

EPILEPSY POLICY & PROCEDURE

This policy has been written in line with information provided by Epilepsy Action & the Department for Education & Skills. New Millside recognises that epilepsy is a common condition affecting children & welcomes all children with epilepsy to the pre-school.

New Millside supports children with epilepsy in all aspects of pre-school life and encourages them to achieve their full potential. This will be done by having a policy in place that is developed and understood by all staff. This policy ensures all staff receive relevant training regarding epilepsy and administering emergency medicines. All new staff will receive appropriate training.

When a child joins New Millside or an existing child is diagnosed with the condition, the Pre-school Manager/SENCO will arrange a meeting with the parents/carers to establish how the child's epilepsy may affect their pre-school life. This should include the implications for learning, playing & social development. A nurse may also attend the meeting to talk through any concerns the family or staff may have. The following points in particular will be addressed;

Record Keeping

During the meeting the SENCO will agree and complete a record of the child's epilepsy & learning & health needs. This document may include issues such as agreeing to administer medicines & any staff training needs. This record will be agreed by the parents & the health professional, if present, & signed by the parents & the SENCO. This form will be kept safe & updated when necessary. Staff will be notified of any changes in the child's condition through regular staff briefings. This will make staff aware of any special requirements.

Medicines

Following the meeting, an individual healthcare plan (IHP) will be drawn up. It will contain the information above and identify any medicines or first aid issues of which staff need to be aware. In particular it will state whether the child 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. If the child requires emergency medicine then the pre-school's policy will also contain details of the correct storage procedures in line with DfES guidance.

First Aid

First aid for the child's seizure type will be included on their IHP and all staff will receive basic training on administering first aid. The following procedure giving basic first aid for tonic-clonic seizures will be prominently displayed.

1. Stay calm.
2. If the child is convulsing then put something soft under their head.
3. Protect the child from injury (remove harmful objects from nearby).
4. NEVER try & put anything in their mouth or between their teeth.
5. Try & time how long the seizure lasts – if it lasts longer than usual for that child or continues for more than five minutes then call medical assistance.
6. When the child finishes their seizure stay with them and reassure them.
7. No food or drink until they have fully recovered from the seizure.

Sometimes a child may become incontinent during their seizure. If this happens, we will aim to put a blanket around them when their seizure is finished to avoid potential embarrassment.

Learning & Behaviour

New Millside recognises that children with epilepsy can have special education needs because of their condition. Following the initial meeting, the keyworker will be asked to ensure the child is not falling behind. If this starts to happen the Key Person/Pre-school Manager will initially discuss this with the parents/carer. If necessary, an Individual Educational Plan 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.

Pre-school Environment

The above epilepsy policy applies equally within the pre-school. This includes activities taking place on the pre-school premises and visits. Any concerns held by the parent/carer or member of staff will be addressed at a meeting prior to any visit taking place.

Further Information

The following information is taken from the DfES document *Managing Medicines in Schools & Early Years Settings*. It aims to highlight the importance of having a clear pre-school epilepsy policy & help staff understand their responsibility in ensuring the safety of a child with epilepsy.

The general guidance for ensuring the health & safety of children in schools states that it is the employers responsibility (under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974) to make sure pre-schools have a health & safety policy which includes procedures for supporting children with medical needs. It is also the employer's responsibility to make sure that they have taken out Employer's Liability Insurance and that this insurance provides full cover for pre-school staff acting within full scope of their employment ie 'duty of care'.

In the day-to-day management of children's medical needs, parents/carers should give pre-schools information about their child's condition, including any relevant details from the child's GP, consultant or epilepsy specialist nurse. Parents are also responsible for supplying any information about the medicine their child needs and providing details of any changes to the child's prescription or support required.

There is no legal duty requiring pre-school staff to administer medicine. However, pre-schools should consider this issue as part of their accessibility planning during. Staff are usually happy to volunteer for training to administer emergency medicines.