

This policy has been written in line with information provided by Epilepsy Action, the Department for Education and Skills (now the Department for Children, Families and Schools), the local authority, the school health service, the governing body, students and parents.

The federation recognises that epilepsy is a common condition affecting children and welcomes all children with epilepsy to the schools. The federation supports children with epilepsy in all aspects of school life and encourages them to achieve their full potential. This will be done by having a policy in place that is developed in conjunction with the local authority and understood by all school staff. This policy ensures all relevant staff receive training about epilepsy and administering emergency medicines. All new staff and supply staff will also receive appropriate training.

What to do when a child with epilepsy joins school

When a child with epilepsy joins either Grewelthorpe or Fountains school, or a current pupil is diagnosed with the condition, the head teacher or class teacher arranges a meeting with the parents to establish how the pupil's epilepsy may affect their school life. This should include the implications for learning, playing and social development, and out of school activities. They will also discuss any special arrangements the pupil may require, for example extra time in exams. With the pupil's and parent's permission, epilepsy will be addressed as a whole-school issue through assemblies and in the teaching of PSHE or citizenship lessons. Children in the same class as the pupil will be introduced to epilepsy in a way that they will understand. This will ensure the child's classmates are not frightened if the child has a seizure in class.

The school nurse or an epilepsy specialist nurse may also attend the meeting or be contacted by phone to talk through any concerns the family or school may have, such as whether the pupil requires emergency medicine. The following points in particular will be addressed.

Record keeping

During the meeting the head teacher or class teacher will agree and complete a record of the pupil's epilepsy and learning and health needs. This document may include issues such as agreeing to administer medicines and any staff training needs. This record will be agreed by the parents, and the health professional, if present, and signed by the parents and head teacher. This form will be kept safe and updated when necessary. Staff will be notified of any changes in the pupil's condition through regular staff briefings. This will make staff aware of any special requirements, such as seating the pupil facing the class teacher to help monitor if the student is having absence seizures and missing part of the lesson.

Medicines

Following the meeting, an individual healthcare plan (IHP) will be drawn up. It will contain the information highlighted above and identify any medicines or first aid issues of which staff need to be aware. In particular it will state whether the pupil

requires emergency medicine, and whether this medicine is Rectal Diazepam or Buccal Midazolam. It will also contain the names of staff trained to administer the medicine and how to contact these members of staff or parents contact details. If the pupil requires emergency medicine then the school's policy will also contain details of the correct storage procedures in line with the DfES guidance found in *Managing Medicines in Schools and Early Year Settings*¹.

First aid

First aid for the pupil's seizure type will be included on their IHP and all staff (including support staff) will receive basic training on administering first aid. The procedures giving basic first aid for common seizures will be prominently displayed in all classrooms.

Sometimes a child may become incontinent during their seizure. If this happens, try and put a blanket around them when their seizure is finished to avoid potential embarrassment. First aid procedure for different seizure types can be obtained from the school nurse, the pupil's epilepsy specialist nurse or Epilepsy Action.

Learning and behaviour

The federation recognises that children with epilepsy can have special educational needs because of their condition (*Special Educational Needs Code of Practice*²). Following the initial meeting, staff will be asked to ensure the pupil is not falling behind in lessons. If this starts to happen the teacher will initially discuss the situation with the parents. If there is no improvement, then discussions should be held with the school's special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) and school nurse. If necessary, an Individual Provision Map will be created and if the SENCO thinks it appropriate, the child may undergo an assessment by an educational or neuropsychologist to decide what further action may be necessary.

School environment

The federation recognises the importance of having a school environment that supports the needs of children with epilepsy. A quiet area can be made available and is equipped with comfortable chair and cushions in case a pupil needs supervised rest following a seizure.

The above epilepsy policy applies equally within the school and at any outdoor activities organised by the school. This includes activities taking place on the school premises, and residential stays. Any concerns held by the pupil, parent or member of staff will be addressed at a meeting prior to the activity or stay taking place.

References

DfES *Managing Medicines in Schools and Early Year Settings* Nottingham, 2005

DfES *Special Educational Needs Code of Practice* Nottingham, 2005

Grewelthorpe & Fountains CE Primary Schools Federation

Policy:	Epilepsy Policy
Signed Chair of Governors:	RBain
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