
**ST. GEORGE'S R.C.
HIGH SCHOOL**

"A Specialist Technology College"



Asthma Policy

Issued: December 2007

Review date: December 2010

St. George's R.C. High School Asthma Policy

Introduction:

St. George's High School acknowledges that asthma is the most prevalent disease of childhood and recognises that many pupils on roll in this school will have the disease.

Asthma sufferers should not be isolated by their disease, therefore asthma awareness should involve ALL members of the school community.

Explanation of disease:

- People with asthma have sensitive air passages which are quick to respond to anything that irritates them (triggers).
- This results in the air passages of the lungs becoming narrow, making it difficult to breathe in and out.
- Narrowing of air passages produces ONE or ALL of the following:- coughing, breathlessness, wheezing.
- SUDDEN, SEVERE narrowing of air passages may result in an 'Asthma Attack'.

Identification of pupils affected:

- All parents on roll must notify school of current treatment details.
- Treatment details should be accessible at all times.

Treatment: consists of two main forms

- Reliever inhalers (usually Blue) and preventer inhalers (usually Brown).
- It is encouraged that only blue inhalers should be in school.
- Children should have access to their relief inhalers (usually blue) at all times.

Prevention

It is important to be aware that many factors provoke narrowing of the air passages. Some of these factors **are avoidable** within the school environment, therefore appropriate steps should be taken. Trigger factors include:- coughs and colds, cigarette smoke, furry animals, cold weather, chemical paints – sprays and vapours, grass pollens and spores, extremes of emotion and exercise.

Treating worsening symptoms of asthma:

A reliever inhaler (blue) should be given:-

- If requested by the child
- If the child is coughing, wheezing or breathless

If this is effective, the child can return to normal classroom activity.

What to do in the case of an 'asthma attack':

The main symptoms of an asthma attack are coughing continuously, wheezing and shortness of breath.

1. Support the child to inhale once or twice with the blue inhaler. Wait for **5 minutes** – the inhaler should have been effective. Using the inhaler with a spacer device may be easier when the child is having an attack.

This may be available in the school's emergency equipment.

But remember –

Stay calm – it is treatable.

Sit the child comfortably – do not let the child lie down.

Do not crowd the child.

Speak quietly and calmly to the child – encourage slow deep breaths.

Do not put your arms around the child's shoulders – this restricts breathing.

2. If this does not work, then the child may have a **severe** asthma attack.

This constitutes an emergency situation.

An emergency situation is recognisable when:

Blue inhaler does not work,

Or

The child has difficulty speaking – e.g. can only say 2 or 3 words before taking a breath

Or

The child is breathing quickly.

Child can look pale – lips can turn blue.

Plan of Action:

DIAL 999 – telephone for an ambulance. In the meantime, a blue inhaler can be given every 5 minutes. **You cannot overdose the child by doing this. DO** inform the paramedic how much inhaler has been used.

Policy Review:

St. George's High School encourages discussion and reflection from staff, parents and pupils and this policy will subsequently be reviewed at the end of each academic year.

