

Supporting Children with Medical Needs Policy

St. Thomas More's Catholic Primary School



Approved by the Governing Body

Autumn 2026

Next Review:

Autumn 2028

Our Mission Statement

As we walk together with Jesus we love, live and learn.

Introduction

Most pupils will at some time have a medical condition that may affect their participation in school activities. For many this will be short term. Other children have medical conditions that, if not properly managed, could limit their access to education. Such pupils are regarded as having medical needs. Most of these children will be able to attend school regularly and take part in normal school activities.

This policy outlines responsibilities and procedures for supporting pupils at St Thomas More's Catholic Primary School who have medical needs.

The named person with responsibility for implementing this policy is Bridget Harris.

Parents and Guardians

- Parents are defined in the Education Act 1994, as the child's main carers. They are responsible for making sure that their child is well enough to attend school. Children should be kept at home when they are acutely unwell.
- Parents are responsible for providing the headteacher with sufficient information about their child's medical condition and treatment or special care needed at school.
- With the headteacher, they should reach agreement on the school's role in helping their child's medical needs. They should be involved in the drafting and review of their child's Individual Healthcare Plan.
- They should carry out any action they have agreed to as part of the implementation of the IHP, e.g. provide medicines and equipment, and ensure they or another nominated adult are contactable at all times.
- Where parents have difficulty understanding or supporting their child's medical condition themselves, **Essex Child and Family Well-being Health Service** can often provide additional assistance. However, ideally the head should seek parent's agreement before passing on information about their child's health to other school staff.
- Parents religion and cultural views should always be respected.

The Governing Body

- The governing body must ensure arrangements are in place to support pupils with medical conditions and ensure that such children can access and enjoy the same opportunities at school as any other child.
- The governing body has a duty to ensure that their insurance arrangements provide cover for staff to act within the school of their employment; that the procedures outlined in this policy are followed, and that any necessary training is made available to staff.

The Headteacher

- The headteacher is responsible for implementing the governing body's policy in practice and for developing detailed procedures.
- When teachers volunteer to give pupils help with their medical needs, the head should agree to their doing this, and must ensure that teachers receive proper support and training where necessary.
- Day to day decisions about administering medication will normally fall to the headteacher.
- The head is also responsible for making sure parents are aware of the school's policy and procedure for dealing with medical needs. The head is responsible for arranging back-up cover when the member of staff responsible for a pupil with medical needs is absent or unavailable.

Teachers and other School Staff

- Teachers who have pupils with medical needs in their class should understand the nature of the condition and when and where the pupil may need extra attention.
- They should be aware of the likelihood of an emergency arising and what action to take if one occurs.
- If staff are to administer medication, they may only do so if they have had appropriate training.

Pupils

Pupils with medical conditions will often be best placed to provide information about how their condition affects them. Where appropriate, pupils should be fully involved in discussions about their medical support needs and contribute as much as possible to the development of their IHPs. They are also expected to comply with their IHPs.

School nurses and other healthcare professionals

Our school nursing service will notify the school when a pupil has been identified as having a medical condition that will require support in school. This will be before the pupil starts school, wherever possible. They may also support staff to implement a child's IHP.

Healthcare professionals, such as GPs and paediatricians, will liaise with the school's nurses and notify them of any pupils identified as having a medical condition. They may also provide advice on developing IHPs.

Equal opportunities

Our school is clear about the need to actively support pupils with medical conditions to participate in school trips and visits, or in sporting activities, and not prevent them from doing so.

The school will consider what reasonable adjustments need to be made to enable these pupils to participate fully and safely on school trips, visits and sporting activities.

Risk assessments will be carried out so that planning arrangements take account of any steps needed to ensure that pupils with medical conditions are included. In doing so, pupils, their parents/carers and any relevant healthcare professionals will be consulted.

Being notified that a child has a medical condition

When the school is notified that a pupil has a medical condition, the process outlined below will be followed to decide whether the pupil requires an IHP.

The school will make every effort to ensure that arrangements are put into place within 2 weeks, or by the beginning of the relevant term for pupils who are new to our school.

See Appendix 1.

Individual healthcare plans (IHPs)

The headteacher has overall responsibility for the development of IHPs for pupils with medical conditions. This has been delegated to the SENCO and Assistant SENCO.

Plans will be reviewed at least bi-annually, or earlier if there is evidence that the pupil's needs have changed.

Plans will be developed with the pupil's best interests in mind and will set out:

- What needs to be done
- When
- By whom

Not all pupils with a medical condition will require an IHP. It will be agreed with a healthcare professional and the parents/carers when an IHP would be inappropriate or disproportionate. This will be based on evidence. If there is no consensus, the headteacher will make the final decision.

Plans will be drawn up in partnership with the school, parents/carers and a relevant healthcare professional, such as the school nurse, specialist or paediatrician, who can best advise on the pupil's specific needs. The pupil will be involved wherever appropriate.

IHPs will be linked to, or become part of, any education, health and care (EHC) plan. If a pupil has special educational needs (SEN) but does not have an EHC plan, the SEN will be mentioned in the IHP.

