



# DORMANSLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Asthma Policy

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<b>Status &amp; Review Cycle:</b>	Non-statutory/every 3 years
<b>Next Review Date:</b>	Autumn 2025

### Aims

Asthma is a condition that affects your airways - the small tubes that carry air in and out of the lungs. 5.4 million people in the UK are currently receiving treatment for asthma: 1.1 million children (1 in 11) and 4.3 million adults (1 in 12).

Specifically with children in mind we know that:

- One in 11 children has asthma and it is the most common long-term medical condition.
- On average there are three children with asthma in every classroom in the UK.
- Asthma attacks hospitalise someone every 8 minutes; 185 people are admitted to hospital because of asthma attacks every day in the UK (a child is admitted to hospital every 20 minutes because of an asthma attack).

Dormansland Primary School recognises that asthma is a widespread, serious but controllable condition affecting many pupils. The School positively welcomes all pupils with asthma. We encourage pupils with asthma to achieve their potential in all aspects of school life by having a clear policy that is understood by school staff, the Governing Body and pupils. Supply teachers and new staff are also made aware of the policy.

### 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 Medical Needs Form. All medical needs are informed to school staff.

### Asthma medicines

Medication to treat the symptoms of asthma comes in the form of inhalers. Some children will have 'a preventer inhaler' (brown); these are children who have moderate to severe asthma. This type of inhaler is used daily to try to reduce the number of asthma attacks. All children will have a 'reliever inhaler' (blue). Reliever inhalers work by relaxing the muscles surrounding the airways, therefore, making breathing easier. Reliever inhalers are essential for treating children who have an asthma attack.

Immediate access to reliever medicines is essential and these are kept in each classroom and taken on all school trips. All inhalers are labelled with the child's name.

School staff are not required to administer asthma medicines to pupils except in an emergency; at which point the adult will be asked if he/she is happy to administer such medicine. School staff who

*Asthma Policy*

agree to administer medicines are insured by the local education authority when acting in agreement with this policy. All school staff will let pupils take their own medicines when they need to.

### **Exercise and activity – PE and games**

Taking part in sports, games and activities is an essential part of school life for all pupils. All teachers know which children in their class have asthma and all PE teachers at School are aware of which pupils have asthma from the School's Medical Needs Register. Pupils with asthma are encouraged to participate fully in all PE lessons and/or out of school activities. If a pupil needs to use his/her inhaler during a lesson he/she will be encouraged to do so.

Classroom teachers follow the same principles as described above for other games and activities involving physical activity.

### **Out-of-School activities, trips and outings**

The School will consider asthma triggers when planning out-of-school activities and will ensure there is a member of staff trained in First Aid in attendance. Parents must ensure that the school has been given in advance the correct inhaler, which must be labelled. Failure to do so may result in pupils not being allowed to attend, if parents/carers cannot be contacted.

### **School environment**

The School does all that it can to ensure the school environment is favourable to pupils with asthma. The School has a definitive Nut Free Zone and a No-Smoking Policy. As far as possible the School does not use chemicals in Science and Art lessons which are potential triggers for pupils with asthma.

### **When a pupil is falling behind in lessons**

If a pupil is missing a lot of time at School or is always tired because his/her asthma is disturbing their sleep at night, the class teacher will initially talk to the parents/carers to work out how to prevent their child from falling behind. If appropriate, the teacher will then talk to the school nurse and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator about the pupil's needs. School recognises that it is possible for pupils with asthma to have special education needs due to their asthma.

### **Asthma attacks**

All staff who come into contact with pupils with asthma know what to do in the event of an asthma attack.

In the event of an asthma attack School follows the procedure outlined in Appendix A.

#### **The Governors will:**

- ensure that an appropriate Asthma Policy is in place;
- make sure the Asthma Policy is effectively monitored and regularly updated.

#### **The Headteacher will:**

- plan an individually tailored School Asthma Policy with the help of school staff, the school nurse, local education authority advice and the support of the Governing Body;
- plan the School's Asthma Policy in line with devolved national guidance;

*Asthma Policy*

- ensure good communication of the policy to everyone;
- ensure every aspect of the policy is maintained;
- assess the training and development needs of staff and arrange for them to be met.

