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Administration of Medicines Policy

Caragh National School, Co. Kildare
18654A

Introduction

An Administration of Medication policy has been in existence in the school and was recently redrafted through a collaborative school process and was ratified by the Board of Management.

Rationale

The policy as outlined was put in place to;

- Clarify areas of responsibility
- To give clear guidance about situations where it is not appropriate to administer medicines
- To indicate the limitations to any requirements which may be notified to teachers and school staff
- Safeguard school staff that are willing to administer medication
- Protect against possible litigation.

Relationship to School Ethos

- The school promotes positive home-school contacts, not only in relation to the welfare of children, but in relation to all aspects of school life. This policy is in keeping with the school ethos through the provision of a safe, secure and caring school environment and the furthering of positive home-school links.

Aims of this Policy

The aims and objectives of the policy can be summarised as follows;

- Minimise health risks to children and staff on the school premises
- Fulfil the duty of the BoM in relation to Health and Safety requirements
- Provide a framework within which medicines may be administered in cases of emergency or in instances where regularised administration has been agreed with parents/guardians

In -School Procedures

Parents are required to complete a Health/Medication form when enrolling their child/ren in the school. The school Principal has the ultimate responsibility to supervise either the taking of medicines by pupils themselves and/or the administration of medicines by another member of staff – Teacher or SNA. No member of staff is obliged to administer medicines or drugs to a pupil and any teacher or SNA willing to do so works under the controlled guidelines outlined below.

- Prescribed medicines will only be administered after parents of the pupil concerned have written to the BoM requesting the Board to authorise a member of the teaching staff to do so. Under no circumstance will non-prescribed medicines be either stored or administered in the school. The Board will seek indemnity in writing from parents in respect of any liability arising from the administration of medicines (Appendix)

- The school generally advocates the self-administration (e.g. inhalers) of medicine under the supervision of a responsible adult, exercising the standard of care of a prudent parent. A small quantity of prescription drugs will be stored in the Administration Office if a child requires self-administering on a daily basis and parents have requested storage facilities. In this regard the school may need to provide such storage for medicines which need to be kept in refrigeration. The school will not take responsibility for medicines being incorrectly stored and will follow the directions of the parents in this regard. Parents are responsible for the provision of medication and notification of change of dosage in writing (Appendix)
- Teachers have a professional duty to safeguard the health and safety of pupils, both when they are authorised to be on the school premises and when they are engaged in authorised school activities elsewhere.
- The Board of Management requests parents to ensure that teachers be made aware in writing of any medical condition suffered by any child in their class.
- This does not imply a duty upon teachers personally to undertake the administration of medicines or drugs.

Long Term Health Problems

Where there are children with long-term health problems in school, proper and clearly understood arrangements for the administration of medicines must be made with the Board of Management/school authorities. This is the responsibility of the parents/guardians. It would include measures such as self-administration, administration under parental supervision or administration by school staff.

Guidelines for the Administration of Medicines

1. The parents of the pupil with special medical needs must inform the Board of Management in writing of the condition, giving all the necessary details of the condition. The request must also contain written instruction of the procedure to be followed in administering the medication.
2. Parents must write requesting the Board of Management to authorise the administration of the medication in school (cf Appendixes)
3. Where specific authorisation has been given by the Board of Management / school authorities for the administration of medicine, the medicines must be brought to school by the parent/guardian/designated adult.
4. A written record of the date and time of administration must be kept by the person administering it – generally the Principal or SNA.
5. Parents/Guardians are responsible for ensuring that emergency medication is supplied to the school and replenished when necessary.

6. Emergency medication must have exact details of how it is to be administered
7. The Board of Management must inform the school's insurers accordingly
8. Parents are further required to indemnify the Board of Management and members of the staff in respect of any liability that may arise regarding the administration of prescribed medicines in school
9. All correspondence related to the above are kept in the school in the relevant child's individual file and in the school office.

Medicines

- Non-prescribed medicines will neither be stored nor administered to pupils in school.
- Teachers/SNAs in the school will only administer prescribed medication when arrangements have been put in place as outlined above.
- Arrangements for the storage of certain emergency medicines, which must be readily accessible at all times, must be made with the Principal.
- A teacher/SNA must not administer any medication without the specific authorisation of the Board of Management
- The prescribed medicine must be self-administered if possible, under the supervision of an authorised Teacher/SNA if not the parent
- In an emergency situation, qualified medical assistance will be secured at the earliest opportunity and the parents contacted.
- It is not recommended that children keep medication in bags, coats, etc.
- Where possible, the parents should arrange for the administration of prescribed medicines outside of school hours.

The following guidelines are in place with regard to pupils with a Nut Allergy

- Our school operates a nut-free zone.
- Advise children not to offer or exchange foods, sweets, lunches etc.
- If going off-site, medication must be carried.

Only in the event of anaphylactic shock should an epipen be administered.

Should an epipen need to be administered in our school an ambulance will be called. If deemed necessary, this phone call may be made prior to contacting parents.

Emergencies

In the event of an emergency, staff should do no more than is 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.

Where no qualified medical treatment is available, and circumstances warrant immediate medical attention, designated staff members (Principal / Deputy Principal with Class teacher) may take a child into Accident and Emergency without delay. Parents will be contacted simultaneously.

In addition, parents must ensure that teachers are made aware in writing of any medical condition which their child is suffering from. For example children who are epileptics, diabetics etc. may have a seizure at any time and teachers must be made aware of symptoms in order to ensure that treatment may be given by appropriate persons.

Written details are required from the parents/guardians outlining the child's personal details, name of medication, prescribed dosage, whether the child is capable of self-administration and the circumstances under which the medication is to be given. Parents should also outline clearly proper procedures for children who require medication for life threatening conditions.

The school maintains an up to date register of contact details of all parents/guardians including emergency numbers. This is updated in September of each new school year.