Marsh Hill Nursery School & Perry Beeches Nursery School

MEDICAL NEEDS POLICY 2026-2027

Document control	Details
Policy owner	Headteacher
Approval	Governing Body
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1 . Introduction and purpose

Marsh Hill Nursery School and Perry Beeches Nursery School recognises that some children may have medical conditions, disabilities or additional healthcare needs that require support during their attendance at nursery school.

The nursery school is committed to providing an inclusive, safe and supportive environment in which all children can access learning, play, care and wider nursery school activities, regardless of their medical needs.

This policy sets out the arrangements for identifying, assessing, planning and supporting children with medical needs. It aims to ensure that children receive appropriate care, that staff understand their responsibilities and that effective arrangements are in place to respond to medical emergencies.

The nursery school recognises that children aged 2–4 may be unable to explain their symptoms, communicate discomfort or independently manage their medical conditions. Staff must therefore remain particularly observant and responsive to changes in a child's presentation, behaviour and wellbeing.

The welfare and best interests of the child will remain central to all decisions.

2. Aims and objectives

The aims of this policy are to:

- Ensure children with medical needs are welcomed, included and supported.
- Identify medical needs before a child starts nursery school wherever possible.
- Establish effective communication between parents, staff and healthcare professionals.
- Ensure appropriate Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs) are developed and maintained.
- Ensure staff understand their responsibilities and receive appropriate training.
- Establish clear procedures for medical emergencies.
- Ensure medicines and medical equipment are stored safely and remain accessible when required.
- Reduce the risk of medical conditions preventing children from accessing nursery school activities.
- Ensure medical information is handled confidentially and appropriately.
- Provide clear leadership, accountability and monitoring arrangements.

3. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy has been developed with reference to:

- Children and Families Act 2014, particularly Section 100.
- Equality Act 2010.
- Children Act 1989.
- Children Act 2004.
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.
- Data Protection Act 2018.
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).
- Current Department for Education statutory guidance: Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school.
- Department for Education statutory guidance: Allergy safety in schools (July 2026).
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework for group and school-based providers, effective September 2026.
- Birmingham City Council Medical Needs Policy Template (September 2026).
- Birmingham City Council Administration of Medicines in Schools and Settings guidance.
- Birmingham City Council Personal Care Matters guidance.

The nursery school will ensure that this policy is reviewed when relevant legislation or local authority guidance changes.

4. Definition of medical needs

For the purpose of this policy, medical needs include any physical or health-related condition that may affect a child's wellbeing, safety, participation or ability to access nursery school provision.

This may include, but is not limited to:

- Asthma and respiratory conditions.
- Epilepsy and seizure disorders.
- Diabetes.
- Severe allergies and anaphylaxis.
- Eczema and significant skin conditions.

- Heart conditions.
- Gastrointestinal conditions.
- Continence and bladder or bowel conditions.
- Physical disabilities requiring healthcare support.
- Conditions requiring specialist medication or medical equipment.
- Conditions requiring emergency intervention.

Medical needs may be temporary, long-term, fluctuating or complex.

A child does not necessarily require an Individual Healthcare Plan simply because they have a medical diagnosis. The level of support will be determined by the child's individual circumstances and assessed needs.

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 Governing Body

The Governing Body will:

- Approve and periodically review the Medical Needs Policy.
- Ensure appropriate arrangements are in place to support children with medical needs.
- Monitor the effectiveness of the school's arrangements.
- Ensure the Headteacher has appropriate systems for staff training, risk assessment and healthcare planning.
- Seek assurance that the nursery school is meeting its statutory responsibilities.

5.2 Headteacher

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for implementing this policy and ensuring that the nursery school meets its responsibilities.

The Headteacher will:

- Appoint a designated Medical Needs Lead from the Senior Leadership Team.
- Ensure appropriate arrangements are in place for identifying and supporting children with medical needs.
- Ensure Individual Healthcare Plans are developed where required.
- Ensure suitable risk assessments are completed.
- Ensure staff receive appropriate training and understand their responsibilities.

