

1 minute guide: Emergency Paracetamol

What does the EYFS 2025 state about administering non prescribed medication

Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, for administering medicines.

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.

Prescription medicines must not 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).

Gaining permission to administer emergency paracetamol

Prior written permission to administer emergency infant paracetamol should be collected on the permission form which are completed by parents/carers when the child first attends the setting. The permission form should stipulate that paracetamol will be given as a last resort and only given if other methods to reduce temperature have not worked. Make sure the wording is very specific, only give infant paracetamol for the reasons listed within the permission form, If administering infant paracetamol for any other reason the settings must obtain additional prior written permission from parent/carer before any medication is given and record this on the Medication Administration Form.

Should you feel that a child needs a dose of paracetamol you should contact parents/carers prior to administering to inform them of their child's condition and find out if this has already been given at home to ensure that it is safe to administer. You may ask them to send you confirmation in a text message, so you have this written down. Ensure that a Medication Administration Form has been completed, this record should include:

Child's name, DOB, Date, Name of medication, reason for medication, time to be administered, dose to be administered (in line with manufacturers guidance), medication checked for suitability (age, symptoms), expiry date, parent permission, staff signature, time given, dose given, witness signature, parent signature

Reasons for administering

Giving liquid paracetamol will be a last resort, and the practitioners should use other methods first to try and reduce a child's temperature e.g.: remove clothing, fanning, and tepid cooling with a wet flannel. Parents should be contacted before any medication can be administered. The child should be closely monitored until the parents collect the child.

What dose should be given

Parents/carers should notify the practitioners if a dose of infant paracetamol has been given prior to attending the setting, the dose to be given should be stipulated on the bottle, this may depend on the child's age and sometimes their weight. If a dose has already been given at home wait at least 4 hours between doses.

What to do if a child develops a temperature at the setting – suggested procedure to follow

Measures for Temperature (Over 37 C) If you suspect a child has a temperature it is advisable the following steps should be followed.

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- Record the child's temperature
- Record comments that show what measures have been done to help reduce temperature
- Take layers of clothing off and sponging head with cool water to help reduce temperature
- Give the child some cool water to drink
- Call the Parent/carer and record time of call
- Ask the parent/carer to collect the child
- Comfort the child if upset (try not to cuddle them too long as your body heat will add to temperature)
- Record and monitor on a regular basis
- If temperature continues to rise call parent again to see how long before collection
- If you are unable to bring the temperature down and it continues to rise, and you cannot contact the parent/carer/emergency contacts named on the child's Registration Form call NHS Direct (111) for further guidance.