



# Asthma Policy

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Approved by: **Governing Body**

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## Contents

1. Statement of Intent .....	3
2. Asthma Register .....	3
3. Legal Framework.....	4
4. Roles and Responsibilities .....	4
5. Asthma Medicines .....	6
6. Medication and Inhalers .....	7
7. Emergency Inhaler .....	7
8. Common 'Day to Day' Symptoms of Asthma .....	9
9. Symptoms of an Asthma Attack .....	9
10. Response to an Asthma Attack .....	9
11. Emergency Procedures.....	10
12. Record Keeping .....	11
13. Exercise and Physical Activity .....	11
14. When Asthma is Affecting a Pupil's Education .....	12
15. The School Environment .....	12
16. Monitoring and Review.....	13
Appendix 1 - Asthma Policy Information Slip .....	14
Appendix 2 – School Action Plan.....	15
Appendix 3 – Symptoms of an Asthma Attack .....	16
Appendix 4 - Administering Reliever Inhaled Therapy through a Spacer .....	17



## 1. Statement of Intent

St Clement's Catholic Primary School recognises that asthma is a serious but controllable condition and welcomes all pupils with asthma. This policy sets out how the school ensures that pupils with asthma can participate fully in all aspects of school life including physical exercise, school trips and other out-of-school activities. It also covers how the school enables pupils with asthma to manage their condition effectively in school, including ensuring immediate access to reliever inhalers where necessary.

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).

As a 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 have 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 to pupils, parents and staff

## 2. 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 and spacer 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 back of policy*)



### 3. Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- DfE (2015) 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions'
- Asthma UK (2020) 'Asthma at school and nursery'
- DfE (2022) 'First aid in schools, early years and further education'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Policy Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- First Aid Policy

### 4. Roles and Responsibilities

The governing board has a responsibility to:

- Ensure the health and safety of staff and pupils is protected on the school premises and when taking part in school activities.
- Ensure that this policy, as written, does not discriminate against any of the protected characteristics, in line with the Equality Act 2010.
- Handle complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Policy.
- Ensure this policy is effectively monitored and updated.
- Report any successes and failures of this policy to the Head of School, members of school staff, local health authorities, parents and pupils.
- Provide indemnity for teachers and other members of school staff who volunteer to administer medicine to pupils with asthma in need of help.

The Head of School has a responsibility to:

- Create and implement this policy with the help of school staff, school nurses, local guidance and the governing board.
- Ensure this policy is effectively implemented and communicated to all members of the school community.
- Arrange for all members of staff to receive training on supporting pupils with asthma. Ensure all supply teachers and new members of staff are made aware of this policy and provided with appropriate training.
- Monitor the effectiveness of this policy.
- Ensure that first aiders are appropriately trained regarding asthma, e.g. supporting pupils to take their own medication and caring for pupils who are having asthma attacks.
- Delegate the responsibility to check the expiry date of spare reliever inhalers and maintain the school's asthma register to a designated member of staff.



- Report incidents and other relevant information to the governing board and LA as necessary.

All school staff have a responsibility to:

- Read and understand this policy.
- Know which pupils they come into contact with have asthma.
- Know what to do in the event of an asthma attack.
- Allow pupils with asthma immediate access to their reliever inhaler.
- Inform parents if their child has had an asthma attack.
- Inform parents if their child is using their reliever inhaler more than usual.
- Ensure pupils with asthma have their medication with them on school trips and during activities outside of the classroom.
- Ensure pupils who are unwell due to asthma are allowed the time and resources to catch up on missed school work.
- Be aware that pupils with asthma may experience tiredness during the school day due to their night-time symptoms.
- Be aware that pupils with asthma may experience bullying due to their condition, and understand how to manage these instances of bullying.
- Make contact with parents, the school nurse and the SENCO if a pupil is falling behind with their school work because of their asthma.

PE staff have a responsibility to:

- Understand asthma and its impact on pupils – pupils with asthma should not be forced to take part in activities if they feel unwell.
- Ensure pupils are not excluded from activities that they wish to take part in, provided their asthma is well-controlled.
- Ensure pupils have their reliever inhaler with them during physical activity and that they are allowed to use it when needed.
- Allow pupils to stop during activities if they experience symptoms of asthma.
- Allow pupils to return to activities when they feel well enough to do so and their symptoms have subsided (the school recommends a **five**-minute waiting period before allowing the pupil to return).
- Remind pupils with asthma whose symptoms are triggered by physical activity to use their reliever inhaler before warming up.
- Ensure pupils with asthma always perform sufficient warm-ups and cool-downs.

