

# St Andrew's N. S.



## *Asthma Policy*

This policy should be read in conjunction with all other school policies.

Policy updated and Ratified

6<sup>th</sup> July 2021

## **Introduction**

St Andrew's National School recognises that asthma is a widespread, serious but controllable condition. We aim to ensure that pupils with asthma can and do participate fully in all aspects of school life. This policy has been written with advice from the Asthma Society of Ireland and having researched best practice within other schools.

It is important for all staff members to be aware of asthma, its symptoms and triggers, and its management in a school environment. Asthma attacks involve the narrowing of airways making it difficult to breathe. Symptoms commonly include:

- difficulty breathing
- wheezy breathing
- dry and irritating cough
- tightness in the chest
- difficulty speaking

Those with asthma may require daily or additional medication (particularly before/after exercise).

### **The school will endeavour to:**

- Ensure that children have access to asthma medication provided by their parents/guardians. **Parents are responsible for ensuring that asthma medication is in date and in school with the child.**
- Keep a record of all pupils with asthma and the medicines they take. This information will be updated yearly on a shared document.
- Ensure that all staff know what to do in the event of an asthma attack.

### **Parents should:**

- Keep the school informed and updated on any changes on their child's condition. This will be requested annually via our Aladdin system.
- Parents should ensure that this information is conveyed to all coaches and teachers involved in Extra Curricular Activities.

## **Asthma Medicines**

On entry to the school or at any stage during the child's attendance in primary school, parents/guardians must indicate whether their child has asthma.(Appendix 1)

Parents are responsible for ensuring that the reliever inhalers and spacers belonging to children are kept in the child's school or swimming bag or in the case of younger children in the teacher's care.

Parents are also requested to furnish the class teacher with an unused inhaler labelled with the child's name. This is to be stored in the classroom and used in the event of an emergency.

School staff are not required to administer asthma medicines to pupils (except in an emergency). All staff will let pupils take their own medicine when they need to.

If a parent of a Junior Pupil requires a member of staff to administer the inhaler an indemnity form must be filled out by the parent and agreed with the Board of Management.

### **Information on Asthma**

Parents of pupils who have asthma are encouraged to access the website of the Asthma Society of Ireland for help with managing this condition.

It is recommended that all individuals who have been diagnosed with asthma have an asthma management plan.

### **Off site sport, swimming and Educational Visits**

***Pupils are required to take inhalers with them on out of school/off site activities.***

### **Asthma attacks**

St Andrew's National School endeavours to ensure in so far as is reasonably possible that all staff who come into contact with pupils with asthma know what to do in the event of an asthma attack.

In the case of an asthma attack school staff endeavour to follow the procedure outlined by the Asthma Society of Ireland (the 5 step rule). This procedure is visibly displayed in the school office, staffroom and around the building.

### **What to do in an Asthma Attack – The Five Step Rule**

1. Take two puffs of reliever inhaler (usually blue) immediately
2. Sit upright and stay calm
3. Take slow steady breaths
4. If there is no immediate improvement take one puff of reliever inhaler every minute (You can take up to 10 puffs in ten minutes - Children under 6 years can take up to 6 puffs in ten minutes)
5. Call 999 or 112 if symptoms do not improve after following steps 1 -4 OR if you are in worried

*If an ambulance does not arrive within 10 minutes repeat Step 4.*

**Don't** put your arm around the child or lie him/her down - this will restrict his/her breathing.

**Don't** worry about giving him/her too much reliever - during an asthma attack extra puffs of reliever medication are safe.

**Do** use a spacer device if one is available.

**Do** listen to what the child is saying – he/ she has had attacks before.

***(Adapted from the Asthma Society of Ireland's website)***

**Parents must be contacted whenever their child suffers an asthma attack.**

**Self-Evaluation and Review**

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-yearly review cycle or as the need arises.

This policy was approved by the school's Board of Management (BOM) during its meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2021.



Signed:

6<sup>th</sup> July 2021

(Chairperson BOM)

**Appendix 1**

**Consent form given to parents/guardians**

In order to prepare our staff in case of any child having an asthma attack in school, we would be very grateful if you could return the form below to the school office. We would like to include any child who has been diagnosed with asthma. We are aware that there are a number of children in the school who use an inhaler regularly at home as well as some who only need to use it occasionally. If staff are aware of who these children are it will facilitate us in the unlikely event of their having an attack in school.

My son/daughter \_\_\_\_\_ suffers from asthma  
(child's name )

My son/daughter \_\_\_\_\_ does not/has never suffered  
(child's name) from asthma.

Parent's name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(parent/guardian signature)