

ASTHMA POLICY

Background

This policy has been written with advice from the Department of Education and Skills, Asthma UK, the LA, Local Healthcare Professionals, the School Health Service, parents / carers, the governing body and students.

This school recognises that asthma is a widespread, serious but controllable condition affecting many students at the school. The school positively welcomes all students with asthma. This school encourages students 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 LA) and students. Supply teachers and new staff are also made aware of the policy. All staff who come into contact with students 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. Students with asthma are encouraged to carry their reliever inhaler.
- Parents / carers are asked to ensure that the school is provided with a labelled spare reliever inhaler (when available) this will be held in the medical room. All inhalers must be labelled with the child's name by the parent / carer.
- Thomas Estley will also have a small number of the emergency salbutamol. This inhaler will be made available for children, for whom written parental consent for use of the emergency inhaler has been given, who have either been diagnosed with asthma and prescribed an inhaler, or who have been prescribed an inhaler as reliever medication and where their own inhaler is not available. (This is in line with the Human Medicines (Amendment)(no.2) Regulations 2014) These will be held centrally in the medical room.
- School staff are not required to administer asthma medicines to students (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 LA when acting in agreement with this policy. All school staff will let students 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 on 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.

How to Recognise Signs of Asthma

ATTACK

The signs of an asthma attack are:

- *Persistent cough (when at rest)*
- *A wheezing sound coming from the chest (when at rest)*
- *Difficulty breathing (the child could be breathing fast and with effort, using all accessory muscles in the upper body)*

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- *Nasal flaring*
- *Unable to talk or complete sentences. Some children will go very quiet.*
- *May try to tell you that their chest 'feels tight' (younger children may express this as tummy ache)*

CALL AN AMBULANCE IMMEDIATELY AND COMMENCE THE ASTHMA ATTACK PROCEDURE WITHOUT DELAY IF THE CHILD

- *Appears exhausted*
- *Has a blue/white tinge around lips*
- *Is going blue*
- *Has collapsed*

What to do in the event of an Asthma Attack

- *Keep calm and reassure the child*
- *Encourage the child to sit up and slightly forward*
- *Use the child's own inhaler – if not available, use the emergency inhaler*
- *Remain with the child while the inhaler and spacer are brought to them*
- *Immediately help the child to take two separate puffs of salbutamol via the spacer*
- *If there is no immediate improvement, continue to give two puffs at a time every two minutes, up to a maximum of 10 puffs*
- *Stay calm and reassure the child. Stay with the child until they feel better. The child can return to school activities when they feel better*
- *If the child does not feel better or you are worried at ANYTIME before you have reached 10 puffs, CALL 999 FOR AN AMBULANCE*
- *If an ambulance does not arrive in 10 minutes give another 10 puffs in the same way*

Above extracted from Guidance on the use of emergency salbutamol inhalers in schools September 2014 published by Department of Health
W to recognise Asthma

Exercise and Activity - PE and Games

- Taking part in sports, games and activities is an essential part of school life for all students. All teachers know which children in their class have asthma and all PE teachers at the school are aware of which students have asthma from the school's asthma register.
- Students with asthma are encouraged to participate fully in all PE lessons. PE teachers will remind students 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 student's inhaler will be labelled and kept in a box at the site of the lesson. If a student needs to use their inhaler during a lesson they will be encouraged to do so.
- Classroom teachers follow the same principles as described above during 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 students with asthma as much as possible in after school clubs.

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- PE teachers, classroom teachers and out of hours school sport coaches are aware of the potential triggers for students 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 students with asthma. The school 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 students with asthma. Students with asthma are encouraged to leave the room and go and sit in the school office if particular fumes trigger their asthma.

When a Student is falling behind in Lessons

- If a student is missing a lot of time at school or is always tired because their asthma is disturbing their sleep at night, the Student First Aid / Health Care Assistant will initially talk to the parents / carers to work out how to prevent their child from falling behind. If appropriate, we then talk to the school nurse and special education needs coordinator about the student's needs.
- The school recognises that it is possible for students with asthma to have special education needs due to their asthma.

Asthma Attacks

- All staff who come into contact with students with asthma know what to do in the event of an asthma attack.
- Training is provided for all staff delivered by the school nurse.

Equality Monitoring

Thomas Estley Community College's commitment to equality and diversity means that this policy, via an Equality Impact Assessment, has been screened in relation to the use of gender-neutral language, recognition of the needs of disabled people, promotion of the positive duty in relation to race, age, disability and avoidance of stereotypes.

Based on the Equality Impact Assessment findings, this policy is judged to be of low impact against the equality strands of Race, Gender, Religion, Disability Sexual Orientation and Age. A copy of the Equality Impact Assessment of this policy is available from the Principal's PA.

This Policy is available in alternative formats on request. If you think we can improve the fairness of this Policy, please contact the individual who has responsibility for its update.