

# Asthma Policy



**Lead Personnel:** Head Teacher

**Policy Date:** September 2021

**Review Date:** November 2024

**Review Frequency:** Three Years

**Version:** 1

## ***Aims which guide our policies and practice***

*As a school, we seek to promote shared moral and ethical values to unite both local and global interests which enable children to become global citizens. Our agreed school aims are:*

- To create a happy and stimulating learning environment, in which each child will develop to their full potential, thereby achieving high educational standards.*
- To develop self-awareness, self-respect and tolerance of others by developing an understanding of the world in which they live.*
- To appreciate human achievements and aspirations; develop aesthetic sensitivity and appreciation; physical ability and co-ordination and a concern for the safety of themselves and others.*
- To prepare children to live and work with others, enabling them to be responsible and caring members of the community.*
- To give children, at the end of their period of primary education, an appetite for acquiring further knowledge, experience and skills, so ensuring they are prepared for the challenges of the next stage in their education.*

*We ensure that all of our policies and practices are guided by these aims and we seek to ensure that they are at the forefront of all that we do.*

## **Introduction**

Asthma is the most common long-term condition for children and young people in the UK and the impact this condition has on the lives of the 1.1 million children and young people with asthma is enormous. 1 in 10 children in the UK has asthma. However, with the right healthcare management and support from their family, schools and the wider community, there is nothing that should stop the vast majority of children and young people with asthma from leading full and active lives.

This school recognises that asthma is a widespread, serious but controllable condition affecting many pupils at the school. The school positively welcomes all pupils with asthma. This school encourages pupils with asthma to achieve their potential in all aspects of school life by having a clear policy that is understood by school staff, governors and pupils. Training by the school nurse is available to all staff and will be updated once a year.

## **Associated Policies**

This policy should be considered alongside other related school policies: Health & Safety, Educational Visits and the Staff Handbook.

## **Asthma medicines**

- Immediate access to reliever medicines is essential. For those children who need to have a reliever inhaler available during the day there is an inhaler box in each lower school classroom, which is kept accessible to the children who require them, but safe from other young children. When the class is taken out on an educational visit, swimming lesson or local walk the class teacher or teaching assistant takes the inhaler box along too.
  - Key Stage 2 children carry their own reliever inhaler with them. This can be placed in their personal drawer in their classroom.
- Parents/carers are asked to ensure that the child has an inhaler in school at all times, if they are prescribed them. All inhalers must be labelled with the child's name by the parent/carer.

- School staff are not required to administer asthma medicines to pupils (except in an emergency), however many of the staff at this school are happy to do this. School staff who agree to administer medicines are insured by the local education authority when acting in agreement with this policy. All school staff will let pupils take their own medicines when they need to.

### **Record keeping**

- Parents/carers are asked to complete a medical form regarding any medical conditions, including asthma, before their child joins our school. At the beginning of each school year parents/carers are asked to update their child's medical form to keep school up to date with any information about their child's medical condition, including asthma. The medical forms are sent out from the school office.
- Teachers need to look at the medical forms for their class, when these have been updated, so they are aware of any child's medical conditions in their class and so they can keep other adults, who need to know, up-to-date with relevant information. The medical forms are kept in the medical file which is centrally stored in the school office.
- The SENCo/Deputy Headteacher is responsible for ensuring the staff room board is updated regarding the information on the medical forms.

### **Exercise and activity – PE and games**

- Taking part in sports, games and activities is an essential part of school life for all pupils. All teachers know which children in their class have asthma. Any visiting supply teachers or sports teachers need to be aware of which pupils have asthma. This information is in the medical register and on the staff room board.
- Pupils with asthma are encouraged to participate fully in all PE lessons. As far as possible staff will remind pupils whose asthma is triggered by exercise to take their reliever inhaler before exercise, and to thoroughly warm up and down before and after the lesson. If a pupil needs to use their inhaler during a lesson they will be encouraged to do so. If the P.E./sports activity is off site then the teacher in charge needs to ensure that inhalers are taken with the children who need them.

### **Out-of-hours sport**

- It is important that the school include pupils with asthma as much as possible in after-school clubs as this is beneficial to the health of all children, including those with asthma.
- Classroom teachers and out-of hours school sport coaches need to be aware of the potential triggers for pupils with asthma when exercising, tips to minimise these triggers and what to do in the event of an asthma attack. All staff are offered training from the school nurse, who has had asthma training.

### **School environment**

- The school does all that it can to ensure the school environment is favourable to pupils with asthma. Smoking is not allowed in the school building or school grounds. As far as possible the school does not use chemicals in science and art lessons that are potential triggers for pupils with asthma. Pupils with asthma are encouraged to leave the room accompanied by an adult and report to the school office if particular fumes or anything else triggers their asthma.

### **Making the school asthma-friendly**

- Where appropriate children are taught about asthma in school e.g. in the science curriculum.

### **Keeping up in lessons**

- If a pupil is missing a lot of time at school or is always tired because their asthma is disturbing their sleep at night, the class teacher or headteacher will initially talk to the parents/carers to see if there is a way to help to minimise or remove barriers to learning. If appropriate, the class teacher will talk to the headteacher or SENCo who will decide whether to seek outside support or advice from e.g. the school nurse, regarding the child's needs.
- The school recognises that it is possible for pupils with asthma to have special education needs due to their asthma.

