The school has a registered nurse on duty, Monday to Friday from 8.00am – 6.00pm to administer medication if required. The Medical Centre is located in Anne Symington House, phone extension 9202.

In terms of the administration of medication, it is recognised that:

- some students require long term medication for control of chronic medical conditions;
- some students need short term medication for management of acute illness or infection;
- the quantities of medications in the school need to be minimised;
- some students require occasional analgesia, decongestants or antihistamine;
- treatment of conditions of the eye or ear may require frequent care with refrigerated, prescribed medications;
- students may require medication during excursions or camping trips;
- students who reside at St Mary’s may require medication;
- medications must be stored safely;
- when medication is given, written records of this administration of medication must be kept.

The situations above are treated as follows.

**LONG TERM MEDICATIONS**

The administration of medication to control chronic medical conditions depends predominantly on the student’s ability to self medicate. Students with chronic illness need to learn the importance of regular medication and how to be in control of their own treatment. Self medication, where possible in school, allows independence and helps to teach chronically ill students the disease management skills upon which their lives depend.

A student will self-medicate at school if the student’s parents/guardians and physician believe the student to be capable. One day’s supply of medication is to be carried by the student for that student’s personal use only. A reserve supply should be kept in the school Medical Centre, labelled with student’s name, medication name, dose and expiry date, in case the student forgets to bring a daily dose.

A student will be denied self medication privileges if the student shows non-compliance with medication administration or exhibits an inability to correctly follow the quantity guidelines of this policy. If self administration has been denied, the student must report to the Medical Centre where the nurse on duty will administer the required medication from a labelled supply provided by the student’s parents/guardians.

If a student is considered incapable of self administration of medication, a supply of the labelled drug, along with written instructions from the prescribing physician, should be delivered by the parent/guardian to the nurse in the school Medical Centre. Nursing staff, or in some cases teaching staff under direct instruction from the school’s nurse, will administer the drug at the prescribed times and dosages.
Asthma medications will be retained by the student and used as directed. Young children who require assistance may either attend the Medical Centre or be assisted by a teacher or carer who has been instructed and is competent in the use of asthma inhalers and spacer devices. Spare asthma medications, (fully labelled) should be given to the student’s teacher in the Junior School, or for senior students, to the nursing staff in the Medical Centre. Full instructions and dosages must be provided by the student’s physician.

In the case of life threatening allergic reaction where emergency injection of drugs may be required, the orders of the student’s physician will be followed. The student should carry emergency drugs at all times and be capable of self administration. A supply of the emergency medication and written instructions must be left with the school’s nursing staff. It is the responsibility of the parent to be aware of the expiry date of the medication and to replace the supply before it expires.

**SHORT TERM MEDICATIONS**

Short term medications can be self administered if the student is considered by her parents/guardians to be capable. Many of these medications, eg. antibiotics, must be taken, either; on an empty stomach (half an hour before meals) to aid absorption, or with food to protect the gastric mucosa. Students must be aware of dosage instructions and comply even if it means having to leave class to take the medication at a specified time.

**MEDICATION QUANTITIES**

The quantities of medications on school grounds will be minimised by allowing only one day’s supply to be brought to school each day. Medications brought to school are for personal use only. A spare supply of medication may be kept in the Medical Centre if required.

**OCCASIONAL ILLNESS**

Should a student become unwell during the day and the nurse on duty believes the administration of an analgesic, decongestant or antihistamine will relieve symptoms and allow the student to feel well enough to remain at school, then a commonly used “over the counter non-prescription” preparation may be given to the student, provided that the parent/guardian has previously given written consent to allow administration of medication. If there has been no written consent provided, the nurse on duty will try to phone parents/guardians to gain verbal consent or to make arrangements for the student to be collected from school.

If consent from parent/guardian cannot be obtained, oral medication will not be administered. Creams and lotions may be used without parental consent to treat minor injury, rashes and insect stings.

If however, the illness is serious and the nurse on duty is unable to contact parents/guardians, the nurse will phone the student’s doctor to seek advice and/or verbal prescription of medication. The doctor’s orders will be followed and the verbal order will be written by the doctor within 24 hours in accordance with Nurses Board regulations.
EYE OR EAR TREATMENT

The treatment of conditions of the eye or ear will be carried out in the Medical Centre by the nurse on duty. Students will require assistance with the instillation of prescribed eye or ear drops. This assistance will be given by the nurse on duty to prevent the spread of infection between students "helping" each other. Ear and eye drops usually require refrigeration. Storage of drops in a pocket or school bag may render them unsafe to use. Written instructions from the prescribing physician must accompany all eye and ear treatments.

EXCURSION/CAMPING MEDICATION

If a student is deemed capable of self medication, she will be responsible for her own medication administration during excursions or camping situations. Supervisory staff will hold the medications and after checking the medication label with the student, allow the student to dispense herself a supply. The quantity of medication dispensed will be at the supervisor’s discretion.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

a) written notification of treatment regimen;
b) providing all medications the student may need while at camp;
c) ensuring all drugs are clearly labelled with all the previously mentioned information, including expiry date;
d) informing the school’s nursing staff of changes in medical condition or medication.

A basic first aid kit will be provided for each camp to deal with minor accidents and illness. Camp supervisory staff may need to dispense some of the following "over the counter non-prescription" medicines:

a) Paracetamol to relieve pain or fever;
b) anti-inflammatories to treat menstrual pain;
c) decongestants to relieve symptoms of colds;
d) antihistamine to relieve allergic reaction to insect stings or pollen (hay fever);
e) medication to relieve motion sickness;
f) Ventolin to treat asthma.

A written record of all medicines administered by staff to students must be kept and forwarded to the Medical Centre at the completion of each camp.

In the case of life threatening illness or allergy, parents/guardians, student, staff and the student’s doctor will need to discuss the risks the student faces if she attends camp. The school may decide that a student should not attend camp if her health is at risk or if the school is unable to provide a person with sufficient training to look after her. If an "at risk" student attends camp, parents/guardians must:

a) ensure that staff are instructed in the emergency care of the student;
b) provide all emergency medication and/or equipment;
c) provide instruction to staff if administration of medication by injection is required;
d) inform staff of the signs and symptoms of known conditions or allergic reactions.
ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION TO BOARDERS

All medications required by boarders must be handed to the nurse on duty at the commencement of boarding each term or at the commencement of the new treatment.

Each medication requirement will be treated individually and the discretion of the registered nurse will be used in determining which drugs and in what quantities, will be allowed in the students’ rooms; drug safety and administration compliance being of utmost concern.

During the time that a registered nurse is not on duty, boarders may be medicated by supervisory staff under the instruction of a registered nurse. The medications administered by supervisory staff will be commonly used "over the counter non-prescription" preparations. Prescription medication will be dispensed to boarders before the nurse goes off duty.

STORAGE OF MEDICATION

a) All medicines kept in the Medical Centre at St Mary’s will be stored in a locked cabinet.
b) Medications brought into the school for daily use by students will be carried in that student’s pocket, or locked in the student’s locker. Medications are not to be left in school bags.
c) Medications kept in boarders’ rooms will be locked in the student’s valuables compartment.
d) First Aid kits containing medications required for camps or excursions will be stored as safely as possible and remain the responsibility of an authorised adult.

WRITTEN RECORDS

Medication records are deemed to be of a confidential nature. After the legally required passage of time the records may be returned to the student, if required, or be disposed of in a method that will not betray confidentiality.

Student medical information required for camp will be treated and stored in a manner that will not betray student confidentiality.