- Ensure adequate staffing and contingency arrangements are maintained.
- Liaise with parents, healthcare professionals and Birmingham City Council where appropriate.
- Ensure medical incidents and near misses are recorded, investigated and reviewed.
- Ensure medical needs do not unnecessarily prevent children from accessing nursery school provision.

5.3 Designated Medical Needs Lead

The Medical Needs Lead will coordinate the day-to-day management of medical needs.

Responsibilities include:

- Maintaining an overview of children with identified medical needs.
- Coordinating the development and review of Individual Healthcare Plans.
- Ensuring relevant staff have access to appropriate medical information.
- Monitoring staff training and competency.
- Ensuring medication and medical equipment arrangements are appropriate.
- Checking that emergency arrangements are understood.
- Maintaining relevant medical needs records.
- Liaising with parents and healthcare professionals.
- Reporting concerns and incidents to the Headteacher.

5.4 All nursery school staff

All staff have a responsibility to:

- Be aware of children with medical needs in their care.
- Read and understand relevant healthcare plans.
- Recognise potential signs of illness or deterioration.
- Follow agreed medical and emergency procedures.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Report changes in a child's health or presentation.
- Attend relevant training.
- Ensure children are appropriately supervised.
- Report medical incidents, concerns and near misses immediately.

Staff must not undertake medical procedures or administer specialist medication unless they have received appropriate training and have been authorised to do so.

6. Identification of medical needs

The nursery school will seek information about a child's medical needs:

- During the admissions process.
- Through discussions with parents and carers.
- Through medical information and healthcare documentation provided by families.
- Through information from relevant healthcare professionals, where appropriate.
- When a medical condition is identified or develops during attendance.

Parents and carers will be asked to provide accurate and up-to-date information about their child's medical needs.

This includes:

- Medical conditions and diagnoses.
- Known allergies.
- Medication requirements.
- Known triggers.
- Symptoms and warning signs.
- Emergency procedures.
- Relevant medical advice.
- Contact details for parents and emergency contacts.

Parents must inform the nursery school promptly of any changes to their child's medical condition, medication or healthcare arrangements.

The nursery school will not make assumptions about a child's medical needs based solely on their appearance, diagnosis or previous medical history.

7. Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs)

Where a child's medical condition requires individual support or specific healthcare arrangements, an Individual Healthcare Plan will be developed.

The purpose of an IHP is to ensure that everyone involved in the child's care understands their medical needs and knows how to respond appropriately.

Plans will be developed in partnership with:

- Parents and carers.

- The Headteacher or Medical Needs Lead.
- The child's key person.
- Relevant healthcare professionals, where appropriate.

An IHP should include:

1. The child's name and date of birth.
2. Details of the medical condition.
3. Symptoms and warning signs.
4. Known triggers and preventative measures.
5. Medication and treatment requirements.
6. Emergency procedures.
7. Contact details for parents and relevant healthcare professionals.
8. Staff training requirements.
9. Arrangements for supervision and support.
10. Arrangements for outings and activities.
11. Any necessary environmental adjustments.
12. Review dates.

For children aged 2–4, plans must recognise that children may not be able to identify or communicate symptoms reliably.

Staff should therefore understand the child's normal behaviour and presentation and be alert to changes.

IHPs will be reviewed at least annually and whenever there is a significant change in the child's condition, medication or support requirements.

Parents will be involved in the review process.

8. Risk assessments

A risk assessment will be undertaken where a child's medical condition may present additional risks during nursery school attendance.

Risk assessments will consider:

- The child's individual medical needs.
- The level of supervision required.
- Staff availability and training.
- Access to medication and medical equipment.
- Indoor and outdoor activities.

- Mealtimes and food-related risks.
- Sleep and rest periods.
- Personal care and toileting arrangements.
- Transitions between rooms and activities.
- Educational visits and outings.
- Emergency evacuation arrangements.
- The arrangements required if a trained member of staff is absent.

Risk assessments will be individual to the child and proportionate to their needs.

They will be reviewed when circumstances change or following an incident.

9. Inclusion and equal opportunities

The nursery school is committed to ensuring that medical needs do not automatically prevent children from accessing nursery school education.