Pupils with asthma have a responsibility to:

- Tell their teacher or parent if they are feeling unwell due to their asthma.
- Treat the schools and their own asthma medicines with respect by not misusing the medicines and/or inhalers.
- Know how to gain access to their medication in an emergency.



- Know how to take their asthma medicine.

All other pupils have a responsibility to:

- Treat other pupils, with or without asthma, equally, in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.
- Understand that asthmatic pupils will need to use a reliever inhaler when having an asthma attack and ensure a member of staff is called immediately.

Parents have a responsibility to:

- Inform the school if their child has asthma.
- Ensure the school has a complete and up-to-date [asthma card](#) for their child.
- Inform the school of the medication their child requires during school hours.
- Inform the school of any medication their child requires during school trips, team sports events and other out-of-school activities.
- Inform the school of any changes to their child's medicinal requirements.
- Inform the school of any changes to their child's asthmatic condition, e.g. if their child is currently experiencing sleep problems due to their condition.
- Ensure their child's reliever inhaler (and spacer where relevant) is labelled with their child's name.
- Ensure that their child's reliever inhaler and spare inhaler are within their expiry dates.
- Ensure their child catches up on any school work they have missed due to problems with asthma.
- Ensure their child has regular asthma reviews with their doctors or asthma nurse (recommended every 6-12 months).
- Ensure their child has a written Personal Asthma Action Plan at school to help the school manage their child's condition.

## 5. Asthma Medicines

Pupils with asthma are encouraged to carry their reliever inhaler as soon as their parent and the school nurse agree that they are old enough and/or have sufficient capabilities and independence. If not, inhalers are given to the school to be looked after. Reliever inhalers kept in the school's charge are held in the [pupil's classroom](#) in a [designated storage area](#).

Parents will be required to label their child's inhaler with the child's full name and year group. Parents will ensure that the school is provided with a labelled spare reliever inhaler, in case their child's inhaler runs out, or is lost or forgotten.

Members of staff are not required to administer medicines to pupils, except in emergencies. Staff members who have volunteered to administer asthma medicines



will be insured by the school's appropriate level of insurance which includes liability cover relating to the administration of medication.

Staff will administer the asthma medicines in line with the school's Administering Medication Policy. For pupils who are old enough and/or have sufficient capabilities and independence to do so, staff members' roles in administering asthma medication will be limited to supporting pupils to take the medication on their own.

This policy is predominantly for the use of reliever inhalers. The use of preventer inhalers is very rarely required at school. In the instance of a preventer inhaler being necessary, staff members may need to remind pupils to bring them in or remind the pupil to take the inhaler before coming to school.

## 6. 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).

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. However, we will discuss this with each child's parents or carer.

Some children may have a number of other medications which are taken morning and/or night, as prescribed by the doctor/nurse. These medications need 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).

Parents should be encouraged to report to school if their child has started a new medication or a course of oral steroids in case of any side effects.

## 7. Emergency Inhaler

The school keeps a supply of salbutamol inhalers for use in emergencies when a pupil's own inhaler is not available. These are kept in the school's emergency asthma kits.

Emergency asthma kits contain the following:

- A salbutamol metered dose inhaler
- Two plastic, compatible spacers
- Instructions on using the inhaler and spacer



- Instructions on cleaning and storing the inhaler
- Instructions for replacing inhalers and spacers
- The manufacturer's information
- A checklist, identifying inhalers by their batch number and expiry date
- A list of pupils with parental consent and/or individual healthcare plans permitting them to use the emergency inhaler
- A record of administration showing when the inhaler has been used

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 been diagnosed with asthma OR who have been prescribed a reliever inhaler AND for whom written parental consent for use of emergency inhaler has been given.

When not in use, emergency inhalers are stored in the school office in the temperate conditions specified in the manufacturer's instructions, out of reach and sight of pupils, but not locked away.

Expired or used-up emergency inhalers are returned to a local pharmacy to be recycled. Spacers must not be reused in school, but may be given to the pupil for future home-use. Emergency inhalers may be reused, provided that they have been properly cleaned after use.

