

Heritage Park Primary School

Asthma Policy



Approved by: Karen Bell (Headteacher)

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Asthma Policy

Introduction

Heritage Park Primary School recognises that asthma is a widespread, serious but controllable condition and the school welcomes all children with asthma. We ensure that children with asthma can and do fully participate in all aspects of school life, including PE, visits, outings or field trips and other out-of-hours school activities.

This is achieved through:

- Ensuring that children have access to their inhalers as and when required.
- Keeping a record of all children with asthma and the medicines they take.
- Creating a whole school environment, including the physical, social, sporting and educational environment, that is favourable to children with asthma.
- Helping all children to understand asthma as a medical condition.
- Making sure that all staff (including support staff) who come into contact with children with asthma know what to do in the event of an asthma attack.

The School's Approach

Inhalers are kept in a box in each classroom and labelled clearly with the child's name. Children have access to their reliever inhalers when they are required and a record is made when the child has used his or her inhaler. In addition, an email will be sent, or telephone call made, advising parents/carers that their child has needed to use their inhaler and how much has been administered.

Staff will aim to remind the parents/carers when the date on medication has expired but primarily it is the responsibility of the parents to ensure that all medication kept in school is in date.

Should a class go outside school, for example for a PE lesson, the classteacher should ensure that children have their inhalers with them. Similarly should the class go off site, for example for a swimming lesson or a class trip, then once again the class teacher should ensure that the children have their inhalers with them.

During a fire bell, staff will ensure that children's inhalers are carried outside. Children are never to be given an inhaler that does not belong to them.

When a child joins the school, parents/carers are asked if their child has any medical conditions including asthma on their admission form. Parents/carers

of children with asthma will be sent an Asthma UK School Asthma Card for them to complete. Parents/carers will be asked to return the asthma card to the school to be kept as part of our school records. From this information, the school keeps its asthma register, which is available to all school staff on the staff room notice board. Parents/carers are responsible for updating or exchanging the card for a new one if their child's medicines, or how much they take, changes during the year.

Each class teacher will take responsibility for ensuring 'spacers' (also known as Aerochambers) used to administer inhalers are cleaned regularly as indicated on the asthma record. When new, or replacement, medication arrives in school, the record of asthma inhalers and EpiPens should be amended by the classteacher with the expiry date. The record is kept electronically and may be found at staffshared/firstaid/asthmaepi-pen. The classteacher should print two copies of the amended record, one should be displayed on the staffroom board and one to be displayed on the staffroom wall.

Common day to day symptoms of asthma

- Cough and wheeze (a 'whistle' heard on breathing out) when exercising
- Shortness of breath when exercising
- Intermittent cough

These symptoms are usually responsive to use of their own inhaler and rest (e.g. stopping exercise). They would not usually require the child to be sent home from school or to need urgent medical attention.

How to Recognise an 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)
- 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)

However a child may not display all of these signs and symptoms at once; e.g. a child may only display one of these symptoms such as a persistent cough.

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
- 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 provided)
- 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

The child's parents or carers should be contacted after the ambulance has been called. A member of staff should always accompany a child taken to hospital by ambulance and stay with them until a parent or carer arrives.

Staff training is delivered on an annual basis to both teaching and support staff to ensure they are able to effectively support a child who is experiencing asthma symptoms.

Conclusion

Through an understanding of the causes and symptoms of asthma and through following this policy, we at Heritage Park Primary School aim to ensure that children with asthma are able to participate fully in all school activities.