



Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning

Healthcare Needs Policy

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1. Key principles

The local authority is committed to a cooperative and proactive approach to providing effective and individual support to learners with healthcare needs.

The local authority believes that:

- Learners with healthcare needs should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including trips and physical education.
- Governing bodies must ensure that arrangements are in place to support learners with healthcare needs.
- Governing bodies should ensure that staff consult the relevant professionals, learners and parents to ensure the needs of the learner with healthcare needs are properly understood and effectively supported.
- Staff should understand and work within the principles of inclusivity.
- Lessons and activities should be designed in a way which allows those with healthcare needs to participate fully.
- Staff should understand their role in supporting learners with healthcare needs and appropriate training should be provided.
- Staff should feel confident they know what to do in a healthcare emergency.
- Staff should be aware of the needs of their learners through the appropriate and lawful sharing of the individual learner's healthcare needs.
- Whenever appropriate, learners should be encouraged and supported to take responsibility for the management of their own healthcare needs.

2. LA's legal requirements

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to make arrangements to ensure their functions are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in school or another place of learning. This includes supporting children with healthcare needs.

In meeting the duties under section 175 of the Education Act 2002, local authorities and governing bodies must have regard to guidance issued by the Welsh Ministers under this section.

All learners with healthcare needs are entitled to a full education. In addition to the duties set out above in the Education Act 2002,

consideration must also be given to whether the learner is defined as disabled under the Equality Act 2010.

3. Roles and responsibilities

The local authority will ensure education provision is available to learners, and:

- Ensure reasonable adjustments are made to ensure disabled children and young people are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.
- Make arrangements to promote cooperation between various bodies or persons with a view to improving, among other things, the well-being of children in relation to their physical and mental health, their education, training and recreation.
- Will make reasonable provision of counselling services for young people aged 11–18 and learners in year 6 of primary school.
- Work with schools to ensure learners with healthcare needs receive a suitable education.
- Provide support, advice and guidance, including how to meet the training needs of school staff, so that governing bodies can ensure the support specified within the individual healthcare plan (IHP) can be delivered effectively.
- The application of healthcare plans will be monitored as part of the ongoing safeguarding health checks/peer review system currently in place to assist schools.

Governing bodies should oversee the development and implementation of arrangements, which should include:

- Complying with their statutory duties, including those under the Equality Act 2010.
- A statutory duty to promote the well-being of learners.
- Consider how they can support learners to develop the skills, knowledge and emotional resilience required to uphold their rights and the rights of others.
- Ensure the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the arrangements to support the healthcare needs of learners are clear and understood by all those involved.
- Work collaboratively with parents and other professionals to develop healthcare arrangements to meet the best interests of the learner.
- Ensuring the school has in place a suitable healthcare policy and that it is reviewed on a regular basis.
- Develop and implement effective arrangements to support learners with healthcare needs.

- Ensure processes are in place for the development, monitoring and review of the healthcare needs arrangements.
- Ensure the arrangements are in line with other relevant policies and procedures, such as health and safety, first aid, risk assessments, the Data Protection Act, safeguarding measures and emergency procedures.
- Ensure robust systems are in place for dealing with healthcare emergencies and critical incidents, for both on and off-site activities.
- Ensure staff with responsibility for supporting learners with healthcare needs are appropriately trained.
- Ensuring appropriate insurance cover is in place.

Headteachers should ensure arrangements to meet the healthcare needs of their learners are sufficiently developed and effectively implemented by:

- Working with the governing body to ensure compliance with statutory duties, including duties under the Equality Act 2010.
- Ensuring any agreed arrangements in place are fully understood by all parties involved and acted upon.
- Ensuring the support put in place focuses on and meets the individual learner's needs, also known as person-centred planning.
- Extending awareness of healthcare needs across the education setting in line with the learner's right to privacy. This may include support, catering and supply staff, governors, parents and other learners.
- Appointing a named member of staff who is responsible for learners with healthcare needs.
- Ensuring a sufficient number of trained staff are available to implement the arrangements set out in all IHPs, including contingency plans for emergency situations and staff absence.
- Ensuring when a learner participates in a work experience placement or similar, that appropriate healthcare support has been agreed and put in place.
- Ensuring all learners with healthcare needs are not excluded from activities they would normally be entitled to take part in without a clear evidence-based reason.

Teachers and support staff may be asked to provide support to learners with healthcare needs, including assisting or supervising the administration of medicines. Staff members must receive suitable training and achieve the necessary level of competence before they take on the responsibility. No staff member should be required to administer

or supervise medication unless it forms part of their contract, terms and conditions or a mutually agreed job plan.

