

Medication requirements for childminders

Ofsted have clarified what inspectors will be looking for when they check your medication administration procedures to make sure you are complying with the requirements of the EYFS 2012 and the Childcare Register 2012.

The factsheet is available from here - <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/factsheet-childcare-giving-medication-children-registered-childcare> - Ofsted reference 080290.

Childminders are usually registered on 2 different registers. The medication requirements for the 2 registers are slightly different and childminders must comply with both -

The Early Years Register 2012 - the EYFS framework - <http://www.foundationyears.org.uk/early-years-foundation-stage-2012/>;

- 'Requirement 3.42 - The provider must promote the good health of children attending the setting. They must have a procedure, discussed with parents and/or carers, for responding to children who are ill or infectious, take necessary steps to prevent the spread of infection, and take appropriate action if children are ill.'

Ofsted have also confirmed in another factsheet that the medication policy and procedures must be in writing if you are registered on the Childcare Register.

Childminders are not required by the EYFS to administer medication - but you must consider how you will support children's needs if you decide not to give medicine when it is needed or in a medical emergency. Childminders must also comply with the Equality Act 2010 and be inclusive to meet the requirements of the EYFS and Childcare Register.

Do you have an illness and infection procedure? It is not a requirement but it might help you to share information with parents about how you protect their child.

- Requirement 3.43 - Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, for administering medicines. It must include systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medicines, and for keeping this information up-to-date. Training must be provided for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge. Medicines must not usually be administered unless they have been prescribed for a child by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist (medicines containing aspirin should only be given if prescribed by a doctor).

Before a child starts in your care you need to speak to parents and find out about their medical needs. You should consider where you store the information, how you would make emergency services aware of who takes which medication (what if you are unable to speak for the children because you are injured?), how often you ask parents to update medication information etc.

If you need training it can be from a nurse, doctor or in some instances the parents.

- Requirement 3.44 - Medicine (both prescription and non-prescription) must only be administered to a child where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent and/or carer. Providers must keep a written record each time a medicine is administered to a child, and inform the child's parents and/or carers on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable.'

The factsheet above gives detailed advice about the differences between prescription and non prescription medication.

You must have written permission from parents before administering medication. You must also have a way of showing evidence that they have been informed when medication has been given - most childminders ask parents to sign to confirm this.

The Childcare Register 2012 - <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/factsheet-childcare-requirements-for-childcare-register-childminders-and-home-childcarers>

Requirement CR8 - Records to be kept -

'Childminders must keep records of the following and retain them for a period of two years:

- Any medicine administered to any child who is cared for on the premises, including the date and circumstances and who administered it, including medicine which the child is permitted to self-administer, together with a record of a parent / guardian / carer's consent.'

The Childcare Register caters for children up to the age of 17, hence the comments about children self administering medication. You might need to think about how you monitor and record this if children arrive with medication in their pockets from High School or routinely carry an inhaler in their pocket.

As you can see there are some differences between the 2 registers which you need to be aware about - you should make sure they are reflected in your paperwork.