# Supporting children with Medical Needs in School

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Guidelines for supporting children with medical conditions in educational settings

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### Background and context

This guidance is based on the principles contained within the [Department for Education (DfE)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3) statutory document that says that schools must make sure that:

* a pupil with a medical condition will still get their education. They can still go on school trips and do physical education.
* they have made plans about how they are going to support a pupil with a medical condition.
* they speak to health and social care professionals, pupils and parents. This makes sure that everyone understands the medical condition and how to support the pupil.

The [Royal College of Nursing](https://www.rcn.org.uk/professional-development/publications/pdf-006634.) (RCN 2018) document also provides key information about meeting health needs in educational and other community settings.

The Children and Families Act 2014 places a statutory duty on governing bodies of maintained school, academies and pupil referral units to Section 100 to “make arrangements for supporting pupils at the school with medical conditions”. Each educational setting has responsibility to ensure that all appropriate policies and documents are completed and available in line with their statutory duties, and to ensure that they can effectively meet the needs of children and young people with health and medical needs who attend their setting.

These policies will include, but are not limited to the following:

* Safeguarding Policy
* Supporting pupils with Medical Needs, including administration of medication, record keeping and disposal of sharps
* Health and Safety Policy, including risk assessments and moving and handling plans

### Roles and responsibilities

#### Parent/carer responsibility

Parents should ensure that the setting is provided with sufficient, relevant, and up to date information about their child’s medical needs, including details of any health professionals who are involved in their child. Parents are key partners and should be involved in the development and regular review of their child’s individual healthcare plan and maintain effective communication with the education setting to identify any changes in the child or young person’s condition. Parents should make sure they or another nominated adult are contactable at all times.

#### Child and Young Person (CYP) involvement

All children and young people with medical and health needs should be included in meetings and have the opportunity to express their own thoughts and feelings. They should be encouraged to provide their consent for each identified health or care procedure and intervention when appropriate to do so.

#### Educational settings

Educational settings are legally responsible under section 100 of the Children and Families Act (2014) to make arrangements for support to pupils with medical conditions. Each setting should identify a named person with responsibility for effective policy implementation.

Settings must ensure there are sufficient staff who are appropriately trained to meet the needs of the children and young people in the setting and ensure that it is not the responsibility of just one member of staff to carry out medical procedures. Policies should identify collaborative working arrangements between school staff, parents, CYP, health care professionals and local authorities. Settings must undertake risk assessments for the setting, visits, holidays and any other activity e.g. sporting event.

Healthcare plans for children and young people should capture how to support the individual and they should be reviewed at least annually, or at any time when needs change. Settings must ensure written records of treatment and care are maintained and that parents are informed if the CYP is unwell at school.

Any staff member who is involved in caring for the CYP must have access to the healthcare plan and have received sufficient training to deliver the care required. All school staff should undertake basic awareness training with annual updates, this is likely to include asthma, allergy and first aid awareness.

Settings should have a policy for supporting pupils with medical conditions. It must be reviewed regularly, and parents and staff should be able to access it easily.

Some children with medical needs may have Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) too. The Equality Act 2010 says the school must make reasonable adjustments. This is to make sure that disabled children/young people are not at a disadvantage compared with their peers. Adjustments must be planned and put in place in advance. For example, every effort should be made to make sure that pupils can access school trips, visits, or sporting activities.

#### Healthcare professionals

Healthcare professionals should work together and cooperate with the school to provide evidence and advice that goes into the Individual Health Care Plan which is held by the education setting. They will ensure that settings are notified and updated about a child’s medical needs and ensure the setting has access to all relevant information required to safely care for that child or young person (as detailed on the Individual Health Care Plan). They should also monitor the accuracy and impact of the Health Care Plan and assist to update it at least annually (or more frequently if needs change).

#### Local Authority and Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)

The local authority and CCG must make joint commissioning arrangements for children with medical needs and have a duty to promote cooperation between the relevant partners. This will include commissioning of school nurses, providing support, advice and guidance for educational settings or providing alternative arrangements for children and young people who are not able to attend the education setting for medical reasons.

