

Whingate Primary School



Asthma Policy & Action Plan

June 2025

Ratified by the Governing Body on _____

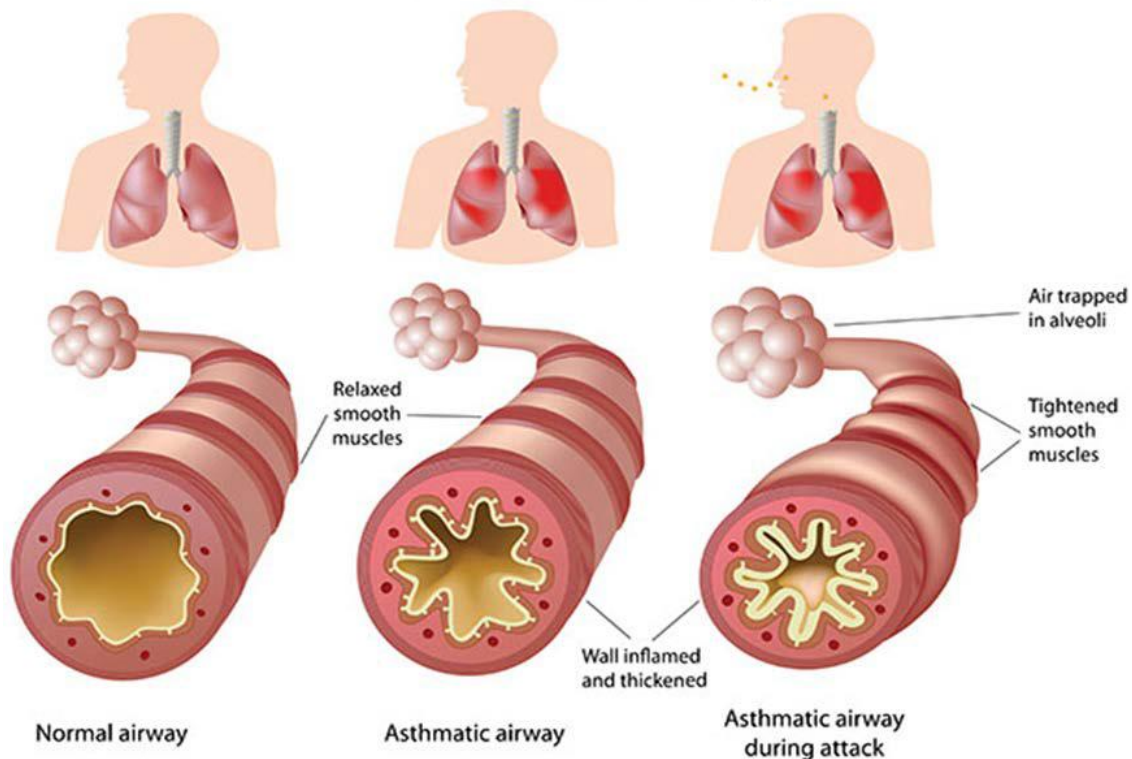
Signature _____ Chair of Governors

Next Review Date: June 2027

Asthma

Asthma is a condition that affects small tubes (airways) 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. These reactions make it difficult to breathe, leading to symptoms of asthma (Source: Asthma UK).

Asthma and Your Airways



At Whingate Primary School we recognise that asthma is a widespread, serious, but controllable condition. This school welcomes all pupils with asthma and aims to support these children in participating fully in school life. We endeavour to do this by ensuring we have:

- an asthma register
- up-to-date asthma policy
- an asthma lead
- all pupils with immediate access to their reliever inhaler at all times
- all pupils have an up-to-date asthma action plan
- an emergency salbutamol inhaler
- ensure all staff have regular asthma training
- promote asthma awareness pupils, parents and staff

Asthma Register:

We have an asthma register of children within the school, which we update yearly. We do this by asking parents/carers if their child is diagnosed as asthmatic or has been prescribed a reliever inhaler. When parents/carers have confirmed that their child is asthmatic or has been prescribed a reliever inhaler we ensure that the pupil has been added to the asthma register and has:

- an up-to-date copy of their personal asthma action plan,
- their reliever (salbutamol/terbutaline) inhaler in school,
- permission from the parents/carers to use the emergency salbutamol inhaler if they require it and their own inhaler is broken, out of date, empty or has been lost. (see Appendix 1)

Asthma Lead:

Helen Woods is the named 'Asthma Lead' at Whingate Primary School. She manages the asthma register, update the asthma policy, manage the emergency salbutamol inhalers (please refer to the Department of Health Guidance on the use of emergency salbutamol inhalers in schools, March 2015) and ensure measures are in place so that children have immediate access to their inhalers.

