

## HEWETT HOUSE – NAPIER GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL

### POLICY ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF PRESCRIBED MEDICATION BY HEWETT HOUSE STAFF IN NON-EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

**NB:** This policy does not refer to emergency situations.

Under the Crimes Act 1961 section 151, everyone has a duty to provide the necessities of life, which could include first aid, until medical professional arrive or until parents or guardians are contacted.

The following information is of a general nature and is not a substitute for taking independent legal, medical or other professional advice.

#### **Background to this Policy**

As an integral part of their pastoral care duties, staff members of Hewett House have traditionally administered antibiotics or provided medication for headaches. Examples of medication commonly administered at Hewett House include prescriptions from Doctors, Ponstan, Mylanta and Panadol.

#### **Hewett House needs to Note**

- 1 Boarders have a right to receive prescribed medication in Hewett House if this enables them to access education.
- 2 Staff members have a right to choose whether or not to take the responsibility for administering prescribed medication to a boarder. An exception to this is when the role is specified in an employee's job description.
- 3 Hewett House has a duty to maintain a safe physical and emotional environment.

#### **Hewett House will need to comply with**

Education Act 1989 that gives students the right to receive education until the end of the year of their nineteenth birthday or, for boarders with section 9 agreements, to receive special education, until the end of the year in which they turn twenty-one.

Human Rights Act 1993 that protects a boarder's right to access education.

The Health and Disability Commissioner advises that the **Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights** may also apply to staff who administer medication. However, whether anyone is in breach of the Code will depend on if they acted reasonably in the circumstances. For example, it would be considered relevant that the medication was administered at the parent's request and under a doctor's instructions. It is important that a staff member does not do anything required to be done by a medical professional. Staff who exercise care and act in accordance with a parent's or doctor's instructions have little to fear from the Code.

## Hewett House Policy is –

- 1 That Hewett House staff are not required to administer medication.
- 2 Subject to a staff member being prepared to accept responsibility, then the following will apply –
  - A All parents or guardians and staff will be made aware of the Hewett House policy concerning the administration of medication.
  - B Require parents or guardians to provide Hewett House with a medical statement that it is acceptable for a non-medical staff member to hold responsibility for administering the medication.
  - C Take legal advice concerning the wording of a medication agreement to be signed by the staff member, Manager of Hewett House, parent or guardian, or other appointed person and, if appropriate, the boarder.

Prescribed medication should only be administered once the agreement is signed and only by those names in the agreement. It may be appropriate for more than one staff member to sign the agreement and for alternative arrangements to be noted in case the person usually responsible for the administering the medication is absent. The agreement should name the medication and the directions for administering it. Each time the medication is administered a register should be signed. It should be the parent or guardian's responsibility to inform Hewett House of any change in the boarder's medical circumstance.
  - D Provide appropriate information / training to staff members who elect to administer medication to boarders.

By law, the medical practitioner's directions must be included on the label of all dispensed medication. It is essential that the person administering the medication follow these directions.
  - E Take all reasonable care with security where medications and drugs are held or administered on Hewett House premises.

Storage must be safe and secure at all times. When medication is removed from its place of safe-keeping administrative processes should be clear. Hewett House is strongly advised to restrict the amount of medication held on the premises at any time. For example, Hewett House may consider it wise for the medication to be supplied to Hewett House on a weekly basis by the parent or guardian in person.