



Dudley
Metropolitan Borough Council



DUDLEY SCHOOLS ASTHMA POLICY

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INTRODUCTION

The Directorate of Education, Lifelong Learning and the Primary Care Trusts for Dudley have identified the need for a jointly agreed policy to embrace the needs of children of school age with asthma to ensure schools are fully aware of their health needs.

Together we fully endorse the following and wish to adopt this as our mission statement: -

"Asthma is a potentially life threatening condition which demands to be taken seriously. With a child admitted to hospital every 12 minutes because of asthma it is essential that schools – where children spend the majority of their time - are able to support children with asthma in their care."
(National Asthma Campaign 1999)

"Asthma has become one of the most important medical conditions in the western world."
(Levy and Hilton, 1996)

"Most classrooms will have an average of four to five children with asthma making it the most common long term medical condition in school today"
(National Asthma Campaign, 1999)

"At school, a child with asthma has the right to expect:

- Immediate access to their life-saving reliever inhaler
- Appropriate support to fully participate in PE and activities
- Help in catching up with lessons after time off school
- An environment free of asthma triggers such as tobacco smoke"

(National Asthma Campaign, 1999)

JOINT DUDLEY LEA AND DUDLEY PRIMARY CARE TRUSTS ASTHMA POLICY
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1. POLICY STATEMENT

We recommend that all schools adopt this policy to ensure that pupils' individual health needs are met in line with the LEA Inclusion Policy.

- Recognises the need of pupils with asthma
- Ensures that children with asthma participate fully in all aspects of school life, including PE.
- Recognises that immediate access to the pupil's reliever inhaler is vital.

2. GUIDANCE

In order to achieve the above, the following guidance is recommended:-

- All staff are given basic awareness training about asthma and the use of an inhaler.
- All staff have a clear understanding of that procedures to follow when a child has an asthma attack.
- Inhalers for pupils are accessible at all times. Preferably pupils in Key Stage 2 and upwards should carry their own inhalers
- The school maintains a register of pupils with asthma and individual pupil asthma cards with emergency treatment details.

3. MANAGEMENT OF ASTHMA IN SCHOOLS

Early administration of the correct reliever treatment will cause the majority of attacks to be completely resolved.

Pupils should generally be responsible for their own treatment.

When this is not the case, parents/carers should supply a labelled inhaler and, if needed a spacer device.

Parents/carers should provide written details (on the school asthma card) of a child's dose to take in the event of an attack.

Information should be dated and signed by the parents/carers. Parents/carers should notify the school in the event of any changes. Details to be evaluated annually by the school nurse.

4. IN THE EVENT OF AN ASTHMA ATTACK

- Ensure that the reliever inhaler is taken immediately. Whenever possible, allow medication to be taken where the attack occurred.
- If the child's own inhaler is not accessible, use the school emergency device.
- Stay calm and reassure the child. Stay with the child until the attack is resolved.
- Help the child to breathe by encouraging them to breathe as slowly and deeply as possible.
- After the attack and as soon as they feel better, the child can return to normal school activities.
- The child's parents must be informed of the attack.

5. EMERGENCY SITUATION

Call the ambulance urgently if:-

- The reliever has no effect after 5 – 10 minutes.
- The child is either distressed or unable to talk.
- The child is getting exhausted.
- You have any doubts at all about the child's condition.
- Continue to give reliever medication every few minutes until help arrives.

PROTOCOL

1. IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY

Asthma Policy Co-ordinators

- Bee Tang
- Chris Palmer
- Viv Marsh

Asthma Awareness Training for all School Health Advisors to include input from Dr Ibrahim and Dr Mudgal.

Each school to provide 1 or 2 members of staff to take on a link role.

Each link person to attend ½ day asthma awareness training to include input from paediatrician and also workshops with School Health Advisors on implementing the policy.

School Health Advisors and Link Staff to implement policy by:

- Compiling an asthma register
- Completing asthma record cards in conjunction with parents.
- Obtaining parental consent for use of emergency reliever inhaler
- Providing asthma awareness advice for all school staff
- Checking each child's inhaler device for working order and expiry date
- Displaying 'Asthma Attack' posters at agreed sites in school

2. TRAINING

All training to be organised by asthma policy co-ordinators to ensure appropriately qualified staff provide training/education.

Initial asthma awareness training and implementing the policy advice to be attended by all School Health Advisors and School Link Staff.

Asthma awareness update to be provided annually for all School Health Advisors and School Link Staff.

New School Health Advisors to receive asthma awareness training as part of induction process.

School Link Staff to contact School Health Advisor to provide asthma awareness advice for new school staff.

3. RECORD KEEPING

School Link Staff to ensure all use of reliever inhalers are recorded on child's card.

If the school's emergency device is used this should also be noted in the emergency record book.

Parents will be asked to ensure that their child's inhaler is

- correctly labelled
- in good working order
- in-date

This will be included in the School Health Advisor's annual audit

Information for asthma register and record cards is provided by parents who have responsibility for informing school of any changes.

The information on the register and record cards should be checked and updated annually by the School Health Advisor/School Link Staff.

Support from Asthma Policy Co-ordinators to be available at all times.

Asthma care and management for Dudley's school children to be evaluated annually by School Health Advisors with support from Asthma Policy Co-ordinators.

Links with G.P's to be made by School Health Advisors where children's asthma is troublesome or poorly managed.

4. EMERGENCY INHALER/SPACER

An inhaler and spacer device will be provided for each school. This is intended to be a spare inhaler for use when an asthmatic child suffering symptoms does not have access to their own inhaler.

Emergency inhaler and spacer should be kept in a safe place and should be accessible to all school staff.

If treatment is needed up to 10 puffs can be taken. (One puff at a time)

This can be repeated if necessary but procedure for emergency situation must also be followed.

Parents should be informed and reason for needing to use spare device should be dealt with

After use, the spacer (or inhaler mouthpiece if used without spacer) should be washed and safely stored for next use.

5. SAFETY AND HYGIENE ISSUES

The drug in blue inhalers used to relieve symptoms of asthma is very safe and even if too much is taken will not cause harm.

No harm will come to a non-asthmatic child that takes some reliever medication.

Emergency spacer devices are for universal use and should be washed in warm soapy water, **not rinsed**, and allowed to dry in air after each use to prevent cross infection.

Emergency inhalers and spacers should be checked annually as per guidelines and asthma policy co-ordinators should be contacted for repeat prescriptions.

6. THANKS

The Asthma Policy Co-ordinators would like to thank the following people for their valuable help in setting up the Dudley School's Asthma Policy.

- Dr Z Ibrahim – Consultant Community Paediatrician
- Dr R Mudgal – Consultant Paediatrician
- Dr Mya Mu – Staff Grade Community Paediatrician
- Mr C Siviter – Locality General Manager
- Mrs S Preston – Child Health Manager
- Ms S Menghini – Assistant Director for Education
- Ms J King – School Development Advisor
- Dudley's Headteachers Consultative Forum
- Mrs E Thomas – School Health Clerk
- Mrs T Hanson – School Health Clerk
- The National Asthma Campaign
- Dudley Health Promoting Schools

With thanks from:

Mrs Chris Palmer, Mrs Bee Tang and Mrs Viv Marsh
Asthma Policy Co-ordinators

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