

# Administering Prescribed Medication

## Guidelines and Procedures

There are implications for the Board when a student's access to education is dependent on taking prescribed medication during school hours, or when this is necessary for the school to maintain a safe physical and emotional environment. Rights and duties will need to be balanced so that policy and actions comply with the law and also meets the needs of the school community. The Board notes its requirement to comply with the Education Act 1989 and the Human Rights Act 1993 that ensure a student's right to access to, and receive, education.

**Aim:** As an integral part of their pastoral care duties, some school staff members may accept nursing/parenting roles such as administering antibiotics or providing medication for head-aches. Other examples that may be encountered are requests from parents or guardians for administering medication for asthmatics, diabetics and children with Attention Disability Disorder (ADD) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) during school hours. The Aim of this policy is to prescribe the requirements necessary to meet the schools obligations for the administration of prescribed medication by school staff, parents or guardians or other appointed personnel.

At West Park School:

1. **Students have a right** to receive prescribed medication in school hours if this enables them to access education.
2. **Staff members have a right** to choose whether or not to take responsibility for administering prescribed medication to a student. An exception to this is when the role is specified in an employee's job description.
3. **The Board has a duty** to maintain a safe physical and emotional environment.
4. The Principal ensures that all parents or guardians and staff are aware of the School's procedures concerning the administration of medication.
5. It is advisable Parents or guardians wishing staff or other persons to administer prescribed medication to students during school hours should provide the School with a medical statement that it is acceptable for a non-medical staff member to hold responsibility for administering the medication. This statement should be sighted before a staff member agrees to take responsibility for administering prescribed medication. An example of such a form is attached.
6. Staff do not administer non-prescription medicine (e.g. for headache etc) without first obtaining the permission of the student's parent or guardian. This may be verbal obtained by telephone if necessary. Each instance of administering such medication should be included in the Register.
7. It is the parent's or guardian's responsibility to inform the school of any change in the student's medical circumstance.
8. Staff members who elect to administer medication to students should ensure that they receive appropriate information/training. By law, the medical practitioner's directions must be included on the label of all dispensed medication. It is essential that the person administering the medication follow these directions.
9. All reasonable care with security is taken where medications and drugs are held or administered on school premises. Storage is safe and secure at all times.
10. Teachers who administer medication may also be subject to the **Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights**. However, whether anyone is in breach of the Code will depend on if they acted reasonably in the circumstances. For example, it would be considered relevant that the medication was administered at the parent's request under a doctor's instructions. It is important that a staff member does not do anything required to be done by a medical professional. Staff who exercise care and act in accordance with a parent's or doctor's instructions have little to fear from the Code.

**Reviewed: DECEMBER 2020**

