

# HERON CROSS PRIMARY SCHOOL

## ASTHMA POLICY

At Heron Cross Primary school we aim to:

- Recognise that asthma is an important condition affecting many people.
- Welcome all pupils with asthma.
- Ensure that children with asthma participate fully in all aspects of school life including PE.
- Keep a register of pupils with asthma and the medication they take. Full copy to be kept in the office and first aid rooms in each building and class copies to each class teacher.
- Ensure all staff and pupils understand asthma, so that pupils with asthma are supported and stigmas about the condition are removed.
- Ensure all staff involved with pupils, are given asthma training and have a clear understanding of asthma and its treatment.
- Work in partnership with parents, school governors, health professionals, school staff and pupils to ensure the successful implementation of our schools asthma policy.
- Recognise that immediate access to reliever inhalers is vital. Pupil's individual inhalers are clearly labelled and kept in an agreed place in their classroom, which is always accessible to them.
- Ensure that pupil's inhalers are always taken out on school trips or local area visits.
- Inform parents that it is their responsibility to ensure that their child's inhaler and spacer is in school at all times and is in date.
- In the event of a child having a mild asthma attack when they do not have an inhaler in school, parents will be contacted to bring an inhaler into school immediately.
- Staff will inform parents, using the agreed letter format, if a pupil suffers from an asthma attack requiring them to use their own inhaler. In the case of a severe asthma attack parents will also be informed by telephone about the attack as well as a letter being issued.
- Keep records detailing the use of pupils own inhalers. Should records show that the pupil is using their inhaler three or more times a week parents will be informed by letter and be advised to take their child to the GP/Nurse for a medication check.

### ASTHMA POLICY REGISTER OF INFORMATION

If your child has been diagnosed as asthmatic and has been prescribed reliever therapy (blue inhaler) please complete this form which gives your consent for school to support your child in administering their inhaler. **This must be countersigned by your own doctor.**

I hereby give consent for school staff to give my child reliever therapy for the treatment of an asthma attack or prior to PE if required. I understand that I will be informed when treatment has been given other than routine treatment at my request.

As a parent of an asthmatic child I will make provisions for a reliever inhaler to be kept in school with my child at all times.

Signed Parent/Guardian ----- Date -----

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**Child's Name** -----

**Date of Birth** -----

**Class** -----

**Emergency Contacts & Telephone numbers**      1:-----  
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2:-----  
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**Type of inhaler** -----

**Any routine treatment required? Please give details**

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(To be signed by GP)

I confirm that this child has been diagnosed with asthma and prescribed a bronchodilator for the relief of symptoms as required.

Signed General Practitioner----- Date -----

Name Printed ----- Surgery -----

# What is Asthma?

Asthma is a condition that affects the airways - the small tubes that carry air in and out of the lungs.

When a person with asthma comes into contact with something that irritates their airways (an asthma trigger), the muscles around the walls of the airways tighten so that the airways become narrower and the lining of the airways becomes inflamed and starts to swell. Sometimes sticky mucus or phlegm builds up which can further narrow the airways.

All these reactions cause the airways to become narrower and irritated - making it difficult to breathe and leading to symptoms of asthma.

## What to do in an asthma attack

Sometimes, no matter how careful people are about taking their asthma medicines and avoiding triggers, people may find that they have an asthma attack.

The following guidelines are suitable for both children and adults and are the recommended steps to follow in an asthma attack:

1. Take reliever inhaler (usually blue), immediately
2. Sit down and ensure that any tight clothing is loosened. Do not lie down.
3. If there is no immediate improvement during an attack, continue to take one puff of your reliever inhaler every minute for five minutes or until symptoms improve.
4. If symptoms do not improve in five minutes - or if in doubt call 999 or a doctor urgently.
5. Continue to take one puff of the reliever inhaler every minute until help arrives.
- 6.

***You are having an asthma attack if any of the following happen:***

- Your reliever does not help symptoms
- Your symptoms are getting worse (cough, breathlessness, wheeze or tight chest)
- You are too breathless to speak, eat or sleep

# Medicines



What treatments are available?

There are two main types of asthma medicines, called **relievers** and **preventers**, and they work in different ways. Most asthma medicines are breathed in through an inhaler. This is a very effective way of taking the medicine, as it goes straight to the lungs. Inhalers can be in a spray form (aerosol) or a dry powder form. Aerosol inhalers can be taken through a device called a spacer. Spacers make inhalers easier to use and more effective.

- Reliever inhalers help to relieve symptoms when they happen
- Preventer inhalers help to protect the airways and reduce the chance of getting asthma symptoms
- Other medicines are also available - these include long-acting reliever and preventer tablets.
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## *Reliever inhalers*

Everyone with asthma should have a reliever inhaler. Reliever inhalers are usually blue. Relievers are medicines that can be taken immediately when asthma symptoms appear. They quickly relax the muscles surrounding the narrowed airways. This allows the airways to open wider, making it easier to breathe again.

- Relievers are essential in treating asthma attacks. A dose of a reliever inhaler should be taken when people start having asthma symptoms.
- People with asthma need to keep their reliever inhalers with them or close at hand at all times. You never know when they might need it.
- If anyone is using their reliever inhaler three or more times a week, it could mean their asthma is not controlled properly.

## *Preventer inhalers*

Preventers protect the lining of the airways. Preventer inhalers are usually brown, red or white. They help to calm down the swelling in the airways and stop them from being so sensitive. This means that people are less likely to react badly when they come across an asthma trigger. However, not all people will need a preventer inhaler.

Most people who need preventer medicines will receive a preventer inhaler from their doctor or asthma nurse that contains inhaled steroids. There are several kinds of inhaled steroids, but they all work in the same way.

- Preventers reduce the risk of severe attacks.

- Their protective effect builds up over a period of time, so they need to be taken every day, usually morning and evening.
- When first being used, it may take up to 14 days before you notice any improvement in asthma symptoms.
- They are usually recommended if people need to use a reliever more than once a day on a regular basis.

### ***What is a spacer?***

Spacers are a useful way of ensuring children, especially young children, take the whole dose of medicine that is delivered through an inhaler.

### ***What is a nebuliser?***

A nebuliser is a machine that creates a mist of medicine, which is then breathed in through a mask or mouthpiece. They are not necessary for most people with asthma.

*Information taken from- Asthma UK website [www.asthma.org.uk](http://www.asthma.org.uk)*