#### **School staff will:**

- follow the School Asthma Policy;
- know which pupils with whom they come into contact, have asthma;
- know what to do in the event of an asthma attack;
- allow pupils with asthma immediate access to their reliever inhaler;
- tell parents/carers if their child has had an asthma attack;
- tell parents/carers if their child is using more reliever inhaler than they usually would;
- ensure pupils have their asthma medicines with them when they go on a school trip or out of the classroom;
- liaise with parents/carers, the school nurse and medical needs coordinator/SENDCo.

#### **Pupils will:**

- treat other pupils with and without asthma equally;
- let any pupil having an asthma attack take his/her reliever inhaler (usually blue) and ensure a member of staff is called;
- tell their parents/carers, teacher or PE teacher when they are not feeling well;
- treat asthma medicines with respect;
- know how to gain access to their medicine in an emergency;
- know how to take their own asthma medicines.

#### **Parents/carers will:**

- ensure School has the correct labelled and in-date inhaler in School;
- ensure their child's reliever inhaler (and spacer where relevant) is labelled with their name;
- inform School of any medicines the child requires while taking part in visits, outings or field trips and other out-of-school activities such as school team sports;
- inform School of any changes to their child's asthma (for example, if their symptoms are getting worse or they are sleeping badly due to their asthma);
- ensure their child has regular asthma reviews with their doctor or asthma nurse (every six to 12 months).

#### Appendix A

#### **Procedure for treatment to be given during an asthma attack**

#### **Asthma triggers:**

- |                     |          |                    |
|---------------------|----------|--------------------|
| • Colds and flu     | Food     | Indoor Environment |
| • Pollution         | Emotions | Female Hormones    |
| • Moulds and fungi  | Pollen   | Stress and anxiety |
| • Second hand smoke | Exercise | Animals and Pets   |
| • House Dust Mites  | Weather  |                    |

#### **How asthma affects the airways:**

When a person comes into contact with something that irritates their sensitive airways (an asthma trigger), it causes their body to react in three ways:

- the muscles around the walls of the airways tighten so that the airways become narrower;
- the lining of the airways becomes inflamed and starts to swell;
- sticky mucus or phlegm sometimes builds up, which can narrow the airways even more.

These reactions cause the airways to become narrower and irritated - making it difficult to breathe and leading to asthma symptoms, such as chest tightness, wheezing, or coughing.

### **Common signs of an asthma attack:**

- coughing
- shortness of breath
- wheezing
- feeling tightness in the chest - children sometimes say 'heavy' chest
- being unusually quiet
- difficulty speaking in full sentences
- lethargy
- paleness

### **What to do in an asthma attack:**

1. Reassure the child.
2. Ask the child to sit up straight - don't lie down. Try to keep them calm.
3. Ensure tight clothing is loosened.
4. Get the child to take one puff of their relieve inhaler (usually blue) every 30-60 seconds, up to a maximum of 10 puffs.
5. If they feel worse at any point while they are using the inhaler or don't feel better after 10 puffs or you are worried at any time, **call 999 for an ambulance**
6. **If the ambulance is taking longer than 15 minutes you can repeat step 4.**
7. Even if the child appears to recover - a parent should be called.

### **Important things to remember in an asthma attack:**

- Never leave a pupil having an asthma attack, send another pupil to get a teacher/ member of staff if an ambulance needs to be called.
- In an emergency situation school staff are required under common law, duty of care, to act like any reasonably prudent parent.
- Reliever medicine is very safe. During an asthma attack do not worry about a pupil overdosing.
- Contact the pupil's parents/carers immediately after calling the ambulance/doctor.
- A member of staff should always accompany a pupil taken to hospital by ambulance and stay with them until their parent/carer arrives.

**Links to other policies:**

- Administering medicines policy
- Medical needs policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy

**Further information:**

<http://www.asthma.org.uk/knowledge-bank-treatment-and-medicines-using-your-inhalers>

<https://www.asthma.org.uk/e75bf921/globalassets/health-advice/resources/children/my-asthma-plan-2021-v5-multi-media-live.pdf>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/emergency-asthma-inhalers-for-use-in-schools>