

2.1 Administering medication policy

Policy statement

At Perins Pre-school, we promote the good health of children attending pre-school and take necessary steps to prevent the spread of infection (see sickness and illness policy). If a child requires medicine, we will obtain information about the child's needs for this and will ensure this information is kept up to date.

We follow strict guidelines when dealing with medication of any kind in the setting and these are set out below.

The setting WILL NOT administer any medication unless prior written consent is given for each medicine. Medication must be in their original container with their instructions printed in English.

Illness

- If any child is brought to the setting in a condition in which he/she may require medication sometime during the day, the Manager or Deputy Manager will decide if the child is fit to be left at the nursery.
- For information on infection, control and infectious diseases visit the UK Health Security Agency website.
- If the child is deemed well enough to stay at the setting, the parent/ carer must be asked if any kind of medication has already been given, at what time and in what dosage and this will be recorded.

Medication in the Setting - General Guidance

- Before administering medication to any child, we will require written agreement from the parents.
- This agreement (usually a Medication Form) should include;
 - the child's full name
 - the name of the medication
 - the required dose and agreed time of administration.
- Medication is only accepted in its original labelled container.
- Where the medication is an adrenaline pen or inhaler (where there may be only occasional emergency use), it will have the expiry date of the medication recorded on the appropriate form.
- For non-prescription medication the pre-school reserves the right to determine the number of days the medication will be given before requesting parents/ carers further input or the advice of a healthcare professional. This will be based upon the individual child and condition.
- If at any time there is any doubt regarding the administration of medication to a child, practitioners will stop and check with the Manager or Deputy Manager before continuing.

Storage

All medication will;

- Be stored in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions on the container (e.g. cool dark place, refrigerated)
- Be stored in a closed box.
- Be kept out of the reach of children.
- Be in their original containers.
- Have labels which are legible and in English.
- Be clearly marked with child's name and date of birth.

Emergency medication, such as inhalers and Adrenaline (EpiPens), will be within easy reach of staff in case of an immediate need, but will remain out of children's reach.

Any 'stored' medication such as a stock of Paracetamol or a child's inhaler, will be regularly checked to ensure the product is still within its expiry and therefore suitable for use.

Medication Prescribed by a Doctor, Dentist, Nurse, or Pharmacist

(Medicines containing aspirin will only be given if prescribed by a doctor)

- Prescription only medicine will be given when prescribed by the above and only for the person named on the dispensing label on the bottle/container for the dosage stated.
- Medicines must be in their original containers.
- For all medication the parent/carer must give prior written permission for the administration of each medication. Written permission will be accepted once for a whole course of medication or for the ongoing use of a particular medication required for long term use.
- The parent/ carer will complete the relevant form to enable the nursery to administer the medication(s) required. The form will include;
 - Child's full name, date of birth
 - Name and strength of medication
 - Dose
 - Any additional requirements (such as to be taken with food)
 - Expiry date whenever possible
 - Dispensing date
- The written permission is only acceptable for the medication listed and cannot be used for similar types of medication, e.g. if the course of antibiotics changes
- Parents must notify the pre-school IMMEDIATELY if the child's circumstances change, e.g. a dose has been given at home, or a change in strength/dose needs to be given
- Any change in the details listed above must be recorded on a new form with counter signature from parent / carer.
- The setting will only administer as per the information listed on the form.
- At each visit the child's parent/ carer will be asked if there have been any changes to the requirements stated on the form. If there have been changes, a new form must be completed, and counter signed by parent/ carer.
- When the child is picked up from the setting, the parent/ carer must be given an update as to the times and dosage given throughout the day. The parent's signature must be obtained confirming this information has been given.
- At the time of administering the medicine, a senior member of staff will ask the child to take the medicine or offer it in a manner acceptable to the child at the prescribed time and in the prescribed form.
 - N.B. It is important to note that staff working with children are not legally obliged to administer medication.
- If the child refuses to take the appropriate medication a note will be made on the form. Where medication is "essential" or may have side effects, discussion with the parent will take place to establish the appropriate response. This will be documented on the form accordingly.

Non-prescription Medication (also known as over the counter medicine)

- If any child is brought to the pre-school in a condition in which he/she may require medication sometime during the day, the manager or deputy manager will decide if the child is fit to be left at pre-school.
- The setting will not administer any non-prescription medication containing aspirin.
- The setting will only administer non-prescribed medication for a short initial period and only if necessary. After this time parents / carers will be advised to seek medical advice
- The setting reserves their right to refuse to administer medication if they feel that the child does not need the medication or deem further medical attention is required.
- For all medication the parent/carer must give prior written permission for the administration of each medication
- Medicines must be in their original containers.
- During a pandemic such as coronavirus, children with high temperatures will be sent home and asked to have a government test. They will be allowed to return upon a negative test result.
- If a child needs liquid paracetamol or similar during their time at pre-school, the parent/carer will be contacted. Only 1 dose of liquid will be given if a child has a high temperature. Antihistamine will be given with permission if a child suffers a bee/wasp sting or an allergic reaction (with permission)
- The parent / carer will complete the relevant form to enable the nursery to administer the medication(s) required. The written permission is only acceptable for the medication listed and cannot be used for similar types of medication.