### Risk assessment

It is the responsibility of the individual education setting to undertake a risk assessment with the support of parents, the child or young person and any appropriate health professionals. The risk assessment process should clearly identify:

* Any risks around the healthcare needs and the impact of these on the child or young person and others
* Control measures to manage the risks
* Any training needs, including who will need to be trained, to what level and by whom
* Measures in place to maintain the privacy and dignity of the child or young person
* All environments the child may access whilst under the care of the setting, including trips, visits, sports activities, and transport arrangements

### Healthcare Plan

A Healthcare Plan is a document that has information from:

* health professionals
* school nurses
* parents
* the pupil
* other relevant professionals

Healthcare plans are developed in partnership between the school, parents, child or young person and the relevant healthcare professional who can advise on the child’s case.  It should have key information and actions that are needed to support the child in school. Parents are asked to inform settings of any changes in advice from healthcare professionals and should make this information known to the setting.

The healthcare plan should say what the school will do to help the pupil manage their condition. It helps overcome any barriers to get the most from their education.

The plan must be reviewed at least once a year or earlier if the pupil’s needs have changed. It should keep the pupil’s best interests in mind. Some conditions are not expected to change, so in some instances, plans will not routinely be updated on an annual basis, but setting must check with families that the plan is still the most up to date recommendations from health providers.

The school must say how they will assess and manage risks to the child’s education, health, and social wellbeing.

The Healthcare Plan should include:

* the medical condition, triggers, signs, symptoms and treatments
* the pupil’s needs and the impact on the child, including:
  + details of any medication needed, storage and disposals of medication, dose and method of administration
  + clinical procedures that need to be carried out, by whom, when and how
  + any tests that need to be undertaken and action to be taken depending on the results e.g. diabetes care
  + what training is required and how this will be provided
  + description of what constitutes an emergency and what action should be taken
  + written permission from parents that the medication can be administered either by a member of staff or self-administered by the pupil
  + facilities
  + equipment
  + plans that need to be put in place for testing/exams (if appropriate), school trips and other activities outside the school timetable
  + access to food and drink where this is used to manage their condition,
  + dietary requirements
  + environmental issues, e.g. crowded corridors, travel time between lessons;
  + support for the pupil’s educational, social and emotional needs

A Healthcare Plan is different to an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan.

* An EHC plan defines outcomes and provision in school for pupils with SEND
* A Healthcare Plan defines how to support a pupil’s medical needs whilst in school.

Where the child or young person has a special educational need identified in an EHC plan, the healthcare plan should be linked to it.

### Individual Pupil Resourcing Agreement (IPRA)

Essex County Council are keen to ensure that mainstream schools can provide an appropriate offer for children with additional needs. Essex has a mechanism to provide timely additional resourced to sources without having to carry out a statutory assessment. This is known as an Individual Pupil Resourcing Agreement (IPRA).

An IPRA can be considered if a pupil has no significant special educational needs but requires additional resourcing to support medical needs. Schools are expected to use the notional SEN fund in the first instance to support the pupils needs. If a child or young person has a severe or complex medical need and requires specialist support, the school or setting may wish to make a referral to the Physical and Neurological Impairment (PNI) Service for advice (see [Infolink](https://schools.essex.gov.uk/special-educational-needs-and-disabilities-send/physical-and-sensory-needs/physical-and) for details and online referral form).

To request an IPRA, relevant evidence signed by a medical professional alongside an up-to-date Healthcare plan, interventions and current support arrangements in place using the notional SEN budget alongside details of what the money will be utilised for, the expected outcomes as a result of the additional resource and how the school will measure these outcomes.

Requests for IPRAs go to the quadrant resourcing panels where the application and evidence is viewed and a decision by education colleagues is made collectively.

If the application is successful, funding can be awarded for up to one year. This can be reviewed on an annual basis for continuation. It is possible to have medical IPRA on a long-term basis if medical needs of pupil warrant it.

