

Introduction

School acknowledges that asthma is the most prevalent disease of childhood and recognises that many pupils on roll in this school will have the disease. Asthma sufferers should not be isolated by their disease, therefore asthma awareness should involve ALL members of the school community.

The School

Recognises that asthma is a widespread, serious but controllable condition and the school welcomes all pupils with asthma

- Ensures that pupils with asthma can and do participate fully in all aspects of school life, including art lessons, PE, science, visits, outings or field trips and other out of hours school activities
- Recognises that pupils with asthma need immediate access to reliever inhalers at all times
- Keeps a record of all pupils with asthma and the medicines they take
- Ensures that the whole school environment, including the physical, social, sporting and educational environment, is a favourable to pupils with asthma
- Ensures that all pupils have an awareness of asthma
- Ensures that all staff (including supply teachers and support staff) who come into contact with pupils with asthma know what to do in an asthma attack
- Will work in partnership with all interested parties including the school's governing body, all school staff, school nurses, parents/cares, employers of school staff, doctors, nurses and pupils to ensure the policy is planned, implemented and maintained successfully.

Explanation of Disease

People with asthma have sensitive air passages which are quick to respond to anything that irritates them (triggers). This results in the air passages of the lungs becoming narrow, making it difficult to breathe in and out. Narrowing of air passages produces ONE or ALL of the following: coughing, breathlessness, wheezing. SUDDEN, SEVERE narrowing of air passages may result in an 'Asthma Attack'.

Identification of Pupils Affected

At the beginning of each school year or when a child joins the school, parents/carers are asked if their child has any medical conditions including asthma on their emergency contact form. All parents/carers of children with asthma are consequently sent an Asthma UK School Asthma Card to give to their child's treatment details. Parents/carers are asked to return them to the school... Parents/carers are also asked to update or exchange the card for a new one if their child's medicines, or how much they take, changes during the year. This information is then passed on to the class teacher

Treatment

Consists of two main forms Reliever inhalers (usually Blue) & preventer inhalers (usually Brown). It is encouraged that only blue inhalers should be in school. Children should have access to their relief inhalers (usually blue) at all times.

Prevention

It is important to be aware that many factors provoke narrowing of the air passages. Some of these factors are avoidable within the school environment, therefore appropriate steps should be taken. Trigger factors include:- coughs & colds, cigarette smoke, furry animals, cold weather, chemical paints - sprays and vapours, grass pollens and spores, extremes of emotion and exercise.

Treating Worsening Symptoms of Asthma

A reliever inhaler (blue) should be given:

- if requested by the child
- If the child is coughing, wheezing or breathless.
- If this is effective, the child can return to normal classroom activity.

What to do in the case of an 'asthma attack': The main symptoms of an asthma attack are coughing continuously, wheezing or shortness of breath.

Support the child to inhale once or twice with the blue inhaler.

Wait for 5 minutes - the inhaler should have been effective. Using the inhaler with a spacer device may be easier when the child is having an attack.

This may be available in the school's emergency equipment.

But remember

- **Stay calm - it is treatable**
- **Sit the child comfortably - do not let the child lie down**
- **Do not crowd the child**
- **Speak quietly and calmly to the child - encourage slow deep breaths.**
- **Do not put your arms around the child's shoulders - this restricts breathing.**

If this does not work, then the child may be having a severe asthma attack. This constitutes an emergency situation.

An emergency situation is recognisable when: Blue inhaler does not work, Or The child has difficulty speaking - e.g. can only say 2 or 3 words before taking a breath.

Or The child is breathing quickly.

Child can look pale - lips can turn blue.

DIAL 999 - telephone for an ambulance.

In the meantime, a blue inhaler can be given every 5 minutes.

You cannot overdose the child by doing this.

DO inform the paramedic how much inhaler has been used.

Plan of Action:

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Out of Hours

There has been a large emphasis in recent years on increasing the number of children and young people involved in exercise and sport in and outside of school. The health benefits of exercise are well documented and this is also true for children and young people with asthma. It is therefore important that the school involve pupils with asthma as much as possible in after school clubs.

Exercise and Activity – P.E and Games
<p>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 and all PE teachers at the school are aware of which pupils have asthma from the school’s asthma register. Pupils with asthma are encouraged to participate fully in all PE lessons. Teachers will remind pupils whose asthma is triggered by exercise to take their reliever inhaler before the lesson, 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.</p>
School Environment
<p>The school does all that it can to ensure the school environment is favourable to pupils with asthma. The school does not keep furry or feathery animals and has a definite no smoking policy. 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 and go and sit in the school office if particular fumes trigger their asthma.</p>
When A Pupil Is Falling Behind In Lessons
<p>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 will initially talk to the parents/carers to work out how to prevent their child from falling behind. If appropriate, the teacher will then talk to the school nurse and special education needs coordinator about the pupil’s needs. The school recognises that it is possible for pupils with asthma to have special education needs due to their asthma.</p>
Asthma Attacks
<p>All staff who come into contact with pupils with asthma know what to do in the event of an asthma attack</p>