

Physical and neurological impairment (PNI)



Guidance on Sleeping in School

Section 100 of the Children and Families Act 2014 places a duty on governing bodies of maintained schools, proprietors of academies and management committees of Pupil Referral Units to make arrangements for supporting pupils at their school who have medical conditions.

Key points

- **Pupils at school with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education.**
- **Governing bodies must ensure that arrangements are in place in schools to support pupils at school with medical conditions.**
- **Governing bodies should ensure that school leaders consult health and social care professionals, pupils and parents to ensure that the needs of children with medical conditions are properly understood and effectively supported.**

This guidance specifically considers those children/young people who need to sleep during the school day as a result of their medical condition. While there are a wide variety of medical conditions resulting in fatigue and tiredness, the need to sleep in school may be triggered by some of the following conditions:

- Epilepsy
- Cancer and Cancer treatments
- Undergoing Radiotherapy or Chemotherapy
- Ehlers-Danlos syndrome
- Diabetes
- Narcolepsy
- Stroke
- Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis
- Neurofibromatosis
- Muscular Dystrophy

This is not an extensive list, as there are many rare medical conditions and treatments that also result in tiredness.

Any child with medical needs would have a Care Plan in place detailing the medical needs, intervention (where appropriate) and medication, and may have the support of the school nurse and/or specialist nurses.

In the first instance there would need to be a conversation with parents regarding their child's tiredness and how this impacts on their school day. This could be highlighted through reduced attendance, unexpected lateness and/or changes in patterns to attendance. In those instances where a child may require a longer night sleep to account for disruption to sleep, it would be more beneficial for a child to start the school day later than the official start time. In collaboration with

parents and the Head Teacher it is possible for a child to have a flexible timetable to compensate for medical needs.

Does the child need to sleep in school as a result of their medical condition?

There are often situations where a short sleep (less than hour) helps a child to feel refreshed and able to carry on with learning.

Schools should consider:

- **Having a Sleep Plan.** As part of the Care Plan there should be a section on the child's need to sleep in school, which sets out the protocol for sleeping in school, detailing:
 - location, duration, monitoring, wake-up procedure
- **Having a suitable a place/space to sleep.** Creating a suitable place for a child who needs to sleep is easily managed with a flexible approach. The child may be equally comfortable sleeping on a large cushion/bean bag as a bed. This can be in the corner of a classroom, library, on soft seating within a corridor, or any other suitable, quiet space. It need not be the medical room as this is often used for emergencies. Some schools may wish to provide a screen to maintain privacy/dignity, although this is not necessarily required. It is helpful to have a small pillow and blanket available, should the child want these.
- **Allowing appropriate length of sleep.** The length of the sleep must be discussed with parents, as they will know how much sleep their child typically needs. If it is more than an hour then the plan will need to be reviewed.
- **Keeping a sleep monitoring chart.** It is important to log each sleep a child has, how long they slept for and for what reason. This should be shared with parents as will demonstrate the sleep patterns of their child. While the child is sleeping it is important that they are checked frequently to ensure they are safe.

Reviewing the **Sleeping in School Plan**

The monitoring plan should be reviewed each week, with the Sleeping Plan being reviewed when there are any changes in the sleep pattern and or/medication. It is recommended that any Care Plan is reviewed each half term to ensure that details and training are up to date and actions are agreed with parents.

Useful resource

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/484418/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions.pdf

