**INDIVIDUAL HEALTHCARE PLANS**

**Your Child’s Rights**

In the United Kingdom, Individual Healthcare Plans are underpinned by Human Rights and Acts of Parliament.

Every person in the UK is protected by human rights, which are built on the principles of dignity, fairness, respect and equality. The UK Government’s human rights obligations shape laws, policies and attitudes in the United Kingdom, to create a stronger and fairer society for everyone. If you would like to find out more about Human Rights visit: [www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)

The Children and Families Act 2014: places a legal duty on particular types of schools (see below) to make arrangements at school to support pupils with medical conditions. A pupil’s mental and physical health should be properly supported in school so that the pupil can have full access to education, including school trips and physical education; play a full and active role in school life; remain healthy and achieve their academic potential.

To help schools understand what they need to do to fulfil their lawful duty, the UK Government has issued a guidance document: Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions. Schools must have regard to this statutory guidance – this means that they must follow it, unless there is a legitimate and robust reason not to do so. Anyone can read the guidance document:

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

The Equality Act 2010 promotes equality in the UK and makes discrimination unlawful. Many pupils with medical needs will also have a disability under this Act. In carrying out and meeting the legal duties in the Children and Families Act 2014, schools are covered by the Equality Act 2010.

**Please note**

The statutory guidance document ‘Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions’ **applies to**: maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units.

It **does not apply to**: maintained nursery schools, 16-19 academies and independent schools. All early years providers should take steps to ensure that children with medical conditions get the support required to meet those needs as set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework.

Understanding Individual Healthcare Plans

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| **Q** | ***What is an Individual Healthcare Plan?*** |
| **A** | It is a document drawn up by a school, that sets out a pupil’s medical needs and how best to support them, for the time that the pupil spends at school. A plan should be developed in liaison with the pupil, parents, school and nay relevant health care professionals. It should be developed with the pupil’s best interests in mind, and should ensure that the school assesses and manages risk to the pupil’s education, health and social wellbeing, and minimises disruption. |
| **Q** | ***What does an Individual Healthcare Plan look like?*** |
| **A** | The way an Individual Healthcare Plan is set out can vary, but all plans should capture key information and actions needed to support a pupil effectively. The level of detail within a plan will depend on the complexity of the pupil’s condition and the degree of support needed.  Schools can use their own Individual Healthcare Plan format, but most schools on Wirral choose to use the Local Authority’s format, which can be found on Wirral’s Local Offer website. |
| **Q** | ***Do all children with medical conditions need an Individual Healthcare Plan?*** |
| **A** | No, not all children will need one. A plan will often be essential in cases where conditions fluctuate or where there is a high risk that emergency intervention will be needed. A plan is likely to be helpful in the majority of other cases, especially where medical conditions are  long-term and complex. |
| **Q** | ***Who decides if a pupil needs an Individual Healthcare Plan?*** |
| **A** | Anyone can ask for an Individual Healthcare Plan to be considered for a pupil, including the pupil’s school, healthcare professional or parent. Schools do not have to wait for a formal diagnosis before providing support to pupils.  The school, healthcare professional and parent should agree, based on evidence, when a plan would be inappropriate or disproportionate. If consensus cannot be reached, the headteacher is best placed to take a final view. |
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| **Q** | ***How often should an Individual Healthcare Plan be reviewed?*** |
| **A** | Plans should be reviewed at least annually or earlier if the child’s needs have changed. |
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| **Q** | ***How do I know who has responsibility for coordinating Individual Health Care Plans in my child’s school, and what procedures and systems they have in place?*** |
| **A** | All schools must have a policy for supporting pupils with medical conditions that is reviewed regularly, and is readily accessible to parents and school staff. The policy should include a named person who has overall responsibility for implementing the policy. Contact your child’s school and ask how you can get a copy. Schools sometimes include information on how to access their policy in their annual Special Educational Needs Information Report, which they must make available on the school website. |
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| **Q** | ***If my child needs practical support or intervention for medical needs in school, will it be provided by the school nurse?*** |
| **A** | No.  Although schools have access to the School Nursing Service, the majority do not have a school nurse on site.  Day-to-day support to meet an individual pupil’s health needs will largely be provided by school staff that have either volunteered or been contracted to provide support.  Schools should ensure that sufficient staff have received suitable training and are competent before they take on responsibility to support children with medical conditions. |
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| **Q** | ***Who will provide training for school staff?*** |
| **A** | Training may be provided in a number of different ways including through local specialist nursing teams e.g. Paediatric Diabetes Nurse Specialist; purchased training e.g. Abbott Nutrition. |
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| **Q** | ***Will my child be able to have medication while at school?*** |
| **A** | Yes. Medicines, including controlled drugs, should only be given at school when it would be detrimental to a child’s health or school attendance not to do so. Where clinically possible, medicines should be prescribed in dose frequencies which enable them to be taken outside of school hours. |
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| **Q** | ***How does Wirral Local Authority help schools to meet their legal duty to support pupils with medical needs?*** |
| **A** | Wirral Local Authority has a **Specialist Support Team for Pupils with Medical and Physical Needs**. The Team is made up of two advisory teachers, who can attend Individual Health Care Plan meetings if necessary, offering advice to schools around appropriate support, that allows a pupil to have full access to education, including school trips and Physical Education; play a full and active role in school life; remain healthy and achieve their academic potential; attend full-time and receive a suitable education. The Team also links in with the Local Authority’s arrangements to provide alternative provision for children who cannot attend school because of health needs. |