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, the nursery school will consider its duty to make reasonable adjustments for children with disabilities.

Where appropriate, adjustments may include:

- Changes to the learning environment.
- Additional supervision.
- Adapted activities.
- Adjustments to routines.
- Access to appropriate medical equipment.
- Additional staff training.
- Changes to arrangements for meals, rest or outdoor play.
- Appropriate support during transitions and educational visits.

The nursery school will work with parents and relevant professionals to identify suitable arrangements.

Decisions about attendance and participation will be based on individual needs and a proper assessment of risks.

A child will not be excluded simply because they have a medical condition.

Where the nursery school has concerns that it cannot safely meet a child's needs, the Headteacher will seek appropriate advice and work with the family and relevant professionals to identify suitable arrangements.

10. Administration and management of medicines

The nursery school has a separate Administration of Medicines Policy, which must be read alongside this document.

That policy covers:

- Parental consent.
- Receiving medicines.
- Safe storage.
- Administration procedures.
- Medication records.
- Expiry-date checks.
- Emergency medicines.
- Medication errors.
- Returning and disposing of medicines.

Medicines will only be administered where appropriate consent, documentation, staffing and training arrangements are in place.

Emergency medication must be readily accessible to appropriately trained staff.

Medication must not be left where children can access it.

11. Emergency procedures

The nursery school will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to respond to medical emergencies.

Staff must know how to:

- Recognise signs of medical deterioration.
- Follow a child's Individual Healthcare Plan.
- Access emergency medication.
- Contact emergency services.
- Contact parents and carers.
- Maintain supervision of other children.
- Record the incident appropriately.

Where a child requires urgent medical assistance, staff must call 999.

Emergency treatment must not be delayed while waiting for parental consent or attempting to contact parents.

Where an ambulance is required:

- A member of staff should remain with the child.
- Another member of staff should contact parents.
- Relevant medical information and medication should accompany the child where appropriate.
- Staff should ensure the remaining children continue to be safely supervised.

Following an emergency, the Headteacher will ensure that the incident is documented and reviewed.

12. Allergy management

The nursery school recognises that allergies can present serious and potentially life-threatening risks.

All known allergies must be recorded and communicated to relevant staff.

The nursery school will:

- Obtain information about known allergies before admission.
- Ensure individual allergy healthcare plans are developed where required.
- Identify known allergens and potential triggers.
- Ensure appropriate staff training is provided.
- Maintain access to prescribed emergency medication.
- Establish suitable arrangements for meals and snacks.
- Communicate allergy information to relevant staff.
- Consider allergy risks during activities, celebrations and educational visits.
- Review allergy arrangements following any incident or near miss.

The nursery school will have a separate Allergy Safety Policy in accordance with the statutory Department for Education guidance introduced in July 2026.

13. Staff training and competence

The Headteacher will ensure that staff receive appropriate training to support children with medical needs.

Training requirements will depend on the individual child's condition and the support required.

Training may include:

- Asthma awareness.
- Allergy and anaphylaxis awareness.
- Epilepsy and seizure awareness.
- Diabetes awareness.

- Administration of medication.
- Use of specialist medical equipment.
- Recognition of medical emergencies.
- Condition-specific healthcare procedures.

Where a medical procedure requires specialist knowledge or technical competence, training must be provided by an appropriately qualified healthcare professional.

Staff must be assessed as competent before undertaking specialist procedures independently.

Training records will be maintained by the Medical Needs Lead.

Refresher training will be arranged when required.

14. Medical needs during nursery school activities and educational visits

Children with medical needs will be included in nursery school activities, visits and outings wherever reasonably practicable.

Before an activity or visit, staff will consider:

- The child's medical condition.
- Any additional risks.
- Medication requirements.
- Emergency procedures.
- Staff training and competence.
- Access to medical equipment.
- Parent and emergency contact details.
- Any additional supervision required.

The child's Individual Healthcare Plan and relevant risk assessment will inform arrangements.

Emergency medication must accompany the child where required and remain accessible.

