

Supporting Children with Medical Conditions

Introduction

At Grass Roots Day Nursery, children with medical conditions, in terms of both physical and mental health, will be properly supported whilst in our settings so that they can play a full and active role in nursery life, remain healthy and achieve their academic potential and that they can access and enjoy the same opportunities at nursery as any other child.

We recognise that children with long-term and complex medical conditions may require on-going support, medicines or care while at nursery to help them to manage their condition and keep them well. Others may require monitoring and interventions in emergency circumstances.

Grass Roots Day Nursery recognises that each child's needs are individual. We also recognise that needs may change over time, and that this may result in extended absence from nursery. We will make every effort to minimise the impact on a child's educational attainment and support their emotional and general well-being, including any necessary resettling in sessions. The nursery will focus on giving children and their parents every confidence in the our approach.

We recognise that some children who require support with their medical conditions may also have special educational needs and may have an Education Healthcare Plan (EHCP). We will work together with other settings, health professionals, other support services and the Local Authority.

No child with a medical condition will be denied admission to nursery on the grounds that arrangements for his or her medical condition have not been made. In line with our safeguarding duties, we do not have to accept a child in nursery at times where it would be detrimental to the health of that child or others to do so.

Policy Implementation

- The management team will ensure that sufficient staff are suitably trained.
- All relevant staff will be made aware of the child's condition.
- Cover arrangements will be put in place to cover for staff absence, to ensure that someone is always available.
- Supply staff will be briefed.
- Risk assessments will be put in place for educational visits, and other school activities outside the normal timetable.
- Individual healthcare plans will be monitored frequently. Procedure to be followed when notification is received that a pupil has a medical condition

We, in consultation with all relevant stakeholders including parents, will where needed:

- ensure that arrangements are put into place to cover transition from another setting, upon being notified that a child is coming into nursery with a medical condition (these may vary from child to child, according to existing HCPs if in place)
- ensure that arrangements are implemented following resettling into nursery after extended absence or when the needs of a child change
- aim to put arrangements into place in time for the requested start date or as soon as possible
- provide support to pupils where it is judged by professionals that there is likely to be a medical condition (where evidence conflicts, some degree of challenge may be necessary to ensure that the right support can be put into place)
- any staff training needs are identified and met

Individual Healthcare Plans

The management team will be responsible for arranging Healthcare Plans. Their purpose is to ensure that they provide clarity about what needs to be done, when and by whom. They will often be essential, such as in cases where conditions fluctuate or where there is a high risk that emergency intervention will be needed, and they are likely to be helpful in the majority of other cases, especially where medical conditions are long-term and complex. However, not all children will require one. The nursery, healthcare professionals and parents should agree, based on evidence, when a healthcare plan would be inappropriate or disproportionate. If consensus cannot be reached, the management team is best placed to take a final view.

The healthcare plan is a confidential document. The level of detail within will depend on the complexity of the child's condition and the degree of support needed. Where a child has a special educational need, but does not have an EHC plan, their special educational needs will be mentioned in their individual Healthcare Plan.

Individual healthcare plans, and their review, may be initiated, in consultation with the parent, by a member of nursery staff or a healthcare professional involved in providing care for the child. Plans will be drawn up in partnership between the nursery, parents, and a relevant healthcare professional, eg. Specialist or community nurse. The aim is to capture the steps which we should take to help the child manage their condition and overcome any potential barriers to getting the most from their time in nursery.

Responsibility for ensuring the plan is finalised rests with the nursery management team. The individual healthcare plans are reviewed at least annually, or earlier if evidence is presented that the child's needs have changed. The plans are devised with the child's best interests in mind, ensuring that an assessment of risk to the child's education, health and social well-being is managed, minimising disruption. Reviews will be linked to any Education Healthcare Plan the child may have.

