

# NASUWT

The Teachers' Union  
NORTHERN IRELAND

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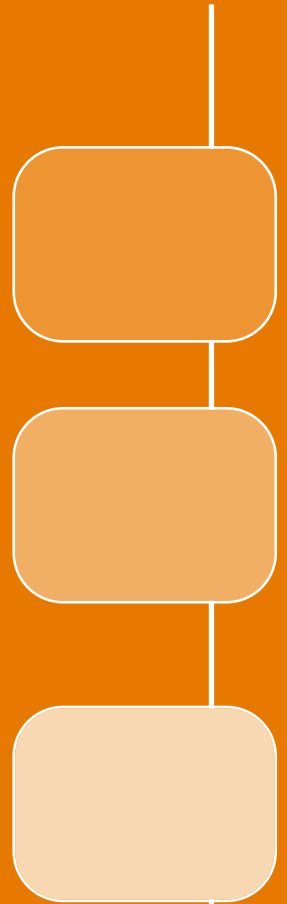
The Teachers' Union  
NORTHERN IRELAND

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***The largest teachers' union in Northern Ireland***

16/07007 Northern Ireland

## The Administration of Medicines



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This leaflet provides essential information and advice relating to the administration of medications to pupils.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

There is no legal requirement for any teacher to administer medication to a pupil. The NASUWT advises members not to do so.

Schools and colleges should employ appropriately trained and qualified support staff to administer medications to pupils and/or ensure that appropriate specialist, external medical support is available.

Schools and colleges should ensure, as a minimum, that:

- all staff are issued with clear written guidelines on the administration of medication;
- relevant staff receive appropriate training;
- all medicines are kept in a suitably approved, locked drugs cabinet. Each medicine should be in a separate container clearly labelled with the contents, the dosage, frequency of administration, duration of course, date of prescription and the pupil's name;
- an up-to-date and detailed record of drug administration is kept in a designated place;
- there is easy access to qualified medical/nursing advice when needed;
- a risk assessment of the activity is undertaken and an Individual Health Care Plan arranged for the pupil; and
- appropriate indemnification is provided for any member of staff involved in the administration of medication to a pupil.

### **Educational visits**

If a pupil's medical condition is a cause for concern, advice on the appropriateness of taking the pupil out of school should be sought from a medical practitioner. The final decision, however, must rest with the teacher in charge of the activity. If it is decided that the pupil should take part, then secure arrangements for the storage of any medication and clear guidelines and instruction as to its administration will be required.

### **Invasive medical procedures**

The NASUWT advice is that no teacher can be required to administer or undertake any invasive medical procedure, for example the administration of rectal Valium, nor should they volunteer to do so.

### **Self-medication**

It is important that the parent/guardian informs the school if their child suffers from any particular condition. Older pupils will be likely to be able to administer their own medication. Any decision on pupils' self-medication should be made in consultation with the parent/guardian, as appropriate. It is vital that schools and colleges have a clear emergency procedure where pupils are unable to self-medicate and ensure that all staff are informed of this.

### **Technology-dependent pupils**

It is a prerequisite that these pupils must have the individual assistance of a qualified nurse who can take care of their needs.

### **Pupils with acute conditions**

There are examples of conditions that may render a pupil vulnerable, in a very short space of time, to a life-threatening episode, such as anaphylactic shock, due to an allergic reaction. Schools and colleges should have emergency procedures for dealing with such events and to identify pupils who may be at risk.

### **Advice and support**

For additional advice and support, contact your NASUWT Local Association or NASUWT Northern Ireland Centre.

Contact details can be found:

- on the NASUWT website at [www.nasuwt.org.uk](http://www.nasuwt.org.uk);
- in the NASUWT diary; or
- by phoning 028 9078 4480.

### **Further information**

The booklet *Supporting Pupils with Medication Needs* (2008) details protocols to enable medication needs to be appropriately managed, and further related guidance is available on the Department of Education Northern Ireland website at [www.deni.gov.uk](http://www.deni.gov.uk).