- We will give non – prescribed medication as a last resort and staff will use other methods first to alleviate symptoms.

Emergency Medication

At new registration of a child to the setting, parents will be asked if they are happy to give consent to ‘emergency’ treatment being given. This would be only deemed necessary for specific circumstances. Parents/ carers will be asked to complete a form to give consent. This form will include:

- The circumstances in which ‘emergency’ medication will be given e.g. High temperature (above 38°c)
- The specific medication (drug name) e.g. Paracetamol
- Dose to be administered will follow the guidance on the original container e.g. following age / dosage instructions
- Statement that medication will only be given if the pre-school is unable to contact the parent.
- An ‘emergency’ stock of medication may be kept on site.
- Stock medication will be kept in accordance with manufacturer’s instructions on the container (e.g. cool dark place, out of the reach of children)
- Stock will be checked at regular intervals to ensure there is ample supply and is still within its expiry date.
- If a child experiences symptoms of illness, attempts will be made to contact the child’s parents before administering ‘emergency’ medication.
- Where parents cannot be contacted the Manager or Deputy Manager will take the decision as to whether the child is suitable to receive the ‘emergency’ medication based on the symptoms and medical history of the child given at registration
- Administering ‘emergency’ non-prescription medication will be a last resort and staff will use other methods first to try and alleviate the symptoms. The child will be closely monitored until the parents collect the child.

Injections, Pessaries, Suppositories

As the administration of injections, pessaries and suppositories represents intrusive nursing, we will not administer these without appropriate medical training for every member of staff caring for this child. This training is specific for every child and not generic. The pre-school will do all it can to make any reasonable adjustments including working with parents and other professionals to arrange for appropriate health officials to train staff in administering the medication.

For children with long term medical requirements, an individual health care plan from the relevant health team will be in place to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to meet the child’s needs.

Administration

As a general guideline before administering medication to a child a manager will:

- Wash their hands.
- Ensure a drink is available if appropriate (some medication can irritate and damage the throat and oesophagus if administered without a drink)
- Check the label on the medication: name of child, dose, route of administration (e.g. by mouth, into ear/eye, rubbed on the skin), any special instructions and expiry date and ensure this is the same information on the Medication Form

If there is any doubt about any procedure, then the medication will not administer but seek advice from parent/ carer or health professional.

If a child refuses the medication, they must not be forced. Management can try to encourage them or perhaps get someone else to try. Under no circumstances should staff attempt to hide the medicine in food or drink unless there is express written permission from parents to do so.

It is normally considered poor practice to give medicines covertly, although in rare cases where the health professionals judge that it is in the child’s interests to do so, this is acceptable. Some children do find tablets difficult to swallow so may be given them, with their full knowledge, in, for example, a spoonful of jam. Even in these circumstances parents must give written instructions as some medicines can react with certain foods it is advisable; they have sought advice from their pharmacist before doing this.

Staff Fitness to Work & Staff Medication

- All staff have a responsibility to work with children only where they are fit to do so
- Staff must not work with children if they are infectious or too unwell to meet children's needs. This includes circumstances where medication taken by staff affects their ability to care for children, for example, where it makes a person drowsy.
- If staff members believe their condition, including any condition caused by taking medication, is affecting their ability to care for children they must inform the manager immediately.
- The manager will decide if a staff member is fit to work, including circumstances where other staff members notice changes in behaviour suggesting a person may be under the influence of medication. This decision will include any medical advice obtained by the individual or from an occupational health assessment.
- Where staff may occasionally or regularly need medication, any such medication must be kept in a separate container in the kitchen. If the medication is required to be accessed in an emergency, such as an asthma inhaler, this should be easily accessible but safe from children.
- In all cases medication must be stored out of reach of children. It must not be kept in the first aid box. It will be clearly labelled with the name of the member of staff.

Medication Errors

Occasionally mistakes may happen. In most cases, whether it is a missed dose, or a medicine given in error there will be no harm done. It is important to be open and honest if errors occur.

Parents should be contacted, and the mistake explained to them:

- In the case of a missed dose, the dose may be able to be given later. The parent may be able to advise.

Where a dose has been given in error, it is important the child is monitored for any reactions and medical advice sought if there are concerns. It is important to inform the parent/ carer as this may happen after the child leaves the setting.

The Manager will investigate all medication errors and put in preventative actions to ensure future errors do not occur.

Disposal of Medication

- Tablets and capsules are occasionally dropped on the floor or spat out. In this case we will place the tablet in a labelled envelope and hand to the parents to be disposed of later
- In no circumstances should it be flushed down the toilet or thrown in the bin
- When a child leaves the setting, ceases to need medication or if a medicine has passed its expiry date, we will return any unused quantity to the parents. If this is not possible then we will take it to a local pharmacist for safe disposal.

Medication stored in the setting will be regularly checked with the parents/carers to ensure that it continues to be required. Along with checking that the details of the medicine form remain current.

This policy was adopted by

Perins Pre-school

On

11th October 2024

Date to be reviewed

11th October 2025

Signed on behalf of the provider

Michelle Osman

Name of signatory

Michelle Osman

Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)

Pre-School Manager
