

# Coventry School Nursing Newsletter

Summer Holiday Edition 2021

## SCHOOL'S OUT FOR Asthma awareness



The end of the school term is near and with it the possibility that the government may be relaxing some of the restrictions. This means that there is an **expected surge in coughs, colds and asthma this summer**. We want you to have as much information as possible to help you manage and treat your child/children's asthma, so that they can enjoy their summer holiday without worrying about them getting ill.

### Why are we expecting this surge?

We have all been very careful to avoid catching Covid-19 and any other infections over the past 16 months, many of our children and young people have had very few coughs and colds during this time. This means their immune system has not been exposed to the viruses that cause coughs and colds. Meaning children are more vulnerable to these infections when we start to meet together more closely and for some this may trigger symptoms of asthma.

According to NHS England, 1 million children in the UK receive treatment for asthma and it is the most common long term medical condition among children and young people

The coming season can bring with it triggers that may contribute to an asthma flare up. In this newsletter, we have provided information which may help you have a better understanding of asthma and how to manage it.

### How is asthma diagnosed?

If your doctor thinks you have asthma, you'll have to get checked. One test that helps doctors diagnose asthma is spirometry. A spirometer is a device that measures how well your lungs work (see picture above on the right). It's as easy as blowing out your birthday candles!



### How is asthma treated?

Caring for your asthma means doing two things: avoiding things that cause flare-ups and taking medicines if your doctor prescribes them.

### What's an asthma flare-up?

Asthma doesn't make your breathing harder all the time — just sometimes. This happens because the airways get more irritated than normal. When this happens, it's called an asthma "flare-up" or "attack."

You'll know you're having a flare-up if you:

- cough a lot
- have a whistling sound when breathing (this is called wheezing)
- have a tight or painful feeling in the chest
- are breathless

Flare-ups also can make you sweat or feel like your heart is beating faster than normal, even while sitting still.

### Who We Are

When your child first enters school, health advice is transferred from the Health Visiting Service to the School Nursing Service. This service continues until your child leaves education. The School Nursing Team provide an accessible service to children, young people, families, carers and members of the local community.

### Confidentiality

Whilst we offer confidentiality, members of the School Nursing Team work in partnership with other agencies, where information may need to be shared in the best interest of your child.

### Consent

The School Nurse Team will obtain consent from parents and carers before supporting children and young people. In secondary schools young people can access the School Nurse independently for advice and support without parental consent, although we would always encourage young people to speak with their parent/carer.

An asthma flare-up can get worse if you don't use your asthma medicine as directed.



**What causes an asthma flare-up?** Things that can cause you to have an asthma flare-up are called "triggers." Different people may have different triggers. What are some of the common triggers?

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CONTACT US

Health  
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HEALTH FOR TEENS

Moat House School Nurse Team:

01926 495321 Ext 7494

[Swg-tr.MoatHouseSchoolNursing@nhs.net](mailto:Swg-tr.MoatHouseSchoolNursing@nhs.net)

Charter School Nurse Team:

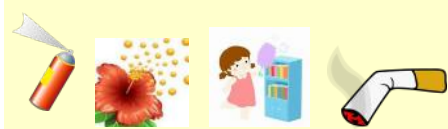
01926 495321 Ext 7417

[Swg-tr.CharterAvenueSchoolNursing@nhs.net](mailto:Swg-tr.CharterAvenueSchoolNursing@nhs.net)

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**Asthma awareness continued** Common triggers include; breathing in things that cause allergies (called allergens) such as; dust, pollen, dander from animals and mould. Breathing in things that irritate your airways such as; cigarette smoke, perfume and chalk dust. Infections, like a cold or the flu as well as exercising and breathing in cold air.



## Avoiding Triggers

Once you know what your triggers are, you can take steps to avoid them. Some ways to do this are:

- Change your sheets and vacuum often to rid your home of dust.
- Keep your pet out of your bedroom if you're allergic to pet dander.
- Stay inside on days when pollen counts are high (check the local weather report daily for the pollen count).
- If exercise makes your asthma worse, the doctor may prescribe a medicine to take before exercising to prevent your airways from tightening up.



It's not always possible to avoid triggers and there is no cure for asthma, but treatment is available to help manage symptoms enabling you to lead a normal active life. Generally if you have asthma you will need to take medication and just as triggers can be different for different people so can the treatment.

You may have quick-relief medicine (also called rescue or fast-acting medicine). It works fast to help open our airways so we can breathe again. Or you may have long-term control medicine (also called controller or maintenance medicine). It's a daily medicine that helps keep flare-ups from happening.

Inhalers, which are devices that let you breathe in medicine, are the main treatment. Tablets and other treatments may also be needed if your asthma is severe. You should take your medicine as directed by your doctor. If you don't, your asthma could get worse and you might even end up in the hospital.

## What is an asthma action plan?

You'll usually create a personal action plan with a doctor or asthma nurse. This can be shared with other professionals who care for your child i.e. schools and clubs etc. Your child can be involved in this plan if they are old enough and it is personal to them and their asthma needs.

Everyone with asthma can benefit from using an asthma action plan.

It tells people:

- Which medicines someone takes every day to prevent symptoms and cut their risk of an asthma attack
- What to do if their asthma symptoms are getting worse
- The emergency action to take if someone is having an asthma attack and when to call 999.

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How do I get an asthma action plan for my child? If your child doesn't have an asthma action plan yet, it only takes three easy steps to get started:

1. Download a child asthma action plan by following this link (this can be copy and pasted if viewing this newsletter on a device): <https://www.asthma.org.uk/c874def6/globalassets/health-advice/resources/children/my-asthma-plan-2021-multi-media-live.pdf> If your child is over 12 they can choose to use the adult action plan instead (<https://www.asthma.org.uk/ac76e7a2/globalassets/health-advice/resources/adults/asthma-action-plan-adult-2021.pdf>). If you can, print out a copy ready to take to your GP.

2. Book an asthma appointment with your child's GP or asthma nurse

3. At the appointment talk through the plan with your child's GP or asthma nurse and fill it in together. Let your child help fill it in with the GP and encourage them to ask questions. Ask them to save a copy onto your notes and send you it to you on email, SMS or WhatsApp.

The asthma action plan can come in different templates but will generally look something like the image below.



### Using an Inhaler

Most asthma medicines need to be breathed in and an inhaler helps get medicine into the lungs.

One type of inhaler has a plastic tube that holds the asthma medