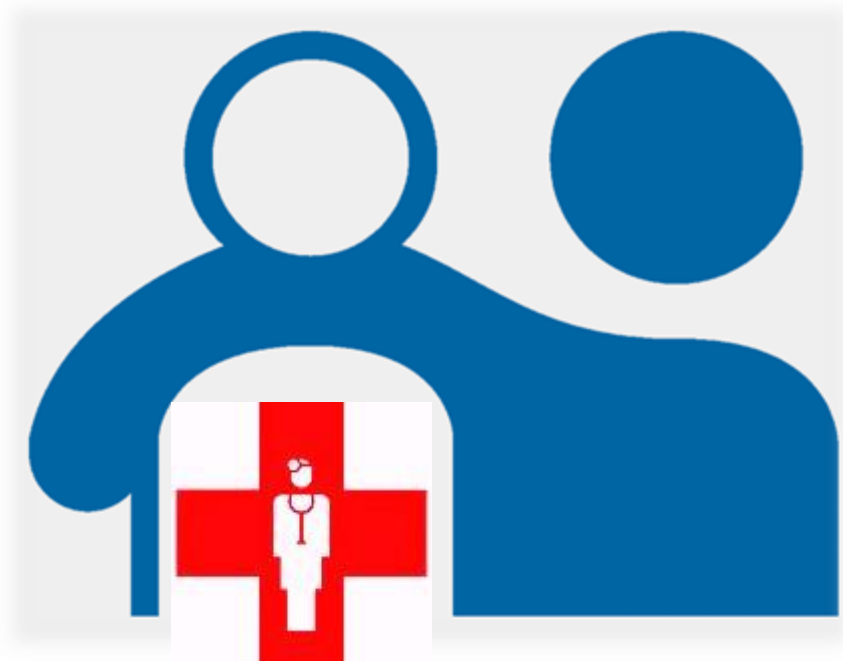




St Louise's
Comprehensive College, Belfast
A Specialist College

MEDICAL CARE POLICY



ST LOUISE'S MISSION STATEMENT

"In partnership with parents, guardians, staff, governors and students St Louise's promotes excellence in learning and teaching within a Catholic, Vincentian, Comprehensive ethos"

SECTION 1

Introduction

Most students will at some time have a medical condition that has the potential to affect their participation in school activities. Some students may require medication for a short term medical need; others may require medication on a long term basis. Such students are regarded as having medical needs. Most children with medical needs are able to attend school regularly, and with some support from the school, can take part in the majority of school activities.

Medication needs can be grouped into 3 categories:

- Students requiring short term prescribed medication for acute conditions.
- Students with a long term condition requiring regular medication such as children with asthma and ADHD.
- Students who may very rarely require medication to be given in an emergency e.g students with severe allergies that may require an adrenaline injection (Epipen).

SECTION 2

Aims

Our school policy aims to support our students, our parents and our staff. It is hoped that the policy will encourage regular attendance to school among our students, will give parents/carers confidence that we are equipped to meet the medical needs of their children, and will reassure our staff who may at times be required to administer medication on behalf of a parent/carer.

The policy is based on guidance materials written by the Departments of Education and Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in consultation with the Education and Library Boards, the Catholic Council for Maintained Schools, a range of education and health professionals and the Teachers Unions.

SECTION 3

Responsibilities

(i) Responsibility of the Parent

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to co-operate fully with the school to ensure the health, safety and well-being of their child.

Parents are responsible for:

- making sure that their child is well enough to attend school. (A child's own doctor is the person best able to advise in relation to this).
- making the school aware of their child's medical needs.
- reaching agreement with the Principal or designated member of staff on the school's role in helping with their child's medication.
- providing the Principal or designated member of staff with the original written medical evidence about their child's medical condition and treatment needed at school.
- providing the Principal or designated member of staff with written instructions and making a written agreement – detailing dose and when the medication is to be administered.
- ensuring prompt notification in relation to condition and medication.
- providing sufficient medication and ensuring it is correctly labelled.
- disposing of their child's unused medication.
- giving written permission for the student to carry his/her own essential medication e.g. inhalers.

(ii) Responsibilities of Staff

Teachers and support staff are responsible for:

- understanding the nature of a student's medical condition and being aware of when and where the student may need extra attention.
- being aware of the likelihood of an emergency arising and the action to take if one occurs. (The key action required from all staff in an emergency situation is to contact a member of the First Aid Team and a member of the Year Team).
- being aware of the needs of the students who carry a Health Alert pass. (students with Asthma, Epilepsy, Diabetes, Anaphylaxis).
- taking part in appropriate training and being aware of the possible side effects of the medication and what to do if they occur.
- supervising students who self-administer medication, if this is required.

(iii) Responsibility of the Principal

Day to day decisions with regard to support for students with medication needs will normally fall to the Principal or to the designated member of staff. When parents request that medication be administered to their child at school, it is expected that Principals or the designated member of staff will deal with each case sympathetically and on its merits. If a student has a Statement of Special Educational Needs, the Statement should outline the procedures, support and training required as outlined in the relevant medical advices. Where there is concern about whether the school can meet a student's medication needs, or where the parents' expectations appear unreasonable, the Principal or the designated member of staff should seek advice from the School Health Service/Designated Medical Officer. On the basis of information received the Principal or the designated

member of staff will advise parents of a child with medication needs on the level of support the school will provide.

The Principal is responsible for:

- the operation of the policy on the administration of medication and is therefore the main person responsible for the administration of medication in school and for developing detailed administrative procedures for meeting the medication needs of students.
- making sure that all parents are aware of the school's policy and procedures for dealing with medication needs and the school's approach to students who need to take medication at school.
- dealing sympathetically with each request from parents that medication be administered to their child at school.
- ensuring that parents' cultural and religious views are always respected.
- ensuring that all staff are aware of the Medical Care Policy and the procedures outlined within it.
- designating the co-ordination role to an 'identified' person (Additional Needs Co-ordinator)
- ensuring that staff who come in contact with the students are:
 - informed about the child's condition.
 - informed about how to assist in meeting their needs in the classroom.
 - aware of the procedure for coping with an emergency associated with that medical condition.
 - given appropriate support, advice and specialist training where necessary.
 - ensuring that medicines are stored safely in a secure place, specifically designated for that purpose.
 - arranging cover for members of staff while medication is prepared or administered, to avoid interruption before the procedure is completed.

- ensuring that supply teachers or other visiting professionals know about the medication needs of individual students and how these are to be met.
- arranging back up cover for when the member(s) of staff, normally responsible for administering medication to a student, is (are) absent or unavailable.
- ensuring that, when a post primary school arranges work experience, the placement is suitable for a student with a particular medical condition and encouraging such students to share relevant medical information with employers.
- asking the employer to provide written confirmation of the insurance cover for staff who provide specific medication support.

(iv) Responsibility of the Board of Governors

The Board of Governors are responsible for:

- ensuring their school develops its own policies to cover the needs of the school.
- ratifying all of the school's policies.
- following the health and safety policies and procedures produced by the ELBs and CCMS.
- taking account of the views of the Principal, staff and parents in developing a policy on assisting students with medication needs.

(v) Responsibility of the School Health Service

The School Health Service is responsible for providing a variety of services to schools including:

- health screening of students.
- immunisation programme.
- written advice to teaching staff on student health matters.
- medical advice for children who have special educational (including medical needs and health promotion activities).

(vi) Responsibility of The School Nurse

The school nurse oversees the health needs of children at school by working closely with children and young people, their families, school and health colleagues. The role of the School Nurse is diverse, ranging from the vaccination of large groups of students, to the identification of the health needs of individual children. The school nurse oversees the compilation of individual Medication Plans to identify how the health needs of the student can be best met within the school environment. He/she can provide information on a range of health issues, and may co-ordinate training programmes.

SECTION 4

The Administration of Medication

The Board of Governors and staff of St Louise's wish to ensure that students 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 students 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.

- Parents are responsible for providing the Principal with comprehensive information regarding the student's condition and medication if they are requesting that the school administer medication to their daughter/son. (AM2) – Appendix 1
- Staff will not give a non-prescribed medicine to a child unless there is specific prior written permission from the parents. This includes the administration of painkillers.
- Where the student travels on school transport with an escort, parents should ensure the escort has written

instructions relating to any medication sent with the student, including medication for administration during respite care.

