

Administration of Medication to Students – Procedures



St Elizabeth's is a school which operates with the consent of the Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne and is owned, operated and governed by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS).

Purpose

St Elizabeth's seeks to provide, as far as practicable, a safe and supportive environment for all of its students. The school seeks to facilitate the safe participation of all students in the educational experiences offered by the school. In accord with the Medical Management Policy, where students have been diagnosed with a medical condition and require the administration of medication at school, St Elizabeth's requires parents/guardians/carers to provide relevant information to enable it to carry out its duty of care obligations through a Medical Management Plan and Medication Authority Form.

St Elizabeth's will implement the following procedures, which support inclusion, protect student safety, privacy and confidentiality, in the administration of medication to students.

Scope

The Administration of Medication to Students Procedures are part of the Medical Management Policy which applies to:

- all staff, including casual relief staff and volunteers
- all students who require the administration of medication
- parents/guardians/carers of students who require the administration of medication.

Procedures

As reflected in the school's enrolment agreement and Medical Management Policy, parents/guardians/carers are required to provide the school with up-to-date medical information to support inclusion and enable the school to carry out its duty of care.

Parents/guardians/carers are responsible for the provision of a Medical Management Plan and, where applicable, a Medication Authority Form, which references the diagnosed medical need and the medication to be administered. The school is responsible for administration of medication in accordance with the medication authority documented in the Medical Management Plan for the student.

In implementing the Medical Management Policy and these procedures, the school will prioritise student safety, privacy and confidentiality.

Medical Management Plan

The school's Medical Management Policy outlines the requirements for the management of health conditions (other than medication to treat anaphylaxis which is provided for in both the First Aid and Anaphylaxis policies).

Medications may only be administered to students in accordance with written medication authority together with a fully completed, signed and dated Medical Management Plan for ongoing medical needs or a letter provided by a registered health practitioner regarding the presenting health needs.

A Medical Management Plan should include written advice related to the medical condition covering the need for the medication, prescribed dosage, method and timing for administering the medication. Medication should be provided to the school administration by the parent/guardian/carer in the original container and the label outlines instructions for administration/application of the medication, as well as relevant storage instructions, particularly regarding temperature.

Storing medication

Parents/guardians/carers are responsible for providing medication that is within its expiry date and replacing medication, if necessary, that has expired. Medication that is within its expiry date will be stored safely and securely and in accordance with relevant storage instructions. The quantity of medication stored will not exceed a week of supply, other than in circumstances where a long-term arrangement has been implemented in accordance with the Medical Management Plan and documented student's health care needs.

Note: Medication such as aspirin and paracetamol will not be stored (or administered) for first aid purposes as these medications may mask symptoms of serious conditions.

Administering medication to students

Where students require that medication be administered to them, the school will first explore with parents/guardians/carers whether they may administer the medication outside the school day, rather than have staff administer the medication at school. Where the medication must be administered at school, a Medical Management Plan and up-to-date Medication Authority Form is required (Refer Medical Management Policy).

In case of an allergic reaction, the first dose of any required medication should not be taken at school but rather under the supervision of a parent/guardian/carer or health professional.

In instances where the student's Medical Management Plan indicates that medication is to be administered to students by staff at school, this will occur only:

- where a Medical Management Plan and Medication Authority Form includes authority to administer the specified medication and has been provided to the school including all necessary information
- under the authority of the principal
- where the medication has been appropriately stored and provided in the original packaging
- in accordance with applicable instructions regarding the dosage, the method and the timing of administration of the medication and its expiry date, as recorded on the original label provided with the original container for the medication
- where provided to the prescribed student
- where the administration is recorded in a medication log, maintained by the school, which records the name of the student, the name of two staff members present to administer the medication, the date and time of administration, the medication administered and the dosage.

Staff who are responsible for the supervision of a student who is to receive medication at a given time are to be informed that the student is to be released to obtain their medication.

In any instance where a staff member is concerned about a student's reaction after receiving medication, the staff member should seek emergency medical assistance.

Students self-administering medication

The school will consult with parents/guardians/carers (or adult or independent students) and, where appropriate, relevant health practitioners to determine circumstances where a student may self-administer medication at school.

A student may carry medication (other than for asthma or anaphylaxis which is not restricted) at school for self-administration where:

- this has been approved by the principal, after considering also the safety of other students
- it is in accordance with written permission provided by a registered health practitioner such as in a Medical Management Plan, Medication Authority Form or in limited circumstances, where such written permission cannot be provided by a registered health practitioner, by the authorised parents/guardians/carers (or adult or independent students)
- the medication does not have particular storage requirements that prevent it.

Where an error occurs

Where an error occurs in relation to the correct administration or to self-administration of medication, staff need to take the following steps in response:

- administer first aid as required
- call the Poisons Information Line (13 11 26) and ambulance (000) as required
- notify the parents/guardians/carers of the error and what has been done following the error
- review the school's first aid procedures, as appropriate
- contact their Regional Office and advise the Regional General Manager of the incident and complete an Incident Report.