Staff should ensure:

- They fully understand the school's healthcare needs policy and arrangements.
- They are aware of which learners have more serious or chronic healthcare needs and are familiar with these learners' IHPs.
- They are aware of the signs, symptoms and triggers of common life-threatening medical conditions and know what to do in an emergency.
- They fully understand the school's emergency procedures and be prepared to act in an emergency.
- Learners with healthcare needs are not excluded from activities they wish to take part in without a clear evidence-based reason, including any external trips/visits.
- They are aware of bullying issues and emotional well-being regarding learners with healthcare needs, and are prepared to intervene in line with the school's policy.
- Parents are kept informed of how the healthcare need is affecting the learner. This may include reporting any deterioration, concerns or changes to learner or staff routines.

Parents and learners should be actively involved in the planning of support and management of healthcare needs. Meeting the individual's needs should be at the centre of decision-making. Parents and learners should:

- Receive updates regarding healthcare issues/changes that occur within the education setting.
- Be involved in the creation, development and review of an IHP.
- Provide the school with sufficient and up-to-date information about healthcare needs, including any guidance regarding the administration of medicines and/or treatment from healthcare professionals.
- Where appropriate, learners should be encouraged and enabled to manage their own healthcare needs.
- Inform the school of any changes such as type of medication, dosage or method of administration.
- Provide relevant in-date medicines, correctly labelled, with written dosage and administration instructions.
- Ensure a nominated adult is contactable at all times and all necessary forms are completed and signed.

Health advice and support can also be provided by specialist health professionals such as GPs, paediatricians, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, dieticians and diabetes specialist nurses. In addition, third sector voluntary bodies can provide advice and practical support. Proactively engaging with specialist services can provide:

- Advice on the development of IHPs.
- Assist in the identification of the training required for the education setting to successfully implement IHPs.
- Supporting staff to implement a learner's IHP through advice and liaison with other healthcare, social care and third sector professionals.

4. Creating an accessible learning environment

The local authority and its governing bodies strive to ensure their schools are inclusive and accessible in the fullest sense to learners with healthcare needs. This includes the following:

Physical access to education setting buildings

In accordance with its duty under the Equality Act 2010, individual schools will have in place a written accessibility strategy plan. This plan will outline the arrangements for increasing the extent to which disabled learners are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school.

Reasonable adjustments – auxiliary aids or services

The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on establishments to make 'reasonable adjustments' for learners who are disabled as defined by the Act.

Day trips and residential visits

Governing bodies should ensure the school actively supports all learners with healthcare needs to participate in trips and visits. Staff should be aware of how a learner's healthcare needs may impact on participation, and seek to accommodate any reasonable adjustments which would increase the level of participation by the learner.

Social interactions

Governing bodies should ensure the involvement of learners with healthcare needs is adequately considered in structured and unstructured social activities, such as during breaks, breakfast club, productions, after-hours clubs and residential visits. The school should

make all staff aware of the social barriers learners with healthcare needs may experience and how this can lead to bullying and social exclusion.

Exercise and physical activity

The school should fully understand the importance of all learners taking part in physical activities and staff should make appropriate adjustments to sports and other activities to make them accessible to all learners, including after-hours clubs and team sports.

Food management

Where food is provided by or through the education setting, consideration will be given to dietary needs of learners, e.g. those who have diabetes, coeliac disease, allergies and intolerances.

Where a need occurs, education settings should in advance provide menus to parents and learners, with complete lists of ingredients and nutritional information. Gluten and other intolerances or allergens must be clearly marked.

Food provided for trips must reflect the dietary and treatment needs of the learners taking part. Food provided for snacks in classroom settings should also take the dietary and treatment needs of these learners into account.

Risk assessments

Staff should be clear when a risk assessment is required and be aware of the risk assessment systems in place. They should start from the premise of inclusion and have built into them a process of seeking adjustments or alternative activities rather than separate provision. These strategies and plans deal with matters related to increasing participation by disabled learners.

5. Sharing information

The local authority will work with governing bodies to ensure healthcare needs arrangements are supported by clear communication with staff, parents and other key stakeholders to ensure that all information is kept up to date. Any information sharing arrangements will need to be in line with Data Protection and GDPR Regulations.

Teachers, supply teachers and support staff should be given access to the relevant information of learners with healthcare needs, particularly if there is a possibility of an emergency situation arising.

Parents and learners should be active partners, and to achieve this schools should make parents fully aware of the care their children receive. Parents and learners should also be made aware of their own rights and responsibilities. To help achieve this it is recommended that the school should make healthcare needs policies easily available and accessible online and in hard copy, when requested.

