



## Old Church Primary Asthma Policy for Pupils

### **Introduction**

This policy has been written using advice from the Department of Education and Skills, Asthma UK, and the School Health Service. It reflects the consensus of opinion of the whole staff and has full agreement of the Governing body. It was reviewed and ratified at the full **Governors meeting in September 2020**. A policy review will take place annually and only when there are changes resulting in policy amendments, will the policy be taken to the committee for review and ratification. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all teaching staff.

At Old Church School we recognise that asthma is a widespread, serious but controllable condition affecting many pupils in school. Most children with asthma can have a full and active life. This policy will help pupils with the management of their asthma while they are at school.

### **Asthma register**

At the beginning of each school year or when a child joins the school parents /carers are given an admission booklet. This contains a medical questionnaire which asks if their child has any medical conditions including asthma.

Children identified as having asthma are placed on the school's Asthma Register. The Asthma Link person collates the register and also sends home an asthma care plan (see appendix 1) to be completed by the child's GP or asthma nurse. These are updated if there is a change to the child's medication or condition during the year. It is the responsibility of parent/carers to inform school if there are any changes.

### **Minimising exposure to triggers**

The school does all it can to ensure the school environment is favourable to pupils with asthma. The school has a definitive no smoking policy and is aware of the possible effects of keeping pets in the classroom. As far as possible the school does not use chemicals in science or art that can act as potential triggers.

## **Inclusion**

The school ensures that pupils with asthma can participate fully in all aspects of the curriculum. All classroom teachers; PE teachers and sports coaches make all reasonable adjustments to sports, games and other activities to make all activities accessible to pupils with asthma. Pupils who miss time at school due to their asthma will be given reasonable support to catch up on missed school work.

## **Access to Inhalers**

It is the parent/carers responsibility to ensure their child's inhaler is in school. Each inhaler provided must be within date, named and prescribed with an appropriate pharmacy label.

Pupils' inhalers and care plans are kept in a bag labelled with name and photo. These are kept in a named box in their classrooms.

Pupils are allowed access to their inhalers at any time in the school day, should they feel the need to use it and are encouraged to take their own medication with staff supervision.

Parents will be informed if their child needed their inhaler to be administered during the day via a slip being sent home. It will also be recorded in the pupils' inhaler booklet which is kept in school.

Inhalers should accompany pupils when taking part in off- site activities and also taken outside during a fire drill.

## **Emergency Inhalers**

From 1<sup>st</sup> October 2014 the Human Medicines Regulations 2014 allows schools to keep a salbutamol inhaler for use in emergencies.

The emergency salbutamol inhaler should only be used by children, for whom written parental consent has been given, who have either been diagnosed with asthma and prescribed an inhaler, or who have been prescribed an inhaler as reliever medication. The inhaler can only be used if the pupils inhaler is not available (for example, because it is empty or broken)

Old Church has five red emergency rucksacks which include:

- one salbutamol inhaler and one spacer.
- red asthma emergency note to go home.

The rucksacks are kept in the medical room and are available for:

- sports coaches and staff who take children for outdoor PE on the pitch.
- staff taking children on trips.
- lunchtime supervisors who deal with First Aid.
- after school club staff.

Staff must record usage in the school emergency inhaler usage log which is in the rucksack.

### **Indemnity**

Staff are not required to administer asthma medicines to pupils (except in an emergency) but many are happy to do so and are insured by the local education authority when acting in agreement with this policy.

Absence of parental consent should not stop staff from acting appropriately in emergencies. In an emergency situation school staff are required under common law duty of care, to act like any reasonably prudent parent. This may include administering medicines.

### **Staff Awareness and action in asthma emergencies**

Asthma training is renewed regularly and was last delivered on the 15<sup>th</sup> January by the school nursing service.

In the event of an asthma attack all staff will do what a 'reasonable parent' would do in the circumstances prevailing at the time. The school follows the procedure outlined by Asthma UK. The procedure is visibly displayed in the staffroom and in a central place in each phase of the school (see appendix 2)

### **How to deal with an asthma attack**

#### **Step 1:**

Help the child to take their usual dose of reliever inhaler (usually blue) immediately, preferably through a spacer.

#### **Step 2:**

Sit the child upright.

Get them to take slow steady breaths.

Keep calm and reassure them.

Do not leave them alone.

#### **If the symptoms improve immediately:**

Sit with the child until they are feeling completely well and can go back to their previous activity. Inform parents and add write it in the Asthma log book.

## **If the symptoms do not improve:**

### **Step 3:**

Continue to give two puffs of reliever inhaler (one puff at a time) every two minutes, up to ten puffs.

If the child does not

- feel better in 5-10 minutes,
- is distressed or exhausted,
- is unable to talk in sentences,
- has blue lips
- or you have any doubts

### **then the action required is...**

**Step 4:** one adult stay with the pupil and use reliever inhaler via spacer while another adult dials 999 for ambulance and states that the child is having a severe asthma attack requiring immediate attention. Inform parents of the situation and actions taken.

**Step 5:** If an ambulance does not arrive within ten minutes repeat step 3 while you wait.

The incident should then be recorded on the asthma log by the person who dealt with the attack, and the entry should be signed and dated by them.

### **Safe disposal**

The Asthma link is responsible for checking the dates of medicines and arranging for the disposal of those that have expired. This check is done at least three times a year.

Parents are asked to collect out of date medicines from school. If parents do not pick up out of date medicines they are taken to a local pharmacy for safe disposal. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure new and in date medicines come into school when requested.

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