### **Asthma attacks**

- Staff who come into contact with pupils with asthma know what to do in the event of an asthma attack. See appendix 1 (Instructions in event of an attack)

### **Roles and Responsibilities re the School's Asthma Policy:**

#### **Governors (Employers)**

Governors have a responsibility to:

- ensure the health and safety of their employees (all staff) and anyone else on the premises or taking part in school activities (this includes pupils). This responsibility extends to those staff and others leading activities taking place off site, such as visits, outings or field trips. Governors therefore have a responsibility to ensure that an appropriate asthma policy is in place
- make sure the asthma policy is effectively monitored and regularly updated
- report to parents/carers, pupils, school staff and local health authorities about the successes and failures of the policy

#### **The Headteacher**

The Headteacher has a responsibility to:

- plan an individually tailored school asthma policy with the help of school staff
- plan the school's asthma policy in line with devolved national guidance
- liaise between interested parties – school staff, school nurses, parents/carers, governors, the school health service and pupils
- ensure the plan is put into action, with good communication of the policy to everyone
- ensure every aspect of the policy is maintained
- assess the training and development needs of staff and arrange for them to be met
- ensure all supply teachers and new staff know the school asthma policy
- regularly monitor the policy and how well it is working
- the SENCo/Deputy Headteacher and Admissions Officer is the person delegated to be responsible for ensuring that parents are reminded about checking the expiry date of reliever inhalers kept in school and keeping up to date pupils' medical information on the staff room board (including children with asthma)
- report back to governors and local education authority about the school asthma policy as appropriate

#### **School staff**

All school staff have a responsibility to:

- understand the school asthma policy and the impact asthma can have on pupils
- know which pupils they come into contact who have asthma
- know what to do in an asthma attack
- allow pupils with asthma immediate access to their reliever inhaler
- tell parents/carers if their child has had an asthma attack
- tell parents/carers if their child is using more reliever inhaler than they usually would
- ensure pupils have their asthma medicines with them when they go out of school e.g. to a swimming lesson or educational visit
- support pupils in catching up school work missed because they have been unwell
- be aware that a pupil may be tired because of night-time symptoms
- keep an eye out for pupils with asthma experiencing bullying
- liaise with parents/carers, headteacher, special educational needs coordinators or school nurse or other appropriate outside agencies if a child is falling behind with

their work because of their asthma.

- ensure that pupils with asthma are not be forced to take part in activity if they feel unwell. They should also not be excluded from activities that they wish to take part in if their asthma is well controlled
- ensure pupils have their reliever inhaler available to them during activity or exercise and are allowed to take it when needed
- if a pupil has asthma symptoms while exercising, allow them to stop, take their reliever inhaler and as soon as they feel better allow them to return to activity. (Most pupils with asthma should wait at least five minutes)
- remind pupils with asthma, where possible, to use their reliever inhaler immediately before warming up, if their symptoms are likely to be triggered by exercise
- ensure pupils with asthma always warm up and cool down thoroughly.

### **School nurses**

School nurses have a responsibility to:

- help plan/update the school asthma policy
- if the school nurse has an asthma qualification it can be their responsibility to provide regular training for school staff in managing asthma
- provide information about where schools can get training if they are not able to provide specialist training themselves.

### **Pupils**

Pupils have a responsibility to:

- treat other pupils with and without asthma equally
- let any pupil having an asthma attack take their reliever inhaler (usually blue) and ensure a member of staff is called
- tell their parents/carers, teacher or other member of staff when they are not feeling well
- treat asthma medicines with respect
- know how to gain access to their medicine in an emergency
- know how to take their own asthma medicines.

### **Parents/carers**

Parents/carers have a responsibility to:

- tell the school if their child has asthma
- ensure the school has a complete and up-to-date medical form for their child, which includes information about their needs re asthma
- inform the school about the medicines their child requires during school hours
- inform the school of any medicines the child requires while taking part in visits, outings or residential visit and other out-of-school activities such as school team sports
- tell the school about any changes to their child's medicines, what they take and how much
- inform the school of any changes to their child's asthma (for example, if their symptoms are getting worse or they are sleeping badly due to their asthma)
- ensure their child's reliever inhaler (and spacer where relevant) is labelled with their name
- provide the school with a spare reliever inhaler labelled with their child's name
- ensure that their child's reliever inhaler and the spare is within its expiry date
- keep their child at home if they are not well enough to attend school
- ensure their child catches up on any school work they have missed
- ensure their child has regular asthma reviews with their doctor or asthma nurse (every six to 12 months)
- ensure their child has a written personal asthma action plan to help them manage their child's condition.

**Further information can be found:**

Asthma UK website – [asthma.org.uk](https://www.asthma.org.uk)

Asthma UK helpline:08457010203

[asthma.org.uk/adviceline](https://www.asthma.org.uk/adviceline)

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[info@asthma.org.uk](mailto:info@asthma.org.uk)

## **Asthma at School - Policy Guide**

### **After a minor asthma attack**

- Minor attacks should not interrupt the involvement of a pupil with asthma in school. When the pupil feels better they can return to school activities
- The parents/carers must always be told if their child has had an asthma attack

### **Important things to remember in an asthma attack**

- Never leave a pupil having an asthma attack
- If the pupil does not have their inhaler and/or spacer with them, send another teacher or pupil to their classroom or assigned room to get their spare inhaler and/or spacer
- In an emergency situation school staff are required under common law, duty of care, to act like any reasonably prudent parent
- Reliever medicine is very safe. During an asthma attack do not worry about a pupil overdosing
- Send another pupil to get the headteacher or another teacher/adult if an ambulance needs to be called
- Contact the pupil's parent/carer immediately after calling the ambulance
- A member of staff should always accompany a pupil taken to hospital by ambulance and stay with them until their parent or carer arrives
- Generally staff should not take pupils to hospital in their own car. However in some situations it may be the best course of action. Another adult should always accompany anyone driving a pupil having an asthma attack to emergency services