 as directed by the Emergency care plan or as deemed, by the nurse, clinically necessary. *School staff can and must call 999 if they deem it necessary before calling a nurse.*

Diabetes

Any pupil with diabetes should have a NHS Health Care Plan detailing the management of their condition. Staff would always call a member of the School Nursing Team or a First Aider if they have concerns that a diabetic pupil was either hypoglycaemic or hyperglycaemic.

Anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis is an extreme allergic reaction requiring urgent medical treatment. The whole body is affected usually within minutes of exposure to the allergen, although it can sometimes take hours for symptoms to develop. The most common allergen is food - in particular nuts, fish and dairy products. Wasp and bee stings can also cause allergic reactions. Most of our pupils are unable to understand the risks associated with contact with the allergen, therefore staff are made aware and ensure the pupil avoids contact with or ingesting the allergens.

See the Allergies and Anaphylaxis Policy 2025, which can be found on the school website

Medication and control of anaphylaxis

In its most severe form the condition can be life-threatening, but it can be treated with medicines. This may include antihistamine or adrenaline injection e.g. Epipen, depending on the severity of the reaction. Not all symptoms need to be present before administering the medication.

Responsibility for giving the injection should be on a purely voluntary basis. However, it should be reiterated that schools have a duty to act in loco parentis, to take reasonable care of pupils and this includes the possibility of administering medicine. School must ensure that staff are trained by an appropriate health professional to administer anaphylactic medicines. At Oaktree School identified staff will be trained by the School Nursing team to recognise the symptoms and to administer the relevant medication. The medication will be kept safe from pupils but readily accessible to staff, and accompanies the child wherever they may be in school.

A pupil at risk of anaphylaxis would have a NHS Health Care Plan detailing the risks and the required action.

Antibiotics.

A pupil taking antibiotics can recover quickly and may be well enough to attend school but it is essential that a course of treatment is completed. Antibiotics must be stored in the medical fridge in the medical room. It is helpful if, where possible, medication can be prescribed in dose frequencies that enable it to be taken outside school hours. Parents are encouraged to ask the prescribing doctor or dentist about this when their child is prescribed medicines.

Enzyme Additives.

A pupil with cystic fibrosis may not be able to digest food without added enzymes. This is not a drug, and it is important that it is taken with food. Under such circumstances, the school would work closely to identify set procedures for each pupil, which will be outlined in their care plan

Maintenance of Medicines

A pupil may be on daily medication (e.g. anticonvulsants) that requires one or more doses during the school day and medication is administered accordingly by the School Nursing Team. Daily medications are stored in a locked cupboard within the School Nursing team's room.

Enteral feeding

Pupils with feeding difficulties may have a gastrostomy, a jejunostomy or nasogastric tube so that the pupil can take feed and medication directly into the stomach or bowel. The School Nursing Team are trained in the care and management for these procedures. The School Nursing Team facilitates training for all class staff where there is a pupil with a gastrostomy, jejunostomy or nasogastric tube in situ. The School Nursing Team will assess the competency of school staff trained in enteral feeding.

Sometimes a treatment or medical procedure may be classed as intimate or invasive. The School Nursing team and school staff will always ensure that the pupil's dignity is maintained and that procedures are explained to the pupils in ways they can understand.

Pupil Refusal of Medication

In the event of a pupil refusing medication, the School Nursing Team may call upon the help of staff who know the pupil well to help. However, staff must not force the pupil to take the medication. The parents should be informed as a matter of urgency and if the situation is life threatening the emergency services should be called.

Storage of Medicines

At Oaktree School all medicines are stored following NHS protocols and are inaccessible to pupils. In the medical room medicines are kept in high level cabinets or the medical refrigerator.

Medicines must be delivered to the School Nursing team in their original container, which must be clearly labelled with the pupil's name and instructions for use.

Medicines which must be readily accessible to staff for pupil use, eg inhalers, Epipens, are stored in locked cupboards in the classrooms, however the medicines will also accompany the pupil around school and on school visits. The teacher ensures that a trained member of staff takes the responsibility for carrying the medication and ensuring it remains inaccessible to the pupils.

Emergency Procedures

Calling 999

As a matter of routine, all schools must have clear procedures for summoning an ambulance in the case of an emergency. Any member of staff can phone 999 directly from any phone in school, this would be done from the nearest telephone. The school office staff and Head Teacher/SLT should be informed and they will direct the emergency services to the relevant location on their arrival.

If a member of staff finds themselves in a position where they believe a pupil's survival is at risk, they will:

1. not leave the pupil alone
2. provide first aid – if trained – or call upon a First Aider from a nearby class
3. call, or instruct another staff member to call, 999 immediately

At Oaktree School there are telephones in most rooms throughout the school and all staff are made aware that it is possible to dial 999 directly from these phones.

A pupil who needs to go to hospital by ambulance is always accompanied by a member of the school staff who will remain with the pupil until the arrival of the pupil's parent or carer.

The Head Teacher will be fully briefed after the incident.

First Aid

Oaktree School has extensive First Aid provision. Emergency situations, such as choking, falls and other accidents, are responded to in line with First Aid training.

Educational Visits

Risk assessments are conducted by school for all off-site activities and these include references to pupils' health care needs. This may be through the training of the class staff in the management of a pupil's epilepsy, anaphylaxis and feeding regime. It may also include training the staff to administer a pupil's oral medication.

It is school policy that a trained First Aider must accompany every educational visit; other staff present will also be trained in the management of epilepsy, anaphylaxis and feeding regimes.

Parents may be invited to accompany their child on an educational visit and they can take responsibility for the health care needs of their own child only.

Consultation on and Communication of this Policy

Parents and staff are kept informed of the school's arrangements for the administration of medicines and the management of pupils' medical conditions. Staff and parents are informed of any changes to these arrangements via phone call or email, and via staff briefings (staff).

Breaches of this Policy

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the Head Teacher and Governing Body and in line with Enfield Council guidance.

Sources used in drafting this policy:

The document, supporting pupils at school with medical conditions. Statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academies in England. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3
www.teachernet.gov.uk
www.education.gov.uk
Medical Conditions at School: A Policy Resource Pack has been compiled by the Medical Conditions at School Group

Associated policies:

Safeguarding
First Aid Provision in School
Allergies and Anaphalaxis Policy 2025