

Going to High School with CF

Moving to high school can be a big transition. Your child will become more independent and will need to learn to manage all the normal high school requirements, plus CF treatments.

It is important to have open communication and a good partnership with the school to ensure your child's education and school experience is not limited by CF.

Choosing a School for Your Child

Choosing a school is a personal decision with many factors to consider for each family. Some questions to consider may be:

- Are any other children with CF enrolled at the school? This does not mean you cannot enrol, but it is important to consider [cross-infection risks](#).
- How does the school cater for children with medical needs?
- Are they willing to have relevant staff educated about CF?
- How does the school manage hand hygiene and [infection control](#)?
- What is the school's medication policy?

Other considerations may include:

- Health and wellbeing policies.
- Ability to provide additional care and support when needed.
- Hygiene and cleanliness.
- Air conditioning that is regularly serviced.



Disclosure

Once a child reaches high school, they may not feel comfortable with everyone knowing that they have CF. It is worth having a conversation with your child to understand their thoughts on this.

While they may not want other students to know, it is important that the relevant staff have an awareness of how CF may affect your child in a school setting, to ensure the best outcome for them.

There is no right or wrong approach to disclosure – each family should disclose CF in a way that suits them.

Educating the School

Start by making an initial meeting with a key staff member such as year coordinator, form teacher, member of student services or school nurse and ask that the information be passed on

to relevant staff. It is important that communication with your key contact is ongoing so they are aware of changes in health or impending absences such as hospital admissions. They will also need to provide ongoing education as teachers change.

Key points to consider discussing include:

- Relevant CF-related complications (e.g. CF related diabetes)
- Medications at school (e.g. enzymes, salt, ventolin)
- Bowel issues/toilet needs
- Hand hygiene and infection prevention
- Exercise and dehydration
- Absences
- Exam requirements

The CFWA Education Coordinator can help educate your school about CF and the individual needs of your child. They can recommend free [eLearning modules](#) from the CFSmart program for teachers and educators, and help facilitate an individual [CF Action Plan](#) detailing the needs of your child on a day to day basis at school. They are also available to provide tailored education to the school to help resolve any issues that may come up.

Educating teachers means they will be more understanding and aware of changes in your child's health and more accommodating of their needs at school.

Camps and Excursions

School camps and excursions are exciting and provide many new and fun experiences. For children with CF, there will be some forward planning and extra considerations both families and the school need to account for, including medication storage, physio, dietary needs, dehydration, environmental risks, toilet access and suitable hand hygiene facilities. For more information, read our [School Camps](#) factsheet.

More Information

CFWA's Education Coordinator is available to provide further support to the school if needed. Contact education@cfwa.org.au for more information.

Useful Resources

[CFSmart](#)
[CFWA Factsheets](#)

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