### Guidance, policies and templates for schools

* [Individual Pupil Resourcing Agreement (IPRA)](https://schools.essex.gov.uk/special-educational-needs-and-disabilities-send/send-services-and-support/send-funding/apply-ipra) – information on process and application form for schools and settings
* [Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/803956/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions.pdf) – Department for Education guidance
* [Supporting pupils with medical conditions: Templates](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/349437/Supporting_pupils_with_medical_conditions_-_templates.docx) – includes a downloadable editable template for an Individual Health Care Plan.  This is provided by the Department for Education
* [Over the counter medicines in schools guidance](https://schools.essex.gov.uk/pupils/SEND/Documents/OTC%20medicines%20in%20schools%20guidance%20v1.0%20March%202020.pdf) – NHS guidance on the use of OTC medicines, salbutamol inhalers and adrenaline auto-injectors in schools
* [Education Access – Children missing their education due to health needs](https://schools.essex.gov.uk/admissions-and-attendance/education-access/medical-referrals) – ECC policy and information regarding children of compulsory school age, who, because of health reasons/pregnancy, would otherwise not receive suitable education.
* [Royal College of Nursing](https://www.rcn.org.uk/professional-development/publications/pdf-006634.) – information on meeting health needs in educational and other community settings
* [Health Conditions in Schools Alliance](http://medicalconditionsatschool.org.uk/) – example policy and editable Individual Health Care Plan templates.  This includes example plans for a range of medical needs.
* [NASEN Children with Medical Needs Mini-Guide](https://nasen.org.uk/uploads/assets/f7bff687-5e79-4c89-a0e5c7b6cfa847a4/children-with-medical-needs-miniguide.pdf) – what schools and settings need to know

**Medical conditions – useful links for schools**

* [Anaphalaxis](https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/schools/) – information from Anaphalaxis Campaign for schools, including resource packs.  Free online training modules for school staff, parents and younger children is also available through [AllergyWise](https://www.allergywise.org.uk/)
* [Anaphalaxis](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/using-emergency-adrenaline-auto-injectors-in-schools) – Department for Education guidance on use of adrenaline auto-injectors in school
* [Asthma guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/emergency-asthma-inhalers-for-use-in-schools) – Department for Education guidance on the use of asthma inhalers at school
* [Asthma online training](https://www.supportingchildrenshealth.org/asthma-module/) – Supporting Children’s Health offers a free 45minute online training module
* [Asthma UK](https://www.asthma.org.uk/) – links, resources, advice for children and young people with Asthma
* [Bowel and Bladder UK](https://www.bbuk.org.uk/) and [ERIC](https://www.eric.org.uk/)– example intimate care policies and plans,  resources and advice for educational settings
* [C:P Teens](https://www.cpteensuk.org/) and [Scope](https://www.scope.org.uk/) have information for children with Cerebral Palsy
* [Diabetes](https://www.diabetes.org.uk/resources-s3/2020-03/national-ihcp-2020.pdf) example health care plan for a child with type 1 diabetes
* [Epilepsy Action](https://www.epilepsy.org.uk/) and [Learn Epilepsy](https://learn.epilepsy.org.uk/) have a number of useful resources including online training videos available.  Staff training and [e-learning](https://learn.epilepsy.org.uk/training-for-schools/) is also available
* [Essex County Council’s Physical and Sensory Impairment Specialist Teaching Service](https://schools.essex.gov.uk/special-educational-needs-and-disabilities-send/physical-and-sensory-needs/physical-and) – information about the team and how to make a referral
* [Muscular Dystrophy UK](https://www.musculardystrophyuk.org/information-for-professionals/)- this website has (free) online training modules for professionals working with children and young people with MD as well as a [downloadable Fact Sheets](https://www.musculardystrophyuk.org/about-muscle-wasting-conditions/information-factsheets/education-guidelines/) for educational professionals and parents/carers
* [School Nursing Service](https://essexfamilywellbeing.co.uk/article/school-nursing/) – information on service for settings
* [Specialist Equipment](https://send.essex.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/finding-specialist-equipment)  – information on specialist equipment and what is available
* [Supporting schools with pupils with medical needs](http://medicalconditionsatschool.org.uk/) – information and health care templates for a list of common conditions
* [Well at School](https://www.wellatschool.org/) – website linking medical conditions with advice for schools and associated websites

This information is issued by:  
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