Medication and Inhalers:

- All children with asthma should have immediate access to their reliever (usually blue) inhaler at all times. The reliever inhaler is a fast acting medication that opens up the airways and makes it easier for the child to breathe. (Source: Asthma UK)
- Some children will also have a preventer inhaler, which is usually taken morning and night, as prescribed by the doctor/nurse. This medication needs to be taken regularly for maximum benefit
- Children should not bring their preventer inhaler to school as it should be taken regularly as prescribed by their doctor/nurse at home. However, if the pupil is going on a residential trip, we are aware that they will need to take the inhaler with them so they can continue taking their inhaler as prescribed. (Source: Asthma UK)
- Children are encouraged to carry their reliever inhaler as soon as they are responsible enough to do so. We would expect this to be by Key Stage 2

We recognise that all children may still need supervision in taking their inhaler

- For our younger children, in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, reliever inhalers are kept in their classroom in the teacher's stock cupboard or somewhere visible for the children
- For our children in Key Stage 2 reliever inhalers are kept in the child's 'tray'

School staff are not required to administer asthma medicines to pupils however many children have poor inhaler technique, or are unable to take the inhaler by themselves. Failure to receive their medication could end in hospitalisation or even death. Staff who have had asthma training and are happy to support children as they use their inhaler, can be essential for the well-being of the child. If we have any concerns over a child's ability to use their inhaler we will refer them to the school nurse and advise parents/carers to arrange a review with their GP/nurse.

Please refer to the medicines policy for further details about administering medicines.

Asthma Action Plans:

Asthma UK evidence shows that if someone with asthma uses a personal asthma action plan they are four times less likely to be admitted to hospital due to their asthma. As a school, we recognise that having to attend hospital can cause stress for a family. Therefore, we believe it is essential that all children with asthma have a personal asthma action plan to ensure asthma is managed effectively within school to prevent hospital admissions. (Source: Asthma UK)

Staff training:

Staff will need annual asthma updates. This training can be provided by Emergency Response Training Ltd.

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 no-smoking policy. Pupil's asthma triggers will be recorded as part of their asthma action plans and the school will ensure that pupil's will not come into contact with their triggers, where possible. We are aware that triggers can include:

- *Colds and infection*
- *Dust and house dust mite*
- *Pollen, spores and moulds*
- *Feathers*
- *Furry animals*
- *Exercise, laughing*
- *Stress*
- *Cold air, change in the weather*
- *Chemicals, glue, paint, aerosols*
- *Food allergies*
- *Fumes and cigarette smoke (Source: Asthma UK)*

As part of our responsibility to ensure all children are kept safe within the school grounds and on trips away, a risk assessment will be performed by staff. These risk assessments will establish asthma triggers which the children could be exposed to and plans will be put in place to ensure these triggers are avoided, where possible.

Exercise and activity:

- Taking part in sports, games and activities is an essential part of school life for all pupils
- All staff will know which children in their class have asthma from the school's asthma register. (Source: Asthma UK)
- Pupils with asthma are encouraged to participate fully in all activities and staff will remind pupils 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 staff teaching a PE lesson that pupils who are mature enough will carry their inhaler with them and those that are too young will have their inhaler labelled and kept in a box at the site of the lesson. If a pupil needs to use their inhaler during a lesson they will be encouraged to do so. (Source: Asthma UK)
- 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 important that the school involve pupils with asthma as much as possible in and outside of school. The same rules apply for out of hours sport as during school hours PE. (Source: Asthma UK)

When asthma is effecting a pupil's education:

Staff in school are aware that the aim of asthma medication is to allow people with asthma to live a normal life. Therefore, if we recognise that asthma is impacting on the pupil's life, and they are unable to take part in activities, tired during the day, or falling behind in lessons we will discuss this with parents/carers, the school nurse (with consent) and suggest they make an appointment with their asthma nurse/doctor.