The information to be recorded

When deciding on the information to be recorded on individual healthcare plans, the following will be considered:

- the medical condition, its triggers, signs, symptoms and treatment
- the child's resulting needs, including medication (dose, side-effects and storage) and other treatments, time, facilities, equipment, testing, access to food and drink where this is used to manage their condition and dietary requirements
- the level of support needed, including in emergencies
- who will provide the support, their training needs, expectations of their role and confirmation of proficiency to provide support for the child's medical condition from a healthcare professional; and cover arrangements for when they are unavailable
- who in the nursery needs to be aware of the child's condition and the support required
- arrangements for written permission from parents for medication to be administered by a member of staff, or self-administered by the pupil during school hours
- separate arrangements or procedures required for trips or other activities outside of the norm that will ensure the child can participate, eg. Risk assessments
- where confidentiality issues are raised by the parent or child, the designated individuals to be entrusted with information about the child's condition
- what to do in an emergency, including whom to contact, and contingency arrangements. Some children may have an emergency healthcare plan prepared by their lead clinician that could be used to inform the development of their individual healthcare plan

Roles and responsibilities

Supporting a child with a medical condition during nursery hours is not the sole responsibility of one person. The nursery will work collaboratively; both with staff within the organisation and with outside agencies, as the circumstances of each child dictate.

Management team

The management team will ensure that children in nursery with medical conditions are supported. It will ensure that a policy is developed, implemented and monitored. They will ensure that staff receive suitable training and that they are competent to take on the responsibility to support children with medical conditions.

The management team will:

- ensure that the Supporting Children with Medical Conditions Policy is developed and effectively implemented with partners, including all staff and all are aware of the policy and that they understand their role in implementing the policy
- ensure that all staff who need to know are aware of a child's condition
- ensure that sufficient trained numbers of staff are available to implement the policy and deliver against all the individual healthcare plans, including in contingency and emergency situations
- have overall responsibility for the development of individual healthcare plans
- ensure that all staff are appropriately insured to support pupils in this way
- liaise with the health visitor and specialist nurses in respect of a child who has a medical condition, including in cases where the situation has not yet been brought to the attention of the health visiting service.

Nursery Staff

Any member of the nursery staff may be asked to provide support to children with medical conditions, including the administration of medicines, although they cannot be required to do so. Although administering medicines is not part of a practitioners professional duties, they should take into account the needs of children with medical conditions they care for. Any member of staff should know what to do and respond accordingly when they become aware that a child with a medical condition needs help.

Parents

Parents should provide the nursery with sufficient and up-to-date information about their child's medical needs. At Grass Roots Day Nursery, parents are seen as key partners and they will be involved in the development and review of their child's individual healthcare plan, and may be involved in its drafting.

Parents should carry out the action they have agreed to as part of its implementation, eg. Provide medicines and equipment and ensure they or another nominated adult are contactable at all times.

Staff training and support

Training needs for staff will be assessed by looking at the current and anticipated needs of pupils already on the roll. It may be possible to determine training needs by early information relating to a child about to be admitted to the nursery. All members of staff providing support to a child with medical needs will have been trained beforehand. Staff who provide support to pupils with medical conditions will be included in meetings where this is discussed.

The type of training, and frequency of refresher training, will be determined by the actual medical condition that a child may have and this will be supported by the management team. Some training may be arranged by the nursery, and other types may make use of the skills and knowledge provided

by the health visitor or specialist nurse services, among others. In some cases, the healthcare professional may be able to advise on easily accessible training. Other training may involve on-site or off-site provision.

Parents will be asked to supply specific advice and then this will be reinforced with healthcare professional advice. All staff will be made aware of the specific needs of each child with a medical condition and will be competent and confident enough to deliver the support.

It must be noted that a First Aid certificate alone will not suffice for training to support children with medical conditions. When training has taken place, nursery will ensure that a training record is completed for inclusion in the Health and Safety folder.

The child's role in managing their own medical needs

At Grass Roots Day nursery, the children who require medication or other procedures will receive them from a relevant member of staff. If a child refuses to take medicine or carry out a medical procedure, staff will not force them to do so, but follow the procedure agreed in the individual healthcare plan. Parents will be informed so that alternative options can be considered.

Managing medicines on school premises

Where clinically possible, medicines should be prescribed in dose frequencies which enable them to be taken outside nursery hours. Where this is not possible, the following will apply:

- Medicines will only be administered at nursery when it would be detrimental to a child's health or attendance not to do so.
- No child will be given prescription medicines without their parent's written consent.
- For the administering of non-prescription medicines during, parents should provide written consent and the medicines be clearly labelled with the child's name, date of birth and dosage.
- The nursery will only accept prescribed medicines that are in-date, labelled, provided in the original container, as dispensed by the pharmacist, and include instructions for administration, dosage and storage. The exception to this is insulin which must be in-date, but will generally be available to nursery inside an insulin pen or pump, rather than its original container.
- Medicines will be stored safely in the medicine cabinet. On educational visits, medicines will also be available and they will be looked after by a relevant member of staff.
- If a controlled drug has been prescribed, it will be kept securely and stored in a non-portable container named staff only will have access to such medication so that it can be administered to the specific child. The school will keep a record of doses administered, stating what, how and how much was administered, when and by whom any side effects of the medication to be administered will be noted.
- When no longer required, medicines should be returned to the parent to arrange for safe disposal. Written records will be kept of all medicines administered to children and parents will be informed if their child has been unwell at nursery.

Emergency procedures

A child's individual healthcare plan will clearly define what constitutes an emergency and the action to be taken, including ensuring that all relevant staff are aware of emergency symptoms and procedures.

If a child is taken to hospital, staff should stay with the child until the parent arrives, or accompany the child if they are taken to hospital by ambulance. Accurate information about the child will be provided to the emergency services at the call out stage, during any first response stage, or subsequent moving on to hospital.

Trips and energetic activities

The nursery will consider how a child's medical condition will impact on their participation. We will encourage all children to participate according to their ability and make any necessary reasonable adjustments, unless evidence from a clinician, such as a GP, states that this is not possible. We will consider what reasonable adjustments may need to be made after carrying out a risk assessment so that planning arrangements take account of any steps needed to ensure that children with medical conditions are included. This will require consultation with parents and pupils and advice from the relevant healthcare professional to ensure that children can participate safely.

Unacceptable practice

Although staff should use their discretion and judge each case on its merits with reference to the child's individual healthcare plan, it is not acceptable practice to:

- not administer their medication when and where necessary
- assume that every child with the same condition requires the same treatment
- ignore the views of the child or their parents; or ignore medical evidence or opinion, (although this may be challenged)
- send children with medical conditions home frequently or prevent them from staying for normal activities, unless this is specified in their individual healthcare plans
- penalise children for their attendance record if their absences are related to their medical condition eg. hospital appointments
- prevent children from drinking, eating or taking toilet or other breaks whenever they need to in order to manage their medical condition effectively
- require parents, or otherwise make them feel obliged, to attend nursery to administer medication or provide medical support to their child, including with toileting issues. No parent should have to give up working because the nursery is failing to support their child's medical needs
- prevent children from participating, or create unnecessary barriers to children participating in any aspect of nursery life, including trips or visits, i.e. by requiring parents to accompany the child

Liability and indemnity

The Directors of Grass Roots Day Nursery ensure that appropriate insurance is in place and that it reflects the level of risk. The insurance covers staff providing support to children with medical conditions. From time to time, the nursery may need to review the level of cover for health care procedures and any associated related training requirements.

Complaints

Parents who are dissatisfied with the support provided should discuss their concerns directly with the nursery. If for whatever reason this does not resolve the issue, they make a formal complaint via the nursery's complaints procedure.

Other issues for consideration

The nursery has a number of trained paediatric First Aiders amongst the staff.

This policy will be reviewed by management annually, who are responsible for ensuring the dissemination of this policy to all staff, volunteers and parents.