

SCHOOL ASTHMA ACTION PLAN

for acute symptom management

Healthier Together

Improving health and care in Bristol,
North Somerset and South Gloucestershire

This guidance can be used for any child experiencing symptoms of asthma or wheeze who has been prescribed an inhaler as reliever medication.

Most children in Primary school will have a spacer but some children over the age of 7 and young people in Secondary school may have an alternative device and may not carry a spacer.

Think!

IS THIS ANAPHYLAXIS?

If someone with a **known** food, medication or insect allergy prescribed an Adrenaline Autoinjector has sudden breathing difficulty including wheeze, shortness of breath, persistent cough or hoarse voice **ALWAYS give Adrenaline Autoinjector FIRST, call 999 and then give asthma reliever inhaler**, even if there are no skin symptoms.

[How to use EpiPen](#)

[How to use Jext](#)

[How to use Emerade](#)

MILD TO MODERATE

- Minor difficulty breathing
- May have a cough
- May have a wheeze
- Look for signs of severe or life-threatening asthma (below)

SEVERE

- Cannot speak a full sentence
- Sitting hunched forwards
- Skin sucking in at base of throat or between ribs
- May have a cough or wheeze
- Obvious difficulty

LIFE-THREATENING

- Unable to speak >1-2 words
- Collapsed/exhausted
- Gasping for breath
- May no longer have a cough or wheeze
- Drowsy/confused/unconscious
- Skin discolouration (blue lips)

ASTHMA FIRST AID

For severe or life-threatening signs and symptoms, call for emergency assistance immediately and dial 999. Follow steps below to start treatment with reliever medications.

Please use the child's own inhaler. If unavailable, use the school's emergency inhaler

1. Sit the child or young person upright

Stay with them and be calm and reassuring

2. For inhaler & spacer

Give 2-5 separate puffs of Salbutamol

Shake the canister before each puff
Squirt 1 puff into the spacer at a time
Take 10 breaths from the spacer after each puff

For dry powder devices

Salbutamol: Take 1 inhalation every 30-60 seconds up to 10 inhalations (up to 4 if using Accuhaler).

Symbicort 100/6 or 200/6 (age 12+): Take 1 inhalation every 2 minutes (up to 6 inhalations)

3. Wait 10 minutes

If symptoms improve, pupil can return to school activities
If there is no improvement, **repeat Step 2**

4. If there is still no improvement, dial 999

Ask for an Ambulance and state that individual is having an Asthma Attack
Give 1 puff/inhalation every minute whilst waiting for Emergency Help to arrive

HOW TO GIVE SALBUTAMOL VIA A SPACER

[Asthma + Lung UK demo video on using a spacer](#)

1. Assemble spacer
2. Remove cap from inhaler
3. Shake inhaler well
4. Attach to end of spacer
5. Place mouthpiece in mouth & ensure good seal (Nursery or children with additional needs may require face mask)
6. Breathe out into spacer
7. Press inhaler down, releasing one puff into spacer
8. Breathe in and out of the spacer 10 times



HOW USE A DRY POWDER DEVICE

[Asthma + Lung UK demo video on dry powder devices](#)

1. Breathe out completely to empty the lungs.
2. Place the mouthpiece in the mouth and close lips around it to create a tight seal.
3. Take a fast, deep, forceful breath in. Take as big a breath as possible!
4. Hold the breath for a count of 10.
5. Take inhaler out of the mouth and breathe out slowly.



Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school (Department for Education, 2014) [link to document](#)

Guidance on the use of emergency salbutamol inhalers in schools. (Department for Education, 2014) [link to document](#)

Approved by BNSSG APMOC August 2025 Review: August 2028