6. Procedures and record keeping for the management of learners' healthcare needs

The local authority recommends that all schools create procedures which state the roles/responsibilities of all parties involved in the identification, management and administration of healthcare needs. Records should always be completed when there are changes to medication or dosage.

7. Storage, access and administration of medication and devices

Governing bodies are advised to incorporate the comprehensive guidance contained within the Welsh Government 'Supporting Learners with Healthcare Needs' 215/2017 document within their individual healthcare needs policies in relation to managing medicines and devices. Governing Bodies and Headteacher's should also have due regard to the school's own policy on administering medicine and the Welsh Government guidance document 003/2010 'Access to Education and Support for Children and Young People with Medical Needs'.

8. Emergency procedures

The local authority recommends that governing bodies should ensure a policy is in place for handling emergency situations. All staff should know who is responsible for the policy, nominated first aiders and how to deal with common healthcare needs.

9. Training

The local authority recommends that governing bodies ensure staff who volunteer or who are contracted to support learners with healthcare needs are provided with appropriate training. Governing bodies should ensure their policy clearly set out how a sufficient number of staff will be identified and supported. IHPs may reflect complex needs requiring staff to have specific information and training. Training provided should be sufficient to ensure staff are competent, have confidence in their ability to support learners and fulfil IHP requirements.

All staff, irrespective of whether they have volunteered to assist or support learners with healthcare needs, may come into contact with

learners who have healthcare needs. The local authority, therefore, recommends that all staff have a basic understanding of common conditions to ensure recognition of symptoms and understand where to seek appropriate assistance.

10. School transport

There are statutory duties on local authorities, headteachers and governing bodies in relation to learners travelling to the place where they receive their education or training. Neath Port Talbot's Home to School Transport Policy outlines the circumstances when transportation will be provided.

11. Reviewing policies, arrangements and procedures

The local authority will review this policy periodically and following the publication of any further guidance by Welsh Government. Governing bodies should also ensure policies, arrangements and procedures are reviewed regularly. Schools are reminded that IHPs may require frequent reviews depending on individual healthcare needs – such reviews should involve all key stakeholders.

12. Insurance arrangements

The local authority has in place an appropriate level of insurance cover for its staff who support learners with their healthcare needs. Governing bodies should check whether any additional cover is needed for some activities, e.g. off-site activities for learners with particular needs.

13. Complaints

If a learner or parent is not satisfied with the school's health care arrangements they are entitled to make a complaint under the individual school complaints procedure which is available via the school's website or directly from the school office.

If the complaint is equality/disability related then learner or parent has recourse of a challenge to the Special Education Needs Tribunal for Wales (SENTW).

The procedure for making a complaint against the local authority can be found on the Neath Port Talbot website or alternatively a paper copy of the complaints policy can be sent upon request.

14. Individual healthcare plans (IHPs)

IHPs set out what support is required by a learner. They do not need to be long or complicated. Governing bodies should ensure their healthcare

needs policy includes information on who has overall responsibility for the development of the IHPs. IHPs are essential where healthcare needs are complex, fluctuating, long term or where there is a high risk that an emergency intervention will be needed. However, not all learners with healthcare needs require an IHP and there should be a process in place to decide what interventions are most appropriate.

The local authority recommends schools follow the process for considering and creating IHPs that is outlined in the Welsh Government guidance document 'Supporting Learners with Healthcare Needs' 215/2017. The document sets out a useful diagram (p23) that will assist with identifying whether an IHP is needed.

15. Unacceptable practice

Neath Port Talbot Council believe it is not acceptable practice to:

- Prevent learners from attending an education setting due to their healthcare need, unless their attending the setting would be likely to cause harm to the learner or others.
- Prevent learners from easily accessing their medication and prevent them from taking their medication when and where necessary.
- Assume every learner with the same condition requires the same treatment.
- Ignore the views of the learner or their parents, or ignore healthcare evidence or opinion (although these views may be queried with additional opinions sought promptly).
- Send learners with healthcare needs home frequently or prevent them from staying for normal activities, including lunch, unless this is suitably specified in their IHP.
- Send a learner who becomes ill or needs assistance to a medical room or main office unaccompanied or with someone unable to properly monitor them.
- Request adjustments or additional time for a learner at a late stage. They should be applied for in good time.
- Prevent learners from drinking, eating or taking toilet or other breaks whenever needed in order to manage their healthcare needs effectively.
- Expect or cause a parent to give up work or other commitments because the education setting is failing to support a learner's healthcare needs.
- Prevent or create unnecessary barriers to a learner's participation in any aspect of their education, including trips, e.g. by requiring a parent to accompany the learner.