



Administering paracetamol in the school setting

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Version	Author	Date	Changes
1	SLT	2019	
2	SLT	20/05/21	Addition of methods for record keeping
Distribution			
Essential reading for:		Teachers and support staff, parents and students	
Information for:		All stakeholders of the school	

Queen Mary's High School keeps its own stock of paracetamol tablets or suspension fluid. This reduces the risk of students carrying medicines and avoids confusion over what may and may not be administered. Children should not bring paracetamol to school to self administer.

Paracetamol must be stored securely as all the medicines are stored and should not be kept in first-aid boxes.

Staff administering medication should be relieved from other duties whilst preparing or giving the medicine, to reduce the likelihood of error.

When a child is given medicine, a written record of it must be kept.

The record must include:

- The name of the medicine
- The dose given, and how (tablet/ liquid)
- The name of the child
- The time and date it was given
- Name and signature of the person giving the medicine to the child

The member of staff responsible for giving medicines must be wary of routinely giving paracetamol to children. If a child complains as soon as they arrive at school and asks for painkillers, it is not advisable to give paracetamol straightaway. Always consider whether the child may have been given a dose of paracetamol before coming to school. Many non-prescription remedies contain paracetamol; it is recommended that if a child has had any pain or cold relief medication during the past four hours, then paracetamol is not given. If paracetamol is taken soon after taking these remedies, it could cause an unintended overdose. 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 24 hours. Always ask the child what other medication they take and what has been taken recently before doing anything.

If there is any doubt, seek medical advice before administering the medicine. It is recommended that school should only administer paracetamol three times in a term to an individual child. If a child requests more than this, parents should be advised to seek medical assessment, unless parents have specifically requested it because of a medical condition for a limited period of time.

Before giving the child paracetamol:

1. The child is first encouraged to get some fresh air and have a drink or something to eat, take a walk, sit in the shade, lie down (as appropriate) and paracetamol is only considered if these actions do not work.
2. There must be written parental consent, with verbal consent received from the parent on the day if written consent has not been provided.
3. Only standard paracetamol may be administered. Combination drugs, which contain other drugs besides paracetamol, must not be administered.

Administering paracetamol:

1. The staff administering should ensure that parents have first authorised the school, to provide paracetamol occasionally to children.
2. Children can only be given one dose of paracetamol every four hours. If this does not relieve the pain, contact the parent or the emergency contact. The member of staff responsible for giving medicines must witness the child taking the paracetamol and make a record of it.
3. Staff should stick the administered paracetamol label in the student's planner on the day, stating the

date and time and the amount of the dose.

4. The child 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.
5. The name of the child, the date, time, dose and reason should be recorded in a log kept with the paracetamol store. Any frequently recurring need must be reported directly to parents.

Note:

Paracetamol must be kept in a secure place and not in first-aid boxes. It must not be given:

- Following head injury
- Where a child is already on some of the medication
- Where a child has taken paracetamol containing medicine within four hours

Aspirin or preparations containing aspirin must never be given. Aspirin should NOT be given to children under 16 years old as its use is associated with Reye's Syndrome (a severe neurological disorder).

Dosage:

Please follow manufacturer's guidance on the bottle or packet of paracetamol. Please be aware that if the child looks below average weight for their age, contact the school nurse for advice before giving paracetamol.

- Age 11 years - 480 to 500 MG every 4 to 6 hours - maximum four doses in 24 hours
- Age 12 to 15 years - 480 to 750 MG every 4 to 6 hours - maximum four doses in 24 hours
- Age 16 to 18 years - 500 MG to 1G every 4 to 6 hours - maximum four doses in 24 hours

After giving the child paracetamol:

Send the child back to their class and make a note in SIMS quick notes to ensure that teachers are aware the child has had a dose of paracetamol.

Optional Checklist to support staff in Paracetamol Administration

Is the child allergic to anything? If yes, what?						
Has the child had any medicines today? If yes, what?						
Other options advised	Fresh air	Drink	Something to eat	Take a walk	Sit in the shade	Lie down
<i>Tick if appropriate</i>						

Is this a frequently recurring need? (More than 3 times in a term). If so, contact parents?

<i>Please tick options below as appropriate</i>		
Written consent from parent	YES	NO
Verbal consent from parent today	YES	NO
Note sent home informing parents	YES	NO
Administration recorded in log	YES	NO
Child improved	SAME	WORSE
Child back to class	YES	NO
Child sent home	YES	NO
Staff name (print)	Date	
Staff signature		