



1. RATIONALE

Asthma affects a significant number of children and young people.

Staff of JVS need to be aware of the symptoms, medication and actions to take, with children who have asthma, and when children might be having an asthma attack or increased breathing difficulties.

2. PROCEDURE

2.1 Parents need to inform their child's school if their child has asthma, and should consult teachers and staff as to whether an 'Asthma Plan' may be required i.e. if the child has had severe asthma attacks in the past, or if the child is very young.

2.2 Schools work with parents, staff and students to provide effective support to students with asthma, in line with the management recommended by the doctor.

2.3 Students with asthma need ready access to their reliever medication when an attack occurs. In most cases formal arrangements are made between the school and parents for students to carry reliever medications with them while at school and on all school related excursions.

2.4 Where the student with asthma is young, or needs assistance to administer the asthma medication, the school will consult with parents and staff to determine the best arrangement for administering the asthma medication when the student needs it.

2.5 In cases of severe asthma or where the principal determines that the student's health support needs cannot be met within existing arrangements, he or she will consult with parents and staff in developing an individual health care plan for the student.

2.6 Parents will need to provide information from the child's doctor.

2.7 Each staff member is to have a current first aid certificate that includes training in the administration of prescribed medications and asthma treatments.

Asthma Emergency Symptoms

A student is having an asthma attack if his/her asthma symptoms get worse but do not go away when they use their blue reliever. An asthma attack may develop very rapidly over a few minutes, or it may take a few hours or even days to happen. An asthma attack may be mild, moderate or severe.

Symptoms of a **mild** asthma attack:

- cough, wheeze
- some shortness of breath
- still able to speak in full sentences between breaths

Symptoms of a **moderate** asthma attack:

- continual cough, moderate to loud wheeze
- obvious difficulty breathing
- only able to speak in short phrases between breaths

Symptoms of a **severe** asthma attack:

- severe difficulties breathing
- speak no more than a few words at a time
- wheeze is often quiet
- sucking in of the throat and rib muscles
- pale and sweaty
- may have blue lips
- very distressed and anxious

If a staff member, student, or someone else, is having a severe attack, call an ambulance (dial 000) immediately.

As well as experiencing some of the above symptoms, young children may appear restless, unable to settle and may have problems eating or drinking. They may also have severe coughing or vomiting.

(information provided by the National Asthma Foundation)

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