

# **POLICY ON ASTHMA IN SCHOOL**

## **Background**

This policy has been written with advice from the Department for Children Schools and Families, Asthma UK, the local education authority, local healthcare professionals, the school health service, parents/carers, the governing body and children.

The school recognises that asthma is a widespread, serious but controllable condition affecting many children at the school. The school positively welcomes all children with asthma. This school encourages children with asthma to achieve their potential in all aspects of school life by having a clear policy that is understood by school staff, their employers (the local education authority) and children. Supply teachers and new staff are also made aware of the policy. All staff who come into contact with children with asthma are provided with training on asthma from the school nurse who has had asthma training. Training is updated once a year.

## **Asthma medicines**

- Immediate access to reliever medicines is essential. Children with asthma are encouraged to carry their reliever inhaler as soon as the parent/carer, doctor or asthma nurse and class teacher agree they are mature enough (normally Junior aged). The reliever inhalers of younger children are kept in the office in a designated, accessible area.
- Parents/carers are asked to ensure that the school is provided with **boxed** spare reliever inhaler with a prescription label clearly displayed on the inhaler box. The office will hold this separately in case the child's own inhaler runs out, or is lost or forgotten. All inhalers must be labelled with the child's name by the parent/carer.
- School staff are not required to administer asthma medicines to children (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 children take their own medicines when they need to.

## **Record Keeping**

- 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 enrolment form.
- All parents/carers of children with asthma are consequently sent an Asthma UK School Asthma Card to give to their child's doctor or asthma nurse to complete. Parents/carers are asked to return them to the school. From this information the school keeps its asthma register, which is available to all school staff. School Asthma Cards are then sent to parents/carers of children with asthma on an annual basis to update. 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.

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

- Taking part in sports, games and activities is an essential part of school life for all children. All teachers know which children in their class have asthma and all PE teachers at the school are aware of which children have asthma from the school's asthma register.
- Children with asthma are encouraged to participate fully in all PE lessons. PE teachers will remind children 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. It is agreed with PE staff that each child's inhaler will be labelled and kept in a box at the site of the lesson. If a child needs to use their inhaler during a lesson they will be encouraged to do so.
- Classroom teachers follow the same principles as described above for games and activities involving physical activity.

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

- 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 children with asthma as much as possible in after school clubs.
- PE teachers, classroom teachers and out-of-hours school sport coaches are aware of the potential triggers for children with asthma when exercising, tips to minimise these triggers and what to do in the event of an asthma attack. All staff and sports coaches are provided with 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 children with asthma. The school does not keep furry or feathery animals and has a definitive no-smoking policy. As far as possible the school does not use chemicals in science and art lessons that are potential triggers for children with asthma. Children with asthma are encouraged to leave the room and go and sit in the school office if particular fumes trigger their asthma.

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

- The school ensures that all children understand asthma. Asthma can be included in the National Curriculum Key Stages 1 and 2 in science, design and technology, geography, history and PE.

### **When a child is falling behind in lessons**

- If a child 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 child's needs.

- The school recognises that it is possible for children with asthma to have special education needs due to their asthma.

### **Asthma attacks**

- All staff who come into contact with children with asthma know what to do in the event of an asthma attack.

### **Using a School Asthma Card**

A School Asthma Card will be sent to the parents/carers with a letter so parents/carers can ask their child's doctor or asthma nurse to fill it in.