

Caythorpe Primary School



Asthma policy

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 a 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.

- A school asthma register

It is important to identify all pupils/students with asthma and have a central record to inform all staff and supply staff.

- Immediate access to inhalers

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. The DOH has provided [guidance for schools on the implementation of this change in law which can be accessed here](#).

- Staff who understand 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

Education for Health has produced a helpful asthma training module for teachers and volunteers who work with children (see Further help and resources section below)

- 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.

The Asthma UK School Asthma Card can help schools to do this.

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. My Asthma helps children to understand more about their asthma, their medicines and how taking their medicines can help them feel better. It helps parents and children to record together useful information to pass on to their healthcare professional. We recommend parents of children newly diagnosed with asthma or parents wanting to learn how to manage their child's asthma [order our My Asthma Pack](#).
- If you would like to speak to an asthma nurse specialist about any aspect of asthma care for a child call our Helpline on 0300 222 5800. Lines are open 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.
- Education for Health's children-specific website now has an asthma training module for people who work with children: www.supportingchildrenshealth.org
- Since September 2014 schools have been required to have a Medical Conditions Policy in place for children with asthma which includes the child having an individualised health plan if it's felt to be appropriate. To read more about this new legal requirement and access templates for individual healthcare plans and parental agreement forms, go to the www.gov.uk website.
- [The Medical Conditions at School](#) website also contains useful information although these pages are also in the process of being updated in light of the legislative changes.