

DISTRIBUTING MEDICINE POLICY



PURPOSE

Newmark Primary is committed to the care, safety and welfare of students.

This policy sets out the principles and framework governing the school's behaviours and activities that enact the school's legal responsibilities and which support the care of students. The policy should be read and understood by staff, parents/carers and students.

PRINCIPLES

- The school and its staff have a duty of care towards its students.
- The school makes proper arrangements for distributing medicine for students who are ill or who have a medical condition that requires medication.

AIMS

- To provide the framework within which the detailed procedures for distributing medicine are set.
- To comply with the requirements of Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic) to develop and implement the following related policies and procedures:
 - First Aid;
 - Distributing Medicines;
 - Infection Control; and
 - Anaphylaxis Management.

LEGAL AND REGULATORY BASIS FOR COMPLIANCE

- Duty of Care
- Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)
- Education and Training Reform Regulations (2017)
- Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) Minimum Standards
- Worksafe Compliance Code – First Aid in the Workplace

KEY DEFINITIONS

WorkSafe Victoria's compliance code *First Aid in the Workplace* - The compliance code is drafted with the first aid needs of employees in mind, but the guidance is also relevant to schools in meeting the first aid needs of students. Although non-mandatory, 'evidence of a failure to observe the compliance code may be used as evidence in proceedings for an offence under the OHS Act or Regulations'.

As part of the **duty of care** owed to students, teachers are required to administer first aid, including assisting students to take medication, within the limits of their skill, expertise and training. It should be noted that a teacher's duty is greater than that of the ordinary citizen in

that a teacher is obliged to assist an injured student, while the ordinary citizen may choose to do nothing.

Non-teaching staff do not have the same legal duty of care. The school may, however, still ask non-teaching staff to assist students to take their medication when required. In making such a request, the school retains its duty of care (which is non delegable) and so must ensure that the staff concerned have proper training and support and should always be able to contact another member of staff if assistance or advice is needed. The school must have appropriate procedures in place so that staff know what is expected of them and how to respond in particular situations.

The administration of medicines must be **authorised in writing** by parents/carers. The written authorisation should state: the medicine to be taken, dosage, time to be administered, the period for which the authorisation is valid, appropriate storage requirements and any special instructions. The school may require the authorisation to be completed by the student's medical or health practitioner.

In the case of an **emergency**, authorisation to administer medication may be given verbally or, if parents/carers cannot be contacted, by a registered medical practitioner or an emergency service.

The school will retain records of such authorisations within the **student's medical record**.

In the case of serious health conditions (anaphylaxis, severe asthma, epilepsy, diabetes, etc.), the authorisation to administer medication (including, self-administration where this is authorised) will be included as part of the student's individual health plan. The school will require the **first dose of any new medication** to be administered by the family or health practitioner in order to monitor any allergic reaction. It is not the school's role to monitor the effects of any medication.

The school will encourage parents/carers to administer medication before or after school wherever possible.

The school must ensure a **log or record** is retained of all medicine administered. Such records should be retained within the student's medical record. It is good practice for medicine to be administered and recorded in the presence of two members of staff, where possible.

When considering whether it is appropriate for the **self-administration of medicines**, the school must consult with parents/carers (and the student's health practitioner) taking into account the age of the student and any other circumstances. The self-administration of medicines must be authorised in writing by parents/carers.

The school must put procedures in place to manage the self-administration of medicines including arrangements for supervision and record keeping.

Where possible, the school will store self-administered medicine. Factors to be taken into consideration when permitting students to **carry their own medication** should include:

- whether the student requires immediate access to the medication e.g. insulin
- any special storage requirements e.g. refrigeration
- the risk of unsafe access to medicines by other students.

The school will not store or administer **analgesics**, such as aspirin and paracetamol.

Medicine must be **stored** in its original container and according to the written instructions provided. The school will ensure the quantity of medicine is at a minimum, that the storage is secure and only accessible by authorised personnel. It is recommended that medicines are not kept in the classroom or in first aid kits.

Medicine must be administered only to the **student named** in the written authorisation, except in a life-threatening emergency.

In distributing medicine, the school must protect student **privacy** and confidentiality to avoid any stigmatisation.

SCOPE

The application of the policy is relevant to the school board, principal, staff, students and parents/carers.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The **school board** is responsible for:

- confirming that the school has a Distributing Medicine policy that is compliant with VRQA requirements and WorkSafe guidance; and
- reviewing and endorsing the Distributing Medicine policy.

The **principal** is responsible for:

- ensuring clear procedures and other implementation documents for the administration of medicines are developed and communicated; and
- reviewing the Distributing Medicine policy and procedures.

Parents/carers:

- have primary responsibility for the health of their child(ren), including for the administration of medicines; and
- are responsible for authorising the administration of medicines as required and for providing the school with accurate and up-to-date information about the health needs and the management of medical conditions.

Teachers (including casual relief teaching staff) have a duty of care to administer medicines when required and when authorised within the limits of their skill, expertise and training. Where possible, medicines should be administered by staff who have been designated as the first aid providers. However, in an emergency, other staff may be required to help within their level of competence.

Students who have been authorised to self-administer their medication should do so responsibly and must follow the school's procedures.

PROCEDURES

Parents/carers notify the school and fill in a Temporary Administration of Medication form.

The form and medication is stored with the First Aid supplies in the Front Office.

Relevant staff are notified of the temporary medication, and procedures are established based on information provided by parents/carers (e.g. time and dosage).

Parents/carers are required to collect any remaining medication according to the end date of the Temporary Administration of Medication form. If parents/carers are unable to collect the medication within a reasonable time frame, the school will responsibly dispose of the medication.

At the end of each school term, medication will be sent home.

COMMUNICATION OF POLICY

The school will ensure that the Distributing Medicine policy and procedures are understood by staff and parents/carers by:

- Making the policy accessible via the schools website and intranet; and
- Providing information to staff during staff meetings and onboarding.

RELATED POLICIES

- First Aid policy
- Anaphylaxis Management policy
- Infection Control policy
- Supervision Policy
- Outings, Camps and Events Policy
- Privacy policy
- Record Management policy

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- Register of Students Medical Conditions
- Accidents and Incident Register
- First Aid Staff Training Register

POLICY REVIEW

The school board and principal will review the Distributing Medicine Policy every second year, or following a major incident.

ENDORSEMENT

Updated date	May 2023
Endorsed by	School Board
Endorsed on	June 2023