It may simply be that the pupil needs an asthma review to review inhaler technique, medication review or an updated Personal Asthma Action Plan, to improve their symptoms. However, the school recognises that Pupils with asthma could be classed as having disability due to asthma as defined by the Equality Act 2010, and therefore may have additional needs because of their asthma.

Emergency Salbutamol Inhaler in school:

As a school we are aware of the guidance *'The use of emergency salbutamol inhalers in schools from the Department of Health' (March, 2015)*. The document can be found under the downloads for schools section on www.leedswestccg.nhs.uk/childrensasthma. We have summarised key points from this policy below.

- As a school we are able to purchase salbutamol inhalers from any reputable first aid supplier.

We have 10 emergency kit(s), which are kept in the Child & Family Support Manager's Office so it is easy to access. Each kit contains:

- A salbutamol metered dose inhaler
- At least two spacers compatible with the inhaler
- Instructions on using the inhaler and spacer
- Instruction on cleaning and storing the inhaler
- Manufacturer's information
- A checklist of inhalers, identified by their batch number and expiry date, with monthly checks recorded
- A note of the arrangements for replacing the inhaler and spacers
- A list of children permitted to use the emergency inhaler
- A record of administration

We understand that salbutamol is a relatively safe medicine, particularly if inhaled, but all medicines can have some adverse effects. Those of inhaled salbutamol are well known, tend to be mild and temporary and are not likely to cause serious harm. The child may feel a bit shaky or may tremble, or they may say that they feel their heart is beating faster.

We will ensure that the emergency salbutamol inhaler is only used by children who have asthma or who have been prescribed a reliever inhaler, and for whom written parental consent has been given. The schools asthma lead staff will ensure that:

- On a monthly basis the inhaler and spacers are present and in working order, and the inhaler has sufficient number of doses available

- Replacement inhalers are obtained when expiry dates approach
- Replacement spacers are available following use
- The plastic inhaler housing (which holds the canister) has been cleaned, dried and returned to storage following use, or that replacements are available if necessary
- Before using a salbutamol inhaler for the first time, or if it has not been used for 2 weeks or more, shake and release 2 puffs of medicine into the air

Any puffs should be documented so that it can be monitored when the inhaler is running out. The inhaler has 200 puffs, so when it gets to 150 puffs having been used we will replace it.

- The spacer cannot be reused. We will replace spacers following use
- The inhaler can be reused, so long as it hasn't come into contact with any bodily fluids
- Following use, the inhaler canister will be removed and the plastic inhaler housing and cap will be washed in warm running water, and left to dry in air in a clean safe place
- The canister will be returned to the housing when dry and the cap replaced
- Spent inhalers will be returned to the pharmacy to be recycled

The emergency salbutamol inhaler will only be used by children:

- Who have been diagnosed with asthma and prescribed a reliever inhaler OR
- Who have been prescribed a reliever inhaler **AND** for whom written parental consent for use of the emergency inhaler has been given
- The name(s) of these children will be clearly written in our emergency kit(s)
- The parents/carers will always be informed in writing if their child has used the emergency inhaler, so that this information can also be passed onto the GP

Common 'day to day' symptoms of asthma:

As a school we require that children with asthma have a personal asthma action plan which can be provided by their doctor/nurse. These plans inform us of the day-to-day symptoms of each child's asthma and how to respond to them in an individual basis.

We will also send home our own information and consent form for every child with asthma each school year (*see appendix 1*). This needs to be returned immediately and kept with our asthma register.

However, we also recognise that some of the most common day-to-day symptoms of asthma are:

- Dry cough
- Wheeze (a 'whistle' heard on breathing out) often when exercising
- Shortness of breath when exposed to a trigger or exercising
- Tight chest

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

Asthma Attacks:

The school recognises that if all of the above is in place, we should be able to support pupils with their

asthma and hopefully prevent them from having an asthma attack. However, we are prepared to deal with asthma attacks should they occur.

All staff will receive an asthma update annually and, as part of this training, they are taught how to recognise and manage an asthma attack. In addition, guidance will be displayed in the staff room (see appendix 3).

