



South Tyneside: Non-Prescribed Medicines in Schools

The following recommendations have been developed by representatives from South Tyneside Council and South Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

Objective: To provide clear guidance for schools in South Tyneside regarding management of non-prescribed (over the counter) medicines.

Background;

Generally, schools have their own policies regarding supporting pupils with medicines based on the national guidance and templates described in the National Statutory framework guidance.^(1, 2, 3)

This guidance states:

“Medicine (both prescription and non-prescription) must only be administered to a child where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child’s parent and/or carer. Providers must keep a written record each time a medicine is administered to a child, and inform the child’s parents and/or carers on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable”

“Prescription medicines must not be administered unless they have been prescribed for a child by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist (medicines containing aspirin should only be given if prescribed by a doctor)”

“schools should only accept **prescribed** medicines if these are in-date, labelled, provided in the original container as dispensed by a pharmacist and include instructions for administration, dosage and storage”

These recommendations are reflected in the schools local policies and are on occasions interpreted that **all** medicines are required to be prescribed in order for the taking of them to be supported in the school setting.

Over the counter medicines:

Non-prescribed medicines are those that have been obtained without a prescription and are often called over the counter (OTC) medicines which refer to those medicines available for the general public to purchase and use to self-treat minor ailments. These products are available from pharmacies but also from supermarkets and other sources such as corner shops and fuel stations (usually with a smaller range of products). However, in a pharmacy, advice regarding the provision of OTC products is accessible from trained staff with further information/advice from the pharmacist who is qualified to diagnose and treat minor illnesses.

All licensed OTC products have printed information regarding the medicine, dosage, side effects and expiry date as part of the packaging requirements.

Prescribing issue:

Interpretation of the national guidance by schools is such that only medicines that have been prescribed and subsequently dispensed by a pharmacy may be supported in the school setting. On occasions this results in parents being asked to

obtain a prescription for medicine which could be purchased over the counter in order for the administration to be supported during the school day.

If the conditions being treated are time limited minor ailments, GPs are recommended⁽⁴⁾ to signpost people to self-treat with OTC products and seek advice from the pharmacist which conflicts with the request from the school regarding prescribing of medicines.

It is important to recognise that there may be circumstances where the product licence doesn't allow the product to be sold over the counter to certain groups of patients. This may vary by medicine, but could include children. Community Pharmacists will be aware of what these are and can advise accordingly.

Recommendations:

South Tyneside Council and South Tyneside CCG have considered the national guidance and current policy recommendations regarding medicines in schools. In order to support schools to support pupils who may require medicines for minor ailments during the school day, the following considerations should be made:

Prescribed medicines

- As defined in the national and local guidance, these medicines should be prescribed and dispensed with an **appropriate label** to indicate who they are prescribed for including the prescribed dosage instructions.
- **Written permission from the parent or guardian** is required to enable school to give it to the child or young person.

Non-prescribed medicines

- These must be in the original packaging from the manufacturer which includes the name of the medicine and recommended dosage range (ensure this includes the dosage range for the age of the child)
- **Written permission from the parent or guardian** is required including any information regarding when the dose is due to be given.
- GPs and other prescribers should not be required to write to confirm that it is appropriate to administer over the counter medicines – parents must provide this consent.

(Parental Agreement for a School to Administer Medicine is available in the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy and in [Appendix 1](#)).

Further considerations regarding non-prescribed (OTC) medicines:

- Non-prescribed medicines should be used on a time limited basis therefore if it appears that the child is frequently receiving this medicine, it may be appropriate to recommend that an appointment with the GP is needed to discuss the continued need for the medicine.

References:

1. Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage - Setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>
2. Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions -Statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academies in England
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/638267/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions.pdf
3. Supporting template documents <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3>
4. Conditions for which over the counter items should not routinely be prescribed in primary care: Guidance for CCGs <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/otc-guidance-for-ccgs.pdf>

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Appendix 1 Parental agreement for setting to administer medicine

(taken from Department for Education guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3>)

The school/setting will not give your child medicine unless you complete and sign this form, and the school or setting has a policy that the staff can administer medicine.

Date for review to be initiated by	
Name of school/setting	
Name of child	
Date of birth	
Group/class/form	
Medical condition or illness	

Medicine

Name/type of medicine <i>(as described on the container)</i>	
Expiry date	
Dosage and method	
Timing	
Special precautions/other instructions	
Are there any side effects that the school/setting needs to know about?	
Self-administration – y/n	
Procedures to take in an emergency	

NB: Medicines must be in the original container as dispensed by the pharmacy
Contact Details

Name	
Daytime telephone no.	
Relationship to child	
Address	
I understand that I must deliver the medicine personally to	[agreed member of staff]

The above information is, to the best of my knowledge, accurate at the time of writing and I give consent to school/setting staff administering medicine in accordance with the school/setting policy. I will inform the school/setting immediately, in writing, if there is any change in dosage or frequency of the medication or if the medicine is stopped.

Signature(s) _____

Date _____