

“Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions”, DfE April 2015

In September 2014 (updated December 2015) a new duty came into force for governing bodies to ensure arrangements are in place in school to support pupils with medical conditions.

The guidance includes statutory and non-statutory advice under the Children and Families Act 2014. The statutory guidance applies to all maintained schools, academies and free schools. For children with SEN&D, this guidance should be read in conjunction with the new SEND Code of Practice.

The new guidance document reiterates existing good practice and clarifies accountability.

Children and young people with medical conditions are entitled to a full education and have the same rights of admission to school as other children. This means that no child with a medical condition should be denied admission or prevented from taking up a place in school because arrangements for their medical condition have not been made. The governing body must ensure that arrangements are in place to ensure that such children can access and enjoy the same opportunities at school as any other child.

Governing bodies should ensure schools develop a policy for supporting pupils with medical conditions that is reviewed regularly and is readily accessible to parents and school staff. This policy may be a separate policy or may be a sub-section included in the school's existing SEN & Disability policy, however, it should include the following:

- a named person who has overall responsibility for policy implementation and ensuring that sufficient staff are suitably trained;
- the procedures to be followed when a parent notifies the school of a medical condition and details of how all relevant staff will be made aware of this;
- cover arrangements in case of staff absence or staff turnover to ensure someone is always available;
- details of how supply teachers will be briefed;
- arrangements for risk assessments for school visits and other school activities outside of the normal timetable;
- monitoring of individual healthcare plans;
- arrangements at points of transition when pupils change classes or schools;
- what should happen in an emergency situation.

Where a child has an individual healthcare plan, this should clearly define what constitutes an emergency and explain what to do, including ensuring that all relevant staff are aware of emergency symptoms and procedures. Other pupils in the school should know what to do in general terms, such as informing a teacher immediately if they think help is needed.

Although there is no requirement on teaching staff to administer medicines or undertake personal and health care procedures, governing bodies are required to ensure there are arrangements in place, including ensuring sufficient members of support staff are appropriately trained to undertake these roles as part of their core job description.

Link to new guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions>

Schools will find the following web resource helpful, which includes model policies:

<http://medicalconditionsatschool.org.uk/documents/Medical-Conditions-Policy.pdf>

Nasen has brought out a helpful resource to assist schools with updating their SEN&D Policies to reflect recent changes to legislation, the new SEND Code of Practice and the Guidance on supporting pupils with medical needs.

<http://www.nasen.org.uk>