The level of detail in the plan will depend on the complexity of the child's condition and how much support is needed. The governing board, Headteacher and SENCO will consider the following when deciding what information to record on IHPs:

- The medical condition, its triggers, signs, symptoms and treatments
- The pupil's resulting needs, including medication (dose, side effects and storage) and other treatments, time, facilities, equipment, testing, access to food and drink where this is used to manage their condition, dietary requirements and environmental issues, e.g. crowded corridors, travel time between lessons
- Specific support for the pupil's educational, social and emotional needs. For example, how absences will be managed, requirements for extra time to complete exams, use of rest periods or additional support in catching up with lessons, counselling sessions
- The level of support needed, including in emergencies. If a pupil is self-managing their medication, this will be clearly stated with appropriate arrangements for monitoring
- Who will provide this support, their training needs, expectations of their role and confirmation of proficiency to provide support for the pupil's medical condition from a healthcare professional, and cover arrangements for when they are unavailable
- Who in the school needs to be aware of the pupil's condition and the support required
- Arrangements for written permission from parents/carers and the headteacher for medication to be administered by a member of staff, or self-administered by the pupil during school hours
- Separate arrangements or procedures required for school trips or other school activities outside of the normal school timetable that will ensure the pupil can participate, e.g. risk assessments
- Where confidentiality issues are raised by the parent/carer or pupil, the designated individuals to be entrusted with information about the pupil's condition
- What to do in an emergency, including who to contact and contingency arrangements

Managing medicines

Prescription and non-prescription medicines will only be administered at school:

- When it would be detrimental to the pupil's health or school attendance not to do so **and**
- Where we have parents/carers' written consent

Pupils under 16 will not be given medicine containing aspirin unless prescribed by a doctor.

Anyone giving a pupil any medication (for example, for pain relief) will first check maximum dosages and when the previous dosage was taken. Parents/carers will always be informed.

The school will only accept prescribed medicines that are:

- In-date

- Labelled
- Provided in the original container, as dispensed by the pharmacist, and include instructions for administration, dosage and storage

The school will accept insulin that is inside an insulin pen or pump rather than its original container, but it must be in date.

All medicines will be stored safely. Pupils will be informed about where their medicines are at all times and be able to access them immediately. Medicines and devices such as asthma inhalers, blood glucose testing meters and adrenaline pens will always be readily available to pupils and not locked away.

Medicines will be returned to parents/carers to arrange for safe disposal when no longer required.

Unacceptable practice

School staff should use their discretion and judge each case individually with reference to the pupil's IHP, but it is generally not acceptable to:

- Prevent pupils from easily accessing their inhalers and medication, and administering their medication when and where necessary
- Assume that every pupil with the same condition requires the same treatment
- Ignore the views of the pupil or their parents/carers
- Ignore medical evidence or opinion (although this may be challenged)
- Send children with medical conditions home frequently for reasons associated with their medical condition or prevent them from staying for normal school activities, including lunch, unless this is specified in their IHPs
- If the pupil becomes ill, send them to the school office or medical room unaccompanied or with someone unsuitable
- Penalise pupils for their attendance record if their absences are related to their medical condition, e.g. hospital appointments
- Prevent pupils from drinking, eating or taking toilet or other breaks whenever they need to in order to manage their medical condition effectively
- Require parents/carers, or otherwise make them feel obliged, to attend school to administer medication or provide medical support to their pupil, including with toileting issues. No parent/carer should have to give up working because the school is failing to support their child's medical needs
- Prevent pupils from participating, or create unnecessary barriers to pupils participating in any aspect of school life, including school trips, e.g. by requiring parents/carers to accompany their child
- Administer, or ask pupils to administer, medicine in school toilets

Emergency procedures

Staff will follow the school's normal emergency procedures (for example, calling 999). All pupils' IHPs will clearly set out what constitutes an emergency and will explain what to do.

If a pupil needs to be taken to hospital, staff will stay with the pupil until the parent/carer arrives, or accompany the pupil to hospital by ambulance.

Training

Staff who are responsible for supporting pupils with medical needs will receive suitable and sufficient training to do so.

The training will be identified during the development or review of IHPs. Staff who provide support to pupils with medical conditions will be included in meetings where this is discussed.

The relevant healthcare professionals will lead on identifying the type and level of training required and will agree this with the headteacher / Senco. Training will be kept up to date.

Training will:

- Be sufficient to ensure that staff are competent and have confidence in their ability to support the pupils
- Fulfil the requirements in the IHPs
- Help staff to have an understanding of the specific medical conditions they are being asked to deal with, their implications and preventative measures

Healthcare professionals will provide confirmation of the proficiency of staff in a medical procedure, or in providing medication.

All staff will receive training so that they are aware of this policy and understand their role in implementing it, for example, with preventative and emergency measures so they can recognise and act quickly when a problem occurs. This will be provided for new staff during their induction.

Record keeping

The governing board will ensure that written records are kept of all medicine administered to pupils for as long as these pupils are at the school. Parents/carers will be informed if their pupil has been unwell at school.

IHPs are displayed in a readily accessible place that all staff are aware of:

Staff Room; Office; Headteacher's Office; Kitchen; child's classroom.

Liability and indemnity

The governing board will ensure that the appropriate level of insurance is in place and appropriately reflects the school's level of risk.

We purchase insurance via Essex County Council's academy Insurance framework with Zurich.

Complaints

Parents/carers with a complaint about the school's actions in regard to their child's medical condition should discuss these directly with the headteacher / Senco in the first instance. If the Headteacher cannot resolve the matter, they will direct parents/carers to the school's complaints procedure.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the governing board every two years.

Links to other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Accessibility plan
- Complaints
- Equality information and objectives
- First aid
- Health and safety
- Safeguarding
- Special educational needs information report and policy
- Medicines
- Allergy Policy

Appendix 1: Being notified a child has a medical condition