- The school will keep records of medication administered, which they will have available for parents. (AM4 and AM5) – Appendix 2 and 3
- 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 a refusal of medicines results in an emergency, the school's emergency procedures will be followed.
- It is the responsibility of parents to notify the school in writing if the student's need for medication has ceased.
- The school will not make changes to dosages on parental instructions.
- For each student 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. (AM1) – Appendix 4
- Where it is appropriate to do so, students will be encouraged to carry and 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. (AM3) – Appendix 5
- Staff who volunteer to assist in the administration of medication will receive appropriate training/guidance through arrangements made with the School Health Service.
- The school will make every effort to continue the administration of medication to a student 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 student on a school trip if appropriate supervision cannot be guaranteed.

- All staff will be made aware of the procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency. – Emergency Call Form – Appendix 6

Students sometimes ask for painkillers at school such as paracetamol. School staff should never give non-prescribed medication to students unless there is specific prior permission from their parents.

SECTION 5

The Delivery, Storage and Disposal of Medication

- Prescribed medication will not be accepted in school without complete written and signed instructions from the parent.
- Each item of medication must be delivered to the Principal or designated member of staff, in normal circumstances by the parent, **in a secure and labelled container as originally dispensed**. Each item of medication must be clearly labelled with the following information:
 - Student'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.

- Only reasonable quantities of medication should be supplied to the school (for example, a maximum of four weeks supply at any one time).
- Medication will be kept in a secure place, out of the reach of students. Unless otherwise indicated all medication to be administered in school will be kept in a locked medicine cabinet.

- 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.
- 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.

SECTION 6

Confidentiality

- The Principal and school staff should treat medical information confidentially.
- The Principal or designated member or staff will consult with the parent, or the student if appropriate, as to who should have access to records and other information about the student's medical needs.
- The Principal or designated member or staff will consider how much other children should be told about the student's medical condition.
- The school will not disclose details of a child's condition to other students without the consent of the parent and the child if appropriate. If permission is given to disclose information the situation will be handled as sensitively as possible.

SECTION 7

Record Keeping

- The school will keep records of all medicines given to students - time, date and route of administration will be recorded.
- Staff, who administer medication, will complete and sign a record card each time they give medication to a student. (AM4 and AM5) – Appendix 2 and 3

SECTION 8

Training for Staff

- All staff will receive periodic training on common medical conditions (Allergic reactions/Anaphylaxis / Asthma / ADHD / Cystic Fibrosis / Diabetes / Epilepsy)
- All staff will receive periodic training in Emergency procedures.
- Staff working with students who have a significant and particular medical need will be invited to participate in an individual programme of training which will be child specific.
- The Principal or designated member of staff will maintain a record of the medical training provided for staff. (AM6) – Appendix 7

SECTION 9

Emergency Procedures

- All staff will be informed annually of all students with a medical condition.
- If a medical concern arises a member of the First Aid Team and Year Team will be sent for.
- In the event of a student who has a known medical condition with a medical care plan experiencing a medical emergency, staff will follow the advice given in that medical care plan.
- All staff will be aware of how to call emergency services. A copy of the Emergency Call Procedures will be displayed at reception and in all classrooms - Appendix 6
- Once an emergency call is made, parents will be contacted immediately. A member of staff will accompany the student to hospital and remain with her/him until their parent/guardian arrives.
- The member of staff should have details of health care needs, medication and a copy of the medical care plan (if one is in place).

- The incident should be fully recorded.

In all emergency situations a teacher or other member of school staff will be expected to act as a responsible adult or parent and to act in the best interests of the child in recognition of their duty of care. If in doubt staff should always phone for the emergency services.

SECTION 10

Related Policies

This policy is set within the broader context of Pastoral Care and, as such, should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Attendance Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Concerns/Complaints Policy
- Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers
- Drugs Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy

SECTION 11

Monitoring and Evaluating

The Medical Care Policy will be monitored and evaluated annually.