



## **St Columba's Catholic Primary School**

### **ASTHMA POLICY**

#### **RATIONALE**

In school we recognise that asthma is an important condition which affects many children. We will welcome all children who suffer from asthma and we will ensure that they are able to participate fully in areas of school life.

#### **AIMS**

The aim of this policy is to ensure that staff, parents, Governors, visitors and pupils understand about asthma and how to deal with it.

#### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

Full participation in all areas of the school curriculum, including physical education, should be the aim for all, but the most affected, with asthma.

#### **DEFINITION OF ASTHMA**

Asthma is sometimes described as wheezy bronchitis. It causes the airways in the lungs to narrow making breathing difficult. Children with asthma have inflamed airways which react to certain triggers (irritants) eg: viral infections, allergies, exercise, cold weather, temperature changes, excitement, laughter, glue, paint and tobacco smoke.

#### **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

In order to make our school asthma friendly, besides it being a non-smoking site, chemicals, cleaning materials and paint sprays are not to be used whilst pupils are present. Avoiding these in the school environment can lessen the incidence of asthma attacks.

It is essential that we understand how to deal with medication and inhalers effectively. There are two types of treatment both of which come in an inhaler.

- **RELIEVERS** - which help the child's breathing difficulties, these are generally in blue containers.
- **PREVENTORS** - which make airways less sensitive, these generally come in brown/white containers.

Children with asthma should have easy access to their inhalers in case they need them for any reason and be responsible for their use. Staff should not cause delay by locking up inhalers. Staff should also make sure all inhalers are always taken on school trips.

The school will liaise with health professionals if a child needs the use of a nebuliser at school.

Children with exercise-induced asthma should take a puff of their inhaler before they start exercise. They should bring inhalers to the hall, swimming pool and Sports Fields. Children who say they are too wheezy to continue, should take their reliever inhaler and rest until they feel better.



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Teachers should be aware that some children are shy in public when taking their inhalers. We will ensure that other children understand asthma so that they can support their friends.

### **SPECIFIC ISSUES**

We will ensure that all staff have a clear understanding of what to do if a child has an asthma attack. We will work in partnership with parents, governors, health professionals, school staff and children to ensure the successful implementation of the school asthma policy.

- What to do if a child suffers an asthma attack

An asthma attack can cause severe distress to the child and be a frightening experience when first observed. Action needed to deal with an asthma attack does not require specific medical training, and the following guidelines may be helpful:

- ensure that the reliever medicine is taken
- stay calm and reassure the child
- encourage the child to breathe slowly and deeply
- send for assistance if necessary
- contact the parents immediately
- call an ambulance urgently if
  - the reliever has no effect after 5 - 10 minutes,
  - the child is either distressed or unable to talk
  - the child becomes exhausted
  - there are any doubts about the child's condition

### **DISSEMINATION**

All staff and governors will receive a copy of this policy. A copy will be available for parents. A short summary will be included in the school prospectus. The policy will be available on request to parents, LEA, OFSTED and others working for the school, through the Headteacher.

### **MEDICATION REGISTER**

An Medication Register will be maintained. The register will be stored in the School Office.

**Feb 10**