

Date: 16 May 2018

**Dear Headteacher**

I have recently been contacted by Alison Baldwin Senior Prescribing Adviser and she shared the following information with our service. Schools can provide children with over the counter medicines as long as they have written consent from parent. I have attached an example of a consent form. Please let me know if you need any further information

**Prescribing changes for over the counter medicines**

Bexley GPs are no longer routinely providing prescriptions for short term minor health conditions. Instead patients (and parents/carers) are encouraged to treat these at home with over the counter (OTC) medicines obtained from the pharmacist or supermarket where appropriate. These medicines and treatments include:

- Acne treatment
- Analgesic/pain relief treatment (short term pain, fever, headache, muscle/joint injury)
- Anti-fungal treatment (athlete's foot, oral and vaginal thrush, ring worm)
- Antiperspirant treatment (excessive sweating)
- Camouflage creams
- Cold sore treatment
- Colic treatment
- Constipation treatment
- Cough, cold and sore throat treatment
- Diarrhoea treatment
- Ear wax remover
- Eye treatments/lubricating products (Conjunctivitis/dry eyes)
- Haemorrhoid (piles) treatment
- Hayfever treatment
- Head lice treatment
- Herbal and complementary treatments
- Homeopathic preparations
- Indigestion and heartburn (dyspepsia) treatment
- Mouth ulcer treatment
- Nappy rash treatment
- Scabies treatment
- Suncream
- Threadworm treatment
- Topical steroid treatment (insect bites/stings, contactdermatitis, nappy rash)
- Vitamins and minerals
- Wart and verruca treatment

Exceptions to this include:

- Where an OTC medicine is outside of its marketing authorisation, also known as “off-label use” or “unlicensed use”.
- Where an OTC medicine is being prescribed for a long-term (chronic) condition
- Frail or housebound patients
- Where there are possible safeguarding concerns including, but not limited to, children, where there might be concerns that treatment might otherwise not be provided.

GPs will still use their clinical judgement when considering whether it is appropriate to ask a patient to purchase their medication

I enclose a copy of the patient leaflet that has been distributed widely throughout the borough, including to GP practices and pharmacies.

This change may have implications for management of medicines in schools and early years providers. **Children in these settings may be given non-prescription medicines without the need for a prescription.** Guidance from the Department for Education advises:

- Schools and early years providers must have and implement a policy and procedures for giving medicines, including setting out the circumstances in which **non-prescription** (over the counter) medicines may be administered.
- **Non-prescription medication**, e.g. for pain relief, should never be administered without first checking maximum dosages and when the previous dose was taken. Aspirin should never be given to a child under 16 years unless it has been prescribed by a doctor.
- **Prescription medicines** must not be administered unless they have been prescribed for a child by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist (medicines containing aspirin should only be given if prescribed by a doctor).
- Medicines (both prescription and non-prescription) must only be administered to a child where **written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent and/or carer**. Providers must keep a **written record each time a medicine is administered** to a child, and **inform the child's parents and/or carers** on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable

The guidance may be found here:

Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions - December 2015:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3>

Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage 3 April 2017:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/596629/EYF\\_S\\_STATUTORY\\_FRAMEWORK\\_2017.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/596629/EYF_S_STATUTORY_FRAMEWORK_2017.pdf)

Please would you update your medicine policies if necessary, to ensure that they do not preclude giving non-prescription medicines in the absence of a prescription.

Thank you for your support and please contact me if you have any questions.

Yours faithfully

Marta Thlon

Team Lead for School Nursing

## Example of parent consent form:

### Parental agreement for school/setting to administer medicine

The school/setting will not give your child medicine unless you complete and sign this form, and the school or setting has a policy that staff can administer medicine.

Name of School/Setting.....

Date.....

Child's Name.....

Group/Class/Form.....

Name and strength of medicine.....

Expiry date.....

How much to give ( i.e. dose to be given).....

When to be given.....

Any other instructions.....

Number of tablets/quantity to be given to school/setting.....

### Note: Medicines must be the original container

Daytime phone no. of parent or adult

Contact.....

Name and phone no. of GP.....

Agreed review date to be initiated by

*[name of member of staff]*.....

The above information is, to the best of my knowledge, accurate at the time of writing and I give consent to school/setting staff administering medicine in accordance with the school/setting policy. I will inform the school/setting immediately, in writing, if there is any change in dosage or frequency of the medication or if the medicine is stopped.

Parent's signature: .....Print Name:.....

If more than one medicine is to be given a separate form should be completed for each one.