



Caythorpe Primary School

Asthma Policy

Reviewed: Jan 2024

Date of next review: Jan 2025

Related Policies:

Supporting pupils with Medical Conditions, First Aid, Medication Administration, PE, Health and well-Being

Asthma is the most common chronic condition for children, affecting around 1.1 million children in the UK. But many people don't realise how serious it can be. Even if you only have occasional symptoms you can still have a serious asthma attack. Three people die from asthma every day in the UK and the equivalent of a classroom full of children dies every year in the UK.

Schools have a responsibility to be prepared about what to do when a pupil has an asthma attack while at school. This is why our school's asthma policy is so important – to make sure when a child has an attack everything possible is done to ensure they receive the best care as quickly as possible.

Being part of a school community which is asthma-aware and understands their needs will help them to reach their full potential.

Staff awareness

- Supporting Pupils in school with Medical condition (Department for Education 2015) is available for all staff to read and to use as guidance when developing policies
- Guidance on the use of Emergency Salbutamol Inhalers in Schools (Department of Health, Sept 2014) is available.
- School asthma policy in place, developed using guidance from above and updated regularly – all staff to be made aware of the policy and where to access it
- Information available on inhaler devices and how to use them.
- System in place to identify pupils who have frequent absences from school due to asthma

Knowing which pupils have asthma

- Each class has a list of medical conditions which is regularly updated
- Each class has a medical folder which includes pupil individual asthma medication log for pupils with asthma within the class
- Supply staff are made aware of medical conditions including asthma within the class they are covering

Medications

- Pupils have immediate access to inhalers - Inhalers should be kept in a cool environment
- Asthma medication is provided by the parent for school use with instructions of when and how to use, in keeping with their IHCP

- A system is in place to check the expiry dates of any medication and a system to replace when expired or almost empty
- If using a metered dose inhaler (“puffer” type), a spacer device must also be provided by the parent.
- Medication must be clearly labelled with a pharmacy label displaying name/dose/instructions
- Usage of reliever medication must be recorded (in class medical file), and parents informed

All pupils/students should be able to access their emergency reliever inhaler (usually blue) rapidly at all times including during PE, school trips etc. This will be achieved by having the child’s inhaler in the teachers cupboard (obvious) and it will accompany the child whenever they leave the school site. It is the responsibility of the group leader to have the inhaler with the child and to check that the child always has it before leaving the site.

Spare inhaler and spacer

From 1 October 2014, all schools can choose to keep a spare inhaler kit in school for use in an emergency (if the child’s own inhaler is not immediately accessible). This is not mandatory and should not replace the requirement that parents arrange for children to have their own reliever inhaler in school.

Staff understanding of asthma

It is important that all school staff understand asthma so that they have the skills to support pupils/students. All staff should undertake regular training on managing asthma in schools

All staff should know:

- What can trigger asthma symptoms
- How to recognise an asthma attack
- What to do in an asthma attack

All staff attend regular training on asthma (<https://www.educationforhealth.org/course/supporting-children-and-young-peoples-health-improvingasthma-care-together/>)

Record-keeping and home/school communication

It is important that the school is kept informed of any changes in the child’s asthma and that they inform parents/carers of any asthma symptoms at school.

Common asthma triggers at school include pollen, animals, colds and viral infections, dust, pollution, and cold weather. It is impossible to eradicate asthma triggers completely from the school environment but schools should be aware of what triggers exist and what can be done to reduce avoidable triggers.

Further help and resources

- Asthma UK’s My Asthma resources are for parents and children aged around 6-11 years to use.

- Lincolnshire NHS asthma information and resources <https://lincolnshire.icb.nhs.uk/your-health-and-services/childhood-asthma/>

HOW TO RECOGNISE AN ASTHMA ATTACK

It is important to recognize the signs and symptoms of an asthma attack in a Child/Young person (CYP). The onset of an asthma attack can gradually appear over days. Early recognition can reduce the risk of a hospital admission.

A CYP may have one or more of these symptoms during an asthma attack:



BREATHING HARD AND FAST

You may notice faster breathing or pulling in of muscles in between the ribs or underneath the ribs. (recession)



WHEEZING

This is typically a high-pitched whistling noise heard on breathing in and out, a sound produced by inflamed and narrowed airways that occur in asthma.



COUGHING

A cough may become worse, particularly at night preventing your child from having restful sleep and making them seem more tired in class.



BREATHLESSNESS

A child may become less active and reluctant to join in activities. Lack of interest in food or restlessness can be a sign that the child is too breathless to exercise or eat.

TUMMY OR CHEST ACHE

Be aware that younger children often complain of tummy ache when it is actually their chest that is causing them discomfort.

INCREASED USE OF THE RELIEVER INHALER

If the CYP is old enough, he/she may ask for the reliever inhaler more frequently during an attack. It is important that you follow the asthma action plan and recognize that if the reliever inhaler is not helping that it is time to seek medical help.

Asthma Management Flow Chart

