



# Epilepsy Policy

## **Adoption Arrangements and Date**

**Review Body:** Headteacher  
**Responsibility:** Deputy Head  
**Policy Type:** Non-statutory

**Adopted:** November 2017

Bennett is a Church of England school where the principal aim is to provide a Christian framework for learning and development. In this context all students are treated with respect, and the safety and well-being of each individual student in the school's care are of prime importance. This policy sets out the school's procedures for managing epilepsy safely and appropriately in school.

This school aims to provide all children with epilepsy the same opportunities as others at school. We will help to ensure they can:

- be healthy
- stay safe
- enjoy and achieve
- make a positive contribution
- achieve economic well-being.

Epilepsy is a condition that affects the brain and causes repeated seizures. It is estimated that almost one in every 100 people has the condition.

The cells in the brain, known as neurons, conduct electrical signals and communicate with each other in the brain using chemical messengers. During a seizure, there are abnormal bursts of neurons firing off electrical impulses, which can cause the brain and body to behave strangely.

The severity of seizures can differ from person to person. Some people simply experience an odd feeling with no loss of awareness, or may have a "trance-like" state for a few seconds or minutes, while others lose consciousness and have convulsions (uncontrollable shaking of the body).

Some people may only have a single seizure at some point during their life. If they do not have a high risk of having further seizures, they would not be regarded as having epilepsy.

Bennett Memorial Diocesan School welcomes all students with epilepsy to the school. We will support students with epilepsy in all aspects of school life and encourage them to achieve their full potential. This policy ensures that all relevant staff receives training about epilepsy and administering emergency medicines. All new staff and supply staff will also receive appropriate training.

Whenever a student with epilepsy joins our school, or a current student is diagnosed with the condition, the School Nurse, Year Manager, and where necessary the SENCO, will arrange a meeting with the student and the parents/guardians to establish how the student's epilepsy may affect their school life. This should include the implications for learning, social development, and out of school activities/trips. Special arrangements such as extra time during exams will also be discussed.

During the meeting an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) of the student's epilepsy and learning and health needs will be completed. This document may include issues such as agreeing to administer medicines and any staff training needs. It will also contain the names of staff trained to administer the medicine and how to contact these members of staff. This record will be agreed by the

parents/guardians, and the health professional, if present, and signed by the parents/guardians. This IHCP will be kept by the School Nurse. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to inform the school of any changes to the IHCP.

Staff will be notified of any changes in the student's condition through regular staff briefings and by e-mail. This will make staff aware of any special requirements, such as seating the student facing the class teacher to help monitor if the student is having absence seizures and missing part of the lesson.

Students in the school are made aware of epilepsy through assemblies and PSHE lessons.

To maintain and ensure safety of all students with epilepsy and to reduce the risk of injury all staff are expected to ensure:

- They have read the Epilepsy Policy
- They are familiar with the care plan for each student in their care; Seizures, procedures and protocols vary widely according to the student. It is important that all staff within school are aware of the student's condition and of protocols and procedures should the student experience a seizure.
- Key staff members receive the appropriate training; in addition to basic life support to meet the needs of student with epilepsy that they are working with. This may include safe storage and administration of Buccal Midazolam
- They read and share risk assessments before accompanying students offsite or on outdoor and adventurous activities.

## **Medication**

The majority of students with epilepsy will receive regular anti-epileptic medication at home; however any medication to be administered during the day should be brought into school. This will be kept in the medical room for safe storage and will be administered by the School Nurse or trained staff at the appropriate times during the school day. The medication will be clearly marked with the student's name, dosage and times to be given. Please refer to the school policy on managing medications in school.

Some students will require emergency medication to control their seizures and will require administration of Buccal Midazolam in school. The medication will be kept in the medical room, unless specifically agreed and risk assessed as necessary to keep it elsewhere i.e. an individual student may need to have medication carried by a 1:1 staff member to ensure they can access the medication ASAP (this will be agreed with staff, parents/guardians and our school nurse and written into the student's care plan).

On the school site the School Nurse or First Aider would be summoned when needed and will administer this if necessary. Off school site, the trained members of staff would take responsibility for this.

## **Training**

Training of all relevant staff in epilepsy protocols, basic life support and CPR training is provided annually. Key staff who work with a student with epilepsy will undergo specific training relating to the needs of that student.

The training will be organised by the school and be provided by the school nurse. In addition, where staff are expected to administer emergency medication to a student with epilepsy offsite, training will be given in safe administration of medication.

## **School Trips**

Extra care and additional safety measures may be required when taking a student with epilepsy on a school trip. A full risk assessment, in conjunction with the parents/guardians and health care professionals, will need to take place.

The following points should be considered prior to a visit:

- a member of staff trained in the treatment of epilepsy and the administration of routine and emergency medication must be identified and accompany the group if a student with epilepsy is travelling
- the staff must be aware of the medication the student will need to take on the trip
- staff supervising the trip must be aware of the student's condition and of any relevant procedures and protocols
- all seizures will be timed, described and all details will be noted for the emergency services, school nurse and parents/guardians

## **Emergency Services**

If an ambulance is required at school, as agreed in the care plan, a member of staff will accompany the student to hospital and remain with them until their parents/guardians arrive.

An ambulance should be called during a seizure if:

- it is the student's first seizure
- the student has injured themselves badly
- they have breathing problems during a seizure
- a seizure lasts longer than the period set out in the student's individual health care plan
- there are repeated seizures
- if medication has been given but the seizure hasn't stopped or the student was not able to take the full dose of medication.

### What to do if a student has a seizure (Also refer to the student's health care plan)

- **Stay calm** and call for help
- **Look around** - is the person in a dangerous place? If not, don't move them. Move objects like furniture away from them.
- **Note the time** the seizure starts.
- **Stay with them.** If they don't collapse but seem blank or confused, gently guide them away from any danger. Speak quietly and calmly.
- **Cushion their head** with something soft if they have collapsed to the ground.
- **Don't hold them down.**
- **Don't put anything in their mouth.**
- **Check the time again.** If a convulsive (shaking) seizure doesn't stop after 5 minutes, call for an ambulance (dial 999).
- **After the seizure has stopped,** put them into the recovery position and check that their breathing is returning to normal. Gently check their mouth to see that nothing is blocking their airway such as food or false teeth. If their breathing sounds difficult after the seizure has stopped, call for an ambulance.
- **Stay with them until they are fully recovered.**