

Elmsett C. of E. V.C.P. School

Asthma Policy



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1. DEFINITION OF ASTHMA

Asthma is sometimes described as wheezy bronchitis. It causes the airways in the lung to narrow, making breathing difficult. Children with asthma have inflamed airways which react to certain triggers (irritants) e.g. viral infections, allergies, exercise, cold weather, temperature changes, excitement, laughter, glue, paint and tobacco smoke.

2. PURPOSE AND AIMS

The aim of this policy is to ensure that staff, parents, governors, visitors and pupils understand about asthma and how to deal with it. In order to make our school asthma friendly we have adopted a non-smoking policy to ensure that pupils are never exposed to the dangers of passive smoking. Chemicals, cleaning materials and paint sprays are not to be used whilst pupils are present.

It is essential that we understand how to deal with medication and inhalers effectively. There are two types of treatment, both of which come in an inhaler:

- Relievers (generally in blue containers) help the child's breathing difficulties
- Preventors (in brown/white containers) make airways less sensitive

These inhalers are kept in the child's classroom so that they are readily available at all times.

Children with asthma should have easy access to their inhalers in case they need them for any reason and be responsible for their use. We make sure all inhalers are always taken on school trips and are carried by the child or an appropriate adult in the case of younger children. Staff are aware of younger pupils who may need help with "spacers" to administer the medication.

3. INCLUSION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

In school we recognise that asthma is an important condition which affects many children. We will welcome all children who suffer from asthma and we will ensure that they are able to participate fully in all areas of school life.

Full participation in all areas of the school curriculum, including physical education, should be the aim for all, but the most affected, with asthma. Children with exercise-induced asthma should take a puff of their inhaler before they start exercise. They should bring inhalers to the hall, swimming pool and Sports Field. Children who say they are too wheezy to continue should take their reliever inhaler and rest until they feel better.

Teachers are aware that some children are shy in public when taking their inhalers. We will ensure that other children understand asthma so that they can support their friends.

4. SPECIFIC ISSUES

We will ensure that all staff have a clear understanding of what to do if a child has an asthma attack. We will work in partnership with parents, governors, health professionals, school staff and children to ensure the successful implementation of the school asthma policy.

5. WHAT TO DO IF A CHILD SUFFERS AN ASTHMA ATTACK

An asthma attack can cause severe distress to the child and be a frightening experience when first observed. Action needed to deal with an asthma attack does not require specific medical training, and the following guidelines may be helpful:

- Ensure that the reliever medicine is taken
- Stay calm and reassure the child

- Encourage the child to breathe slowly and deeply
- Send for assistance if necessary
- Contact the parents immediately. It is vital that parent contact details are accurate and up to date
- Call an ambulance urgently if the reliever has no effect after 5-10 minutes, the child is either distressed or unable to talk, the child becomes exhausted, or there are any doubts about the child's condition

6. STAFF AWARENESS

A list of children with known medical conditions is attached to the inside front cover of each class register so that supply staff as well as class teachers are aware of children who may require medical attention. This information is also prominently displayed in the staff room and in the lunchtime supervisors' folder. When further medical information has been provided it is filed in the child's blue folder.