In line with the school's Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy and First Aid Policy, appropriate support and training will be provided for relevant staff, e.g. first aid staff, on the use of the emergency inhaler and administering the emergency inhaler.

Whenever the emergency inhaler is used, the incident must be recorded in the corresponding record of administration and the school's records. The records will indicate where the attack took place, how much medication was given, and by whom. The pupil's parents will be informed of the incident in writing.

A designated staff member is responsible for overseeing the protocol for the use of the emergency inhaler, monitoring its implementation, and maintaining an asthma register.

The designated staff member who oversees the supply of salbutamol inhalers is responsible for:

- Checking that inhalers and spacers are present and in working order, with a sufficient number of doses, on a monthly basis.
- Ensuring replacement inhalers are obtained when expiry dates are approaching.

- Ensuring replacement spacers are available following use.
- Ensuring that plastic inhaler housing has been cleaned, dried and returned to storage following use, and that replacements are available where necessary.

## 8. 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 school action plan (see [Appendix 2](#)) and consent form ([Appendix 1](#)) for every child with asthma each school year. This needs to be returned immediately and kept with our asthma register.

- 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). As per Department of Health Guidance, they would not usually require the child to be sent home from school or to need urgent medical attention.

## 9. Symptoms of an Asthma Attack

Members of staff will look for the following symptoms of asthma attacks in pupils:

- Persistent coughing (when at rest)
- Shortness of breath (breathing fast and with effort)
- Wheezing sound coming from the chest when at rest
- Nasal flaring
- Complaints of tightness in the chest
- Being unusually quiet
- Difficulty speaking in full sentences

Younger pupils may express feeling tightness in the chest as a 'tummy ache'.

## 10. Response to an Asthma Attack

In the event of an asthma attack, staff will follow the procedure outlined below:

- Keep calm and encourage pupils to do the same.
- Encourage the pupil to sit up and slightly forwards – do not hug them or lie them down.
- If necessary, call another member of staff to retrieve the emergency inhaler – do not leave the affected pupil unattended.
- If necessary, summon the assistance of a member of suitably trained first aid staff to care for the pupil and help administer an emergency inhaler.

- Ensure the pupil takes two puffs of their reliever inhaler (or the emergency inhaler) immediately, preferably through a spacer.
- Ensure tight clothing is loosened.
- Reassure the pupil.

Staff will not administer any medication where they have not been trained to do so.

If there is no immediate improvement, staff will continue to ensure the pupil takes 2 puffs of their reliever inhaler every two minutes, until their systems improve, but only up to a **maximum of 10 puffs**. If there is no improvement before the pupil has reached 10 puffs:

- Call 999 for an ambulance
- If an ambulance does not arrive within 10 minutes, the pupil can administer another 10 puffs of the reliever inhaler as outlined above

Staff will call 999 immediately if :

- The pupil is too breathless or exhausted to talk
- The pupil is going blue
- The pupil's lips have a blue or white tinge
- The pupil has collapsed
- You are in any doubt

## 11. Emergency Procedures

Staff will never leave a pupil having an asthma attack unattended. If the pupil does not have their inhaler to hand, staff will send another member of staff or pupil to retrieve their spare inhaler. In an emergency situation, members of school staff are required to act like a 'prudent parent', i.e. making careful and sensible parental decisions intended to maintain the child's health, safety and best interests.

As reliever medicine is very safe, staff will be made aware that the risk of pupils overdosing on reliever medicine is minor. Staff will send another pupil to get another member of staff if an ambulance needs to be called. The pupil's parent will be contacted immediately after calling an ambulance.

A member of staff should always accompany a pupil who is taken to hospital by ambulance and stay with them until their parent arrives. Generally, staff will not take pupils to hospital in their own car unless in exceptional circumstances, e.g. where a pupil is in need of professional medical attention and an ambulance cannot be procured.

In these exceptional circumstances, the following procedure will be followed in line with the First Aid Policy:



- A staff member will call the pupil's parents as soon as is reasonably practical to inform them of what has happened, and the course of action being followed – parental consent is not required to acquire medical attention in the best interests of the child
- The staff member will be accompanied by one other staff member, preferably a staff member with first aid training
- Both staff members will remain at the hospital with the pupil until their parent arrives

## 12. Record Keeping

At the beginning of each school year, or when a child joins the school, parents are asked to inform the school if their child has any medical conditions, including asthma, on their enrolment form.