The department of health Guidance on the use of emergency salbutamol inhalers in schools (March 2015) states 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)
- 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)

If the child is showing these symptoms we will follow the guidance for responding to an asthma attack recorded below. However, we also recognise that we need to **call an ambulance immediately** and commence the asthma attack procedure without delay if the child:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| *Appears exhausted | *is going blue |
| *Has a blue/white tinge around lips | *has collapsed |

It goes on to explain that 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
- Shake the inhaler and remove the cap
- Place the mouthpiece between the lips with a good seal, or place the mask securely over the nose and mouth
- Immediately help the child to take two puffs of salbutamol via the spacer, one at a time.(1 puff to 5 breaths)
- If there is no improvement, repeat these steps* 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 you have had to treat a child for an asthma attack in school, it is important that we inform the parents/carers and advise that they should make an appointment with the GP
- If the child has had to use 6 puffs or more in 4 hours the parents should be made aware and they should be seen by their doctor/nurse.
- If the child does not feel better or you are worried at ANYTIME before you have reached 10

puffs, call 999 FOR AN AMBULANCE and call for parents/carers.

- If an ambulance does not arrive in 10 minutes give another 10 puffs in the same way
- A member of staff will always accompany a child taken to hospital by an ambulance and stay with them until a parent or carer arrives

References:

- Asthma UK website (2015)
- Asthma UK (2006) School Policy Guidelines.
- BTS/SIGN asthma Guideline
- Department of Health (2015) Guidance on the use of emergency salbutamol inhaler in schools

School Asthma Card

To be filled in by the parent/carer

Child's name

Date of birth

Address

Parent/carer's name

Telephone - home

Telephone - mobile

Email

Doctor/nurse's name

Doctor/nurse's telephone

This card is for your child's school. **Review the card at least once a year and remember to update or exchange it for a new one if your child's treatment changes during the year.** Medicines and spacers should be clearly labelled with your child's name and kept in agreement with the school's policy.

Reliever treatment when needed
For shortness of breath, sudden tightness in the chest, wheeze or cough, help or allow my child to take the medicines below. After treatment and as soon as they feel better they can return to normal activity.

Medicine	Parent/carer's signature
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

If the school holds a central reliever inhaler and spacer for use in emergencies, I give permission for my child to use this.

Parent/carer's signature Date

Expiry dates of medicines

Medicine	Expiry	Date checked	Parent/carer's signature
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Parent/carer's signature Date

What signs can indicate that your child is having an asthma attack?

Does your child tell you when he/she needs medicine?
 Yes No

Does your child need help taking his/her asthma medicines?
 Yes No

What are your child's triggers (things that make their asthma worse)?

Pollen Stress
 Exercise Weather
 Cold/flu Air pollution

If other please list

Does your child need to take any other asthma medicines while in the school's care?
 Yes No

If yes please describe

Medicine	How much and when taken
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Dates card checked

Date	Name	Job title	Signature / Stamp
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

To be completed by the GP practice

What to do if a child is having an asthma attack

- Help them sit up straight and keep calm.
- Help them take one puff of their reliever inhaler (usually blue) every 30-60 seconds, up to a maximum of 10 puffs.
- Call 999 for an ambulance if:
 - their symptoms get worse while they're using their inhaler - this could be a cough, breathlessness, wheeze, tight chest or sometimes a child will say they have a 'tummy ache'
 - they don't feel better after 10 puffs
 - you're worried at any time.
- You can repeat step 2 if the ambulance is taking longer than 15 minutes.

Any asthma questions?
Call our friendly helpline nurses
0300 222 5800
(Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm)
www.asthma.org.uk



CONSENT FORM
USE OF EMERGENCY SALBUTAMOL INHALER

Child showing symptoms of asthma/having asthma attack:

1. I can confirm that my child has been diagnosed with asthma/has been prescribed an inhaler (delete as appropriate)

2. My child has a working, in-date inhaler, clearly labelled with their name, that will be left at school

3. In the event of my child displaying symptoms of asthma, and if their inhaler is not available or is unusable, I consent for my child to receive salbutamol from an emergency inhaler held by the school for such emergencies

Signed Date.....

Name (print)

Relationship to child

Child's Name

Class.....

Parent's address and contact details:

.....
.....
.....

Telephone.....

