



CAULFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL
EPILEPSY AND SEIZURES POLICY
POLICY NO. 1.16

Rational

Epilepsy is characterised by recurrent seizures due to abnormal electrical activity in the brain. This policy is designed to ensure that Caulfield Primary School is able to appropriately support students diagnosed with epilepsy and students having a non-epileptic seizure event.

Policy

All students who have been diagnosed with epilepsy must have an Epilepsy Management Plan signed by a doctor and provided to the school by the student's parents/guardians. There are five different plans, however the doctor will provide one plan to the family depending on the type of treatment required. Caulfield Primary School will also develop an individual Student Health Plan, based on the information provided in the Epilepsy management Plan.

Where the student's Epilepsy Management Plan states that emergency medication has been prescribed then the school must hold a current Emergency Medication Management Plan (EMMP) signed by a doctor and provided by the student's parents/guardians. In case of a student with an epilepsy diagnosis being enrolled in the school, the school will ensure that all staff undertake appropriate training by a recognised epilepsy provider, to provide medical assistance in accordance with the student's Epilepsy Management Plan.

Caulfield Primary School will provide appropriate emergency first aid response and post seizure support when a student has either an epileptic or non-epileptic seizure event.

Definition

Epileptic seizures are caused by a sudden burst of excess electrical activity in the brain resulting in a temporary disruption in the normal messages passing between brain cells. Seizures can involve loss of consciousness, a range of unusual movements, odd feelings and sensations or changed behaviour. Most seizures are spontaneous, brief and self-limited. However multiple seizures known as seizure clusters can occur over a 24-hour period.

Non-epileptic seizures (NES), also known as 'dissociative seizures' are of two types:

- organic NES which have a physical cause

- psychogenic NES which are caused by mental or emotional processes.

Seizure triggers is a term used to describe known circumstances where the individual may have an increased likelihood of having a seizure. Seizure triggers are unique to the person and are not always known. Common seizure triggers can include stress, lack of sleep, heat, illness or missed medication.

Impact at school

Many students with epilepsy have their seizures well-controlled with medication and can participate fully in school life. However, studies indicate that students with epilepsy are at a higher risk of:

- psychological issues or mental health problems
- memory, attention and concentration problems
- behaviour problems
- fatigue
- school absences

All of these may negatively impact the student's learning and academic achievements.

The impact on learning following a seizure event can vary. Many types of seizures are non-epileptic, and may never be accurately diagnosed.

Strategies

For **all seizure** events:

- remain calm
- ensure other students in the vicinity of the seizure event are being supported
- note the time the seizure started and time the event until it ends
- talk to the student to make sure they regain full consciousness
- stay with and reassure the student until they have fully recovered
- provide appropriate post seizure support or adjustments according to the student's Epilepsy Management Plan if available.

A **tonic-clonic seizure** (convulsive seizure with loss of consciousness) presents as muscle stiffening and falling, followed by jerking movements. During this type of seizure:

- protect the head e.g. place a pillow or cushion under the head
- remove any hard objects that could cause injury
- do not attempt to restrain the student or stop the jerking
- do not put anything in the student's mouth
- as soon as possible roll the student onto their side – you may need to wait until the seizure movements have ceased.

For a seizure with impaired awareness (non-convulsive seizure with outward signs of confusion, unresponsiveness or inappropriate behaviour) avoid restraining the student. The student may need to be guided safely around objects to minimise risk of injury.

An ambulance will be called immediately if:

- there is no Epilepsy Management Plan
- a serious injury has occurred
- the seizure occurs in water.

Epilepsy support

This table provides information on how the school can support the student living with epilepsy.

Strategy	Description
Epilepsy Management documentation	<p>Must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● be signed by the treating medical professional before being provided to the school by the student’s parents/guardians. ● be readily accessible to all relevant school staff with a duty of care responsibility for the student living with epilepsy. ● remain current for 12 months and must be reviewed and updated annually. <p>The Epilepsy Management Plan is an important document that not only defines what an emergency is for the student, and the appropriate response, but also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● whether emergency medication is prescribed ● how the student should be supported during and after a seizure ● identified risk strategies (such as water safety, use of helmet) ● potential seizure triggers. <p>Where emergency medication is prescribed, the Emergency Medication Management Plan provides information on the dose, route of administration and emergency response required in the event of a seizure.</p>
Student Health Support Plan	<p>The Student Health Support Plan outlines how the school will support the student’s health care needs and must be in place for each student with epilepsy. It is to be completed by the school in consultation with parents/guardians and guided by medical advice provided in the Epilepsy Management Plan.</p>
Training of staff	<p>School staff with a direct teaching role or other staff as directed by the principal who have a duty of care responsibility for a student living with epilepsy are required to receive training in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Understanding and Managing Epilepsy</i> ● and where indicated, <i>Administration of Emergency Medication</i>.

	Additionally, a dedicated staff member must remain within close response distance to a student with epilepsy when bathing/showering e.g. standing outside the bathing/shower door.
Seizure response	The school will make reasonable adjustments in the classroom and in assessments related to the student's seizure activity or attendance at medical appointments. These adjustments will be outlined in the student's Student Health Support Plan.
Communication	<p>Because the diagnosis of epilepsy can be complex and evolving, ongoing communication between school and parents/carers is important to inform diagnosis and treatment as well as to ensure that the student's needs are identified and met.</p> <p>A good communication strategy would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● identification of the key staff member for the parent/carer to liaise with ● regular communication about student's health, seizure occurrences, learning and development, changes to treatment or medications, or any relevant health or education concerns.

Related legislation

Medical conditions, such as epilepsy, are considered a disability under both state and federal anti-discrimination laws. Under the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)* and the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*, schools have a positive obligation to make reasonable and necessary adjustments for students with medical conditions such as epilepsy, to enable them to access and to participate in their education on the same basis as their peers.

This legal obligation arises regardless of whether they are funded under the Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD).

Review Period

This policy was last updated and approved by School Council in October 2020 and is scheduled for review in October 2022, as part of Caulfield Primary School's review cycle.

Date of Approval: October 2020	Date of Review: October 2022
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