The school keeps a record of all pupils with asthma, complete with medication requirements, in its asthma register. Parents will be required to inform the school of any changes to their child's condition or medication during the school year.

All emergency situations will be recorded, and staff practice evaluated, in line with the First Aid Policy.

## 13. Exercise and Physical Activity

Games, activities and sports are an essential part of school life for pupils. All teachers will know which pupils in their class have asthma and will be aware of any safety requirements.

Outside suppliers of sports clubs and activities that take place during the school day, are provided with information about pupils with asthma taking part in the activity via the school's asthma register.

Pupils with asthma are encouraged to participate fully in PE lessons when they are able to do so. Pupils whose asthma is triggered by exercise will be allowed ample time to thoroughly warm up and cool down before and after the session.

During sports, activities and games, each pupil's labelled inhaler will be kept in a box at the site of the activity. If a pupil needs to use their inhaler during PE lessons they will be encouraged to do so. Classroom teachers will follow the same guidelines as above during physical activities in the classroom.

The school believes sport to be of great importance and utilises out-of-hours sports clubs to benefit pupils and increase the number of pupils involved in sport and exercise. Pupils with asthma are encouraged to become involved in out-of-hours sport as much as possible and will never be excluded from participation. Members of school



staff and contracted suppliers will be aware of the needs of pupils with asthma during these activities and adhere to the guidelines outlined in this policy.

## 14. When Asthma is Affecting a Pupil's Education

The 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 pupils' lives, 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.

## 15. The 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 far as possible, the school does not use any chemicals in art or science lessons that are potential triggers for asthma. If chemicals that are known to be asthmatic triggers are to be used, asthmatic pupils will be taken outside of the classroom and provided with support and resources to continue learning.

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.



## 16. Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored continually by the head of school. Any necessary amendments may be made **immediately**. The governing board will review this policy **annually**.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to staff, pupils, parents and other relevant stakeholders.



## Appendix 1 - Asthma Policy Information Slip

St Clement's Catholic Primary School keeps a record of pupils with asthma in order to ensure the best possible care for your child. In order for us to maintain effective records on our asthmatic pupils, please enter information as requested below:

Child's name:

Date of birth:

Class:

Doctor:

Type of inhaler:

Dosage required:

(how many puffs)

At St. Clement's Catholic Primary School, we keep a Ventolin Inhaler (Salbutamol) and a spacer device which is available in emergency situations. We are able to provide these to pupils who have forgotten their inhaler or are undergoing a severe attack, where the spacer may be more effective in administration.

The school asks that you give staff permission to administer emergency treatment as indicated below by signing the section below.

-----

I hereby allow the school to administer emergency treatment as indicated above:

Signature of parent: .....

Date: .....



## Appendix 2 – School Action Plan

**Date :**

Child's Name : DOB : Allergies : Emergency Contact : Contact Number : Doctor's Number : Class Year :	<b>Affix Photo</b>
What are the signs that your child may be having an asthma attack?  Are there any key words that you/your child may use to express their asthma symptoms?	
What is the name of your child's reliever medicine and the device?  Does your child have a spacer device? (please circle)                      Yes              No Does your child need help using their inhaler? (please circle)              Yes              No	
What are your child's known asthma triggers?	
I give my consent for school staff to administer/assist my child with their own reliever inhaler as required. Their inhaler is clearly labelled and in date.  Signed.....Date.....  Print Name.....  Relationship to child.....	



## Appendix 3 – Symptoms of an Asthma Attack

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

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

## Appendix 4 - 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.**

A Spacer without mask might be :

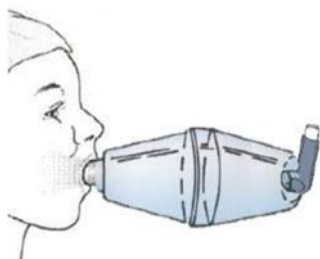
### Small spacers

- Pink
- Green
- Blue

### Large spacer

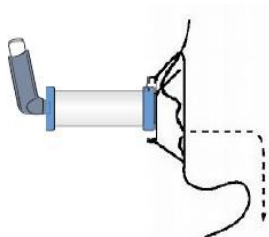
- Clear

### Small spacer



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 end of the spacer
5. Place mouthpiece in mouth with a good seal,
6. Press the canister encouraging the child to continue to breathe in and out for 5 slow breaths.
7. Remove the spacer.

### A spacer with mask



### Large spacer