Email.....

Symptoms of an asthma attack

- Not all symptoms listed have to be present for this to be an asthma attack
- Symptoms can get worse very quickly
- If in doubt, give emergency treatment
- Side effects from salbutamol tend to be mild and temporary
- These side effects include feeling shaky, or stating that the heart is beating faster.

Cough

A dry persistent cough may be a sign of an asthma attack.

Chest tightness or pain

This may be described by a child in many ways including a 'tight chest', 'chest pain', tummy ache

Shortness of breath

A child may say that it feels like it's difficult to breathe, or that their breath has 'gone away'

Wheeze

A wheeze sounds like a whistling noise, usually heard when a child is breathing out. A child having an asthma attack may, or may not be wheezing.

Increased effort of breathing

This can be seen when there is sucking in between ribs or under ribs or at the base of the throat. The chest may be rising and falling fast and in younger children, the stomach may be obviously moving in and out. Nasal flaring.

Difficulty in speaking

The child may not be able to speak in full sentences

Struggling to breathe

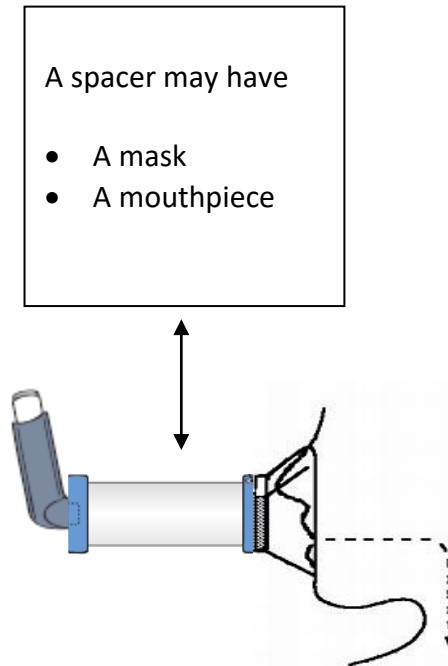
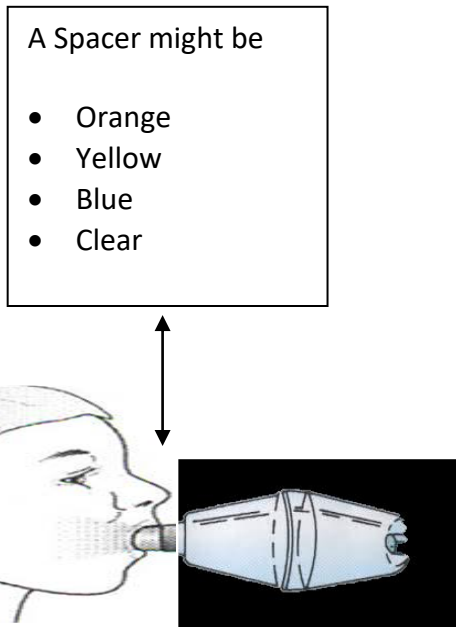
The child may be gasping for air or exhausted from the effort of breathing

CALL AN AMBULANCE IMMEDIATELY, WHILST GIVING EMERGENCY TREATMENT IF THE CHILD

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

Administering reliever inhaled therapy through a spacer

A metered dose inhaler can be used through a spacer device. **If the inhaler has not been used for 2 weeks then press the inhaler twice into the air to clear it.**



1. Keep calm and reassure the child
 2. Encourage the child to sit up
 3. Remove cap from inhaler
 4. Shake inhaler and place it in the back of the spacer
 5. Place mouthpiece in mouth with a good seal, (or if using the mask place securely over the mouth and nose)
 6. Encourage the child to breathe in and out slowly and gently
 7. Depress the canister encouraging the child to continue to breathe in and out for 5 breaths
 8. Remove the spacer
 9. Wait 30 seconds and repeat steps 2-6
 10. Assess for improvement in symptoms
- Dependent on response, steps 2-7 can be repeated according to response up to 10 puffs
 - If there is no improvement, **CALL 999**
 - If help does not arrive in 10 minutes give another 10 puffs in the same way
 - If the child does not feel better or you are worried **ANYTIME** before you have reached 10 puffs, **call 999 for an ambulance and continue to treat as above**