15. Personal care and medical needs

Some children with medical needs may require additional support with toileting, continence, feeding, mobility or other personal care routines.

The nursery school will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to protect the child's dignity, privacy and safety.

Where necessary, an individual personal care plan will be developed.

Staff will follow the nursery school's Personal Care and Intimate Care Policy and relevant Birmingham City Council guidance.

Medical and personal care needs will be considered together where they overlap.

16. Communication with parents and healthcare professionals

The nursery school recognises the importance of effective communication.

Parents and carers will be involved in decisions about their child's medical support.

The nursery school will maintain appropriate communication with relevant healthcare professionals, including:

- GPs.
- Community paediatricians.
- School nursing services.
- Specialist nurses.
- Occupational therapists.
- Physiotherapists.
- Other relevant health professionals.

Information will only be shared where appropriate and in accordance with data protection requirements.

Parents will be informed of significant changes, concerns or incidents relating to their child's medical needs.

17. Confidentiality and information management

Medical information is sensitive personal information and must be handled securely.

The nursery school will:

- Store medical records securely.
- Restrict access to staff who need the information.
- Ensure relevant staff have access to information necessary for the child's safety.
- Maintain accurate and up-to-date records.
- Follow UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- Follow the school's records retention arrangements.

Confidentiality must never prevent staff from accessing essential information required to protect a child.

18. Medical incidents and near misses

All medical incidents and near misses must be reported to the Headteacher or Medical Needs Lead.

This includes:

- Unexpected deterioration in a child's condition.
- Medication errors.
- Delayed administration of emergency medication.
- An allergic reaction.
- A seizure or other medical emergency.
- An incident involving medical equipment.
- A failure to follow an Individual Healthcare Plan.
- Any event that could have resulted in harm.

The nursery school will maintain an appropriate incident reporting system.

Following an incident, the Headteacher will consider:

- Whether the child received appropriate care.
- Whether parents were informed.
- Whether medical advice is required.
- Whether the healthcare plan needs updating.
- Whether further staff training is necessary.
- Whether procedures or risk assessments need changing.
- Whether any external reporting requirements apply.

The nursery school will promote a culture of learning and improvement rather than simply assigning blame.

19. Absence and contingency arrangements

The nursery school will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place when a member of staff responsible for supporting a child with medical needs is absent.

This may include:

- Identifying additional trained staff.
- Ensuring relevant staff understand the IHP.
- Arranging alternative staff cover.
- Ensuring medication remains accessible.
- Reviewing staffing arrangements for particular activities.

Where a child's medical needs cannot be safely supported because of an unexpected staffing issue, the Headteacher will assess the circumstances and take appropriate action.

20. Transition arrangements

Where a child moves to another nursery school room, school or educational setting, appropriate medical information will be shared with the receiving staff or setting, subject to appropriate information-sharing arrangements.

This will include:

- Current medical information.
- Individual Healthcare Plans.
- Medication arrangements.
- Emergency procedures.
- Relevant risk assessments.
- Staff training requirements.

Parents will be involved in transition arrangements.

The nursery school will work with receiving settings to support continuity of care.

21. Complaints

Any concerns about the support provided to a child with medical needs should initially be raised with the Headteacher.

Where concerns cannot be resolved, parents may use the school's formal complaints procedure.

The Governing Body will consider complaints in accordance with the school's established procedures.

22. Monitoring and review

The Headteacher and Medical Needs Lead will monitor the implementation of this policy.

Monitoring will include:

- Reviewing Individual Healthcare Plans.
- Checking staff training records.
- Reviewing medical incidents and near misses.
- Checking medication and emergency arrangements.
- Reviewing risk assessments.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of communication with parents.
- Seeking feedback from families where appropriate.

The policy will be reviewed annually or sooner where there are changes to legislation, statutory guidance, Birmingham City Council requirements or the needs of children attending the nursery school.

23. Related policies and documents

This policy should be read alongside:

1. Administration of Medicines Policy.
2. Allergy Safety Policy.
3. Health and Safety Policy.
4. Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
5. Personal Care and Intimate Care Policy.
6. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy.