

From experience of parents, here are some tips to help when your child is about to start school or attend a new school:

1. Meet the school well in advance, during the school year prior to them starting. A useful document about SNAs for your child: [Special Needs Assistant \(SNA\) Scheme - Information for Parents/Guardians of Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs](#)
2. The school will need to present your situation to the Board for it to be passed by insurance, therefore have a handout typed up of the needs you feel your child will have on a school day and for extra-curricular activities.
3. For example: What is needed when they take part in P.E.?
What about on a school tour?
What to expect on school fun days?
4. Explain that a minimum of four people will need to be trained to administer the medication, e.g. two teachers and two Special Needs Assistants. This allows for absences of the regular one administering meds due to meetings, sick days, holidays etc.
5. Plan a training day with these people in the school in June, at the end of previous term.

If your Public Health Nurse and Gastrostomy (Peg) Nurse are willing and available, they can attend and give the training. If this is not possible, obviously the parents are more than capable of teaching the staff how to give meds.

Include in this training troubleshooting tips and a step-by-step guide if things don't go to plan.

6. It is advisable to request a meeting during the week before your child starts school.

At this meeting you should bring in everything the school will need along with several typed copies of step-by-step guides; which should cover:

- List of medication and how to store them.
 - How to administer the medication and the troubleshooting guide.
 - State your child needs access to water at all times.
 - State that your child needs to be able to use the toilet frequently.
 - A "What if..." checklist with an action plan for any unusual events/sickness etc.
 - Emergency contact details
7. A suggestion is that you arrange and agree with the school that a parent will come in and administer meds and/or feeds in the presence of the teachers/SNA's until such time that they are comfortable doing this themselves.

Everyone needs to have patience as it will take some people longer than others to feel confident and in control of this.

8. Always have your medication well labelled and organised. Send in the instructions on how to give/what they are each day, even when the routine has been well established.
9. **Most important:** Explain everything to your child and let them know they are involved in everything, including the decision making – let them decide if they want to take their meds in the classroom or be brought out for it. Let them help with the administering too, if they want to.