



### 1. Purpose of this Policy

- 1.1 It is a legal requirement that we have parental written permission in order to administer any pain relief medication.
- 1.2 Paracetamol is a widely used drug for controlling pain and reducing temperature. Despite its prevalence, it can be very dangerous if taken inappropriately. Overdose requires immediate medical attention.
- 1.3 It is not recommended to allow children to carry paracetamol around the school with them. If, on occasion, a student needs to take a paracetamol for pain relief, the Health manager / First Aider will be happy to do this. At the beginning of the Autumn Term a consent form will be issued to all parents / guardians seeking permission for Paracetamol to be given to their child in the event of a headache or other moderate pain. In addition to this written permission, we will phone parents at the time to check that they are happy for us to give paracetamol, confirm the dosage and to ensure that they have not been given for a period of at least four hours from a previous dose. If we do not have your written permission the school will not administer paracetamol.
- 1.4 West Sussex County Council, in consultation with Health Practitioners, has carefully considered the benefits and dangers of administering this non-prescription drug in school settings. For older pupils, it is sometimes appropriate to give paracetamol to control specific pain such as migraine or period pain. Schools administering paracetamol to children over 10 should adhere to the following conditions:
  - 1.4.1 The member of staff responsible for giving medicines must be wary of routinely giving paracetamol to children.
  - 1.4.2 If a student complains of pain as soon as they arrive at school and asks for painkillers, it is not advisable to give paracetamol straight away. There should be at least four hours between any two doses of paracetamol containing medicines. No more than four doses of any remedy containing paracetamol should be taken in any 24 hours. Always consider whether the student may have been given a dose of paracetamol before coming to school. Many non-prescription remedies such as Beecham's Powders, Boots pain relief syrup for children, Lemsip, Night Nurse, Vicks Cold Care, etc, contain paracetamol. If paracetamol tablets are taken soon after taking these remedies, it could cause an unintended overdose.
  - 1.4.3 The student is first encouraged to get some fresh air/have a drink/something to eat/take a walk/sit in the shade (as appropriate) and paracetamol is only considered if these actions do not work.
  - 1.4.4 There must be prior written parental consent and verbal consent from the parent or carer on the day.
  - 1.4.5 Only standard paracetamol tablets may be administered. Combination drugs, which contain other drugs besides paracetamol must not be administered.
  - 1.4.6 Paracetamol must be stored securely as all other medicines are stored and should not be kept in first aid boxes.

- 1.4.7 Students can only be given one dose during the school day: one 500mg tablet for children who are 12 or under; two 500mg tablets for children over 12. If this does not relieve the pain, the school will contact the parent or the emergency contact as per the 'Supporting Students with medical Needs Policy'.
- 1.4.8 The member of staff responsible for giving medicines must witness the student taking the paracetamol, and make a record of it.
- 1.4.9 The student should be made aware that paracetamol should only be taken when absolutely necessary, that it is an ingredient in many cold and headache remedies and that great care should be taken to avoid overdosing.

## **2. Paracetamol on Residential Visits**

- 2.1 If a pupil becomes unwell during a residential visit, it may be appropriate to administer paracetamol. The general guidance on paracetamol (above) should be followed but on a residential visit, it may be appropriate to administer more than one dose. Dosage must be strictly according to the instructions on the packaging. Should paracetamol fail to alleviate symptoms and/or should staff have any concerns about a pupil's condition, they should not hesitate to get professional medical attention.

## **3. Keeping Supplies of Paracetamol**

- 3.1 A small supply of paracetamol is purchased by the school and kept in a locked cupboard within the school Medical Room.

Date of origination:	June 2015
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