

## **MERE SCHOOL**

### **Asthma Guidelines**

Asthma is the commonest chronic disease in childhood. It affects 13.1% of all children. It is also the most common reason for pupils to take medication at school.

Pupils with asthma should be encouraged to take a full part in all activities of the school.

#### Parents and school

Mere School asks parents of all new entrants and 'transfer ins' whether their son/daughter has asthma.

A record of all pupils with asthma is maintained and updated regularly.

Details of treatment is obtained from parents, together with clear guidance on correct usage. All medication in school should be clearly labelled with the child's name, name of medication and correct dosage. Any individual emergency plan will be put into place, if appropriate.

#### Inhalers

**RELIEVER INHALERS** (usually blue)

A child must have access to an inhaler at home and school.

**PREVENTER INHALERS** (usually brown)

Pupils will need 2 preventer inhalers if this is to be taken during the school day. Most preventer inhalers need to be taken only twice a day and can therefore be administered at home but, if required during the school day, a preventer inhaler must be available at school.

#### **ACCESS TO INHALERS**

At Mere School we ensure easy access to inhalers – in the classroom, on the sports field, at the pool, at break and lunchtimes and on school trips. The majority of children are encouraged to manage their own asthma. Inhalers are kept in a labelled box/bag in each classroom. Younger children or those with special needs may need supervision in using their inhaler.

### The Asthma Attack – What to do

If an asthmatic pupil becomes breathless and wheezy or coughs continually:

- 1 Keep calm. It is treatable.
- 2 Let him/her sit down in the position he/she finds most comfortable. **DO NOT MAKE HIM/HER LIE DOWN.**
- 3 Let him/her take his/her usual reliever – normally a blue inhaler.  
  
If he/she has forgotten his/her inhaler and you do not have prior permission to use another inhaler:
  - Call the parents
  - Failing that, call the GP
  - Check the attack is not severe (see below).
- 4 Wait 5 – 10 minutes.
- 5 If the symptoms disappear, he/she can go back to what he/she was doing.
- 6 If the symptoms have improved but not completely disappeared, call the parents and give another dose of the inhaler while waiting for them.
- 7 If the normal medication has had no effect, see severe asthma attack below.

### What is a severe asthma attack?

ANY of these signs mean severe:

- Normal relief medication does not work at all.
- Breathlessness causes difficulty in talking normally.
- The pulse rate is 120/minute or more.

### How to deal with a severe attack

- 1 Call an ambulance.
- 2 Stay with the child and reassure.
- 3 Keep trying with the inhaler until the ambulance arrives and do not worry about possible overdosing.
- 4 Ensure that the parents are informed.
- 5 Put into action any individual emergency plan, if appropriate.

### The School Nurse

Teachers concerned about a pupil's asthma should discuss this with the child's parents and the school nurse.

### Sports

Total normal activity should be the goal for all but the most severely affected pupils with asthma. However, nearly all children with asthma can become wheezy during exercise. Pupils who are normally active should not be forced to participate in games if they say they are too wheezy to continue. Missing games regularly because of asthma should be infrequent.

**THE TEACHER NEEDS TO BE AWARE OF EACH CHILD'S INDIVIDUAL TRIGGER FACTORS AND SHOULD TAKE STEPS TO AVOID THESE.**

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