



MEON INFANT SCHOOL

Leaping Forward Together

Administrating Paracetamol in the school setting

It is recommended that the school keep its own stock of Paracetamol tablets/suspension. This reduces the risk of pupils carrying medicines and avoids confusion over what may and may not be administered. If it is the school's policy not to stock Paracetamol, there must be a clear and safe arrangement for parents to supply them to the school for the child. It is not recommended to allow children to carry Paracetamol around.

Paracetamol must be stored securely as all other medicines are stored and should not be kept in first aid boxes.

Only one member of staff at any one time should be responsible for giving medicines, to avoid the risk of giving a double dose. They must be relieved from other duties while preparing or giving the medicine, to reduce the likelihood of error.

When a child is given medicine, a written record of it must be kept. (There are model forms in Managing Medicines in Schools and Early Years Settings Form 6.) The record must include:

- The name of the medicine
- The dose given, and how (pill etc)
- The name of the child
- The time and date it was given
- Name and signature of the person giving the medicine to the child.

The member of staff responsible for giving medicines must be wary of routinely giving Paracetamol to children. If a child complains of pain as soon as they arrive at school and asks for painkillers, it is not advisable to give Paracetamol straight away.

Always consider whether the child may have been given a dose of Paracetamol before coming to school. Many non-prescription remedies contain Paracetamol; it is recommended that if child has had any pain or cold relief medication in past four hours then Paracetamol is not given. If Paracetamol is taken soon after taking these remedies, it could cause an unintended overdose. There should be at least four hours between any two doses of Paracetamol containing medicines. No more than four doses of any remedy containing Paracetamol should be taken in any 24 hours.

Always ask the child what other medications they take and what has been taken recently before giving anything. If there is any doubt, seek medical advice before administering the medicine.

It is recommended that school should only administer Paracetamol three times in a term to an individual child. If a child requests more than this, parents should be advised to seek medical assessment, unless parents have specifically requested it because of a medical condition for a limited period of time.

Before giving the child Paracetamol

1. The child is first encouraged to get some fresh air/have a drink/something to eat/take a walk/sit in the shade/lie down (as appropriate) and Paracetamol is only considered if these actions do not work.
2. There must be written parental consent, with verbal consent from the parent or carer on the day.
3. Only standard Paracetamol may be administered. Combination drugs, which contain other drugs besides Paracetamol, must not be administered.

Administering Paracetamol

1. **Children can only be given one dose of Paracetamol during the school day:** If this does not relieve the pain, contact the parent or the emergency contact.
2. The member of staff responsible for giving medicines must witness the child taking the Paracetamol, and make a record of it. The school must write to the parent on the day, stating the time and the amount of the dose.
3. The child should be made aware that Paracetamol should only be taken when absolutely necessary; that it is an ingredient in many cold and headache remedies and that great care should be taken to avoid overdosing.

School should ensure that parents have first authorised the school in writing to provide Paracetamol occasionally to children. The name of the child, the date, time, dose and reason should still be recorded in a log. Any frequently recurring need must be reported directly to the parents.

Note:

Paracetamol must be kept in a secure place and **not** in first aid boxes. It must **not** be given:

Following a head injury

Where a child is already on some other medication

Where a child has taken Paracetamol containing medicine within 4 hours

Aspirin or preparations containing aspirin must never be given

Aspirin should NOT be given to children under 16 years old as its use is associated with Reye's syndrome (a severe neurological disorder).

Dosage – please follow manufacturers' guidance on the bottle/packet of Paracetamol. Please be aware that if the child looks below average weight for their age, contact the School Nurse for advice before giving Paracetamol.

After giving the child Paracetamol

Send the child back to class with a note informing the teacher.

If the child improves – send a note home in the book bag at home time to inform parents.

If the child does not improve or gets worse – call parents to collect the child.

Paracetamol administration checklist

Child's name/Date of birth	
What are the child's symptoms?	
Does the child have any known illnesses or medical conditions? If yes please state what it is.	
Is the child allergic to anything? What?	
Has the child had any medicines today? If yes what?	
Offer fresh air/have a drink/something to eat/take a walk/sit in the shade/lie down	(Please circle)
Is this a frequently recurring need? (more than 3 times in a term) If so contact parents?	
Written consent from parent?	Yes/No
Verbal consent from parent today?	Yes/No
Note sent home informing parents?	Yes/No
Administration recorded in log	Yes/No
Child improved/same/worse?	(please circle)
Child back to class/sent home?	(please circle)

Staff Name (print)..... Date.....

Staff signature.....

References

Cheshire County Council (2002), The administration of medicines in educational and community establishments, Cheshire Education and Community Health and Safety Manual Available at www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/education (accessed 25.04.10)

Department for Education and Skills (2005), Managing Medicines in Schools and Early Years Settings. DfES Publications: London

Wessex Grid for Learning: Managing medicines in school (2008). Available at www.wsgfl.westsussex.gov.uk (accessed 25.04.10)

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