

MEDICAL NEEDS NEWSLETTER

September 2016 – Issue No. 1

Medical Needs Coordinator blog

Hello and welcome along to the first edition of the medical needs newsletter. The intention behind this occasional publication is to bring to light any updates or key information within the world of medical needs, particularly for schools and settings.



Every new academic year seems to bring about its share of new challenges. On a personal level, this new academic year takes on particular significance as my oldest child is starting school. Having filled in a plethora of different forms, detailing

my son's medical needs (in his instance asthma and following a dairy and soya free diet) it struck me that all that information is for one (generally healthy) child, out of the hundreds that attend the school. There is so much pressure on schools to deliver in so many different areas, having to meet every individual child's dietary, medical, educational or other needs, whatever they may be. Each with parents with their own (often lofty) aspirations for their little stars. It's not easy. However, it's worth remembering just how important and valued you are – confirmed by the many cards and presents received after the end of each school year (my wife is a teacher – I know the drill!)

We all have a part to play in ensuring the medical needs of Norfolk's children and young people are met and therefore affords them the opportunity to realise their potential. A challenge, but a challenge worth signing up for!

Medical Needs Coordinator FAQs

We have a child who is unable to attend school due to health needs. What can we do to support them?

Your school should be looking at ways to ensure that this child is supported to minimise the disruption to their studies. For a short term absence, this might mean sending some work home for the child to complete. This should be as closely matched to the work being completed by the child's class as possible (suitably differentiated of course!). This can be a difficult balance for schools as the main concern has to be around the child's health and welfare, and ensuring they are able to make as quick a recovery as possible – every case is different, so liaison with family, or in certain instances medical professionals, would be useful in ascertaining what the child is able to manage. In certain cases you may also want to look at setting work electronically, either via e-mail or via the school's 'online portal' software (if the school offer such a facility). Consideration of using an external e-learning provider may also be appropriate in certain instances.

We have a child who has been (or will be) absent from school for an extended period of time (i.e. 15 days or more) due to health needs. Is there any other provision that can be accessed for this child?

In short, yes! Norfolk County Council commission the Short Stay School for Norfolk (SSSFN) to provide a service for children that are unable to attend school due to health needs. In order to access this service, the school need to complete the SSSFN referral form and send along with a letter from the child's consultant or GP (indicating that the child is medically unfit to attend school) to Nicky Butterworth, Medical Needs Coordinator at SSSFN (engagement@brooklands.norfolk.sch.uk). This service are able to provide home tuition to children and will work closely with schools, with a view to reintegrating children when they are able to return to school.

You would also be advised to refer to the document 'Norfolk County Council statement on supporting children who are unable to attend school because of health needs', which was published in April 2016. This document outlines the support available within Norfolk that can be accessed for children and young people with additional health needs, including details of when and how alternative provision will be arranged if this is required and the respective roles and responsibilities of



the local authority, schools, parents/carers, providers and other agencies. It can be found on the Norfolk SEND Local Offer website at:

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/children-and-families/send-local-offer/introduction-to-send/roles-of-professionals-in-sen-support/local-authority-medical-needs-coordinator>

Know your statutory guidance

The statutory guidance for schools around medical needs is called 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions' and was last updated in December 2015. It can be found at:

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

Key points of this guidance are:

- Duty is on the governing body/proprietor
- They **must** ensure that arrangements are in place to support pupils with medical conditions.
- Children to access and enjoy the same opportunities at school as any other child.
- Staff to be properly trained to provide the support that pupils need.
- Staff **must** not give prescription medicines or undertake healthcare procedures without appropriate training.
- No child with a medical condition can be denied admission or prevented from taking up a place in school because arrangements for their medical condition have not been made.
- Schools should **develop a policy** for supporting pupils with medical conditions that is reviewed regularly and is readily accessible to parents and school staff.
- Details should be made available on how the school's policy will be implemented effectively, including a **named person** who has overall responsibility for policy implementation.
- Policy should cover individual healthcare plans and who is responsible for their development. These should be reviewed **at least annually**.

I would encourage you to have a read of the full document – it's not that long (easily one night's bedtime reading!)

Type 1 Diabetes E-Learning

A free online course has been developed by the Virtual College in partnership with the JDRF, the type 1 diabetes charity, and the Children and Young People's Diabetes Network. The course is available for anyone to access and is aimed at all professionals who work in schools and other settings where they may come into contact with children and young people who have type 1 diabetes.

There are two levels to the course:

- Basic – gives an awareness of what type 1 diabetes is and how to support children and young people with the condition.
- Advanced - this includes the basic course and gives further information about checking glucose levels and how to administer insulin.

To complete the course please visit <http://type1diabetestraining.co.uk>

The Health Conditions in Schools Alliance

The Health Conditions in School Alliance is made of over 30 organisations, including charities, healthcare professionals and trade unions who work collaboratively to make sure children with health conditions get the care they need in school. Their website is a useful resource and features tools and guidance for schools in supporting children with medical needs. It can be found at:

<http://medicalconditionsatschool.org.uk/>

Feedback

I hope you have found this newsletter a useful resource. If you have any questions or queries relating to the content of this newsletter, or wish to bring to my attention any content that you would like included in a future edition then please contact me at sam.bartram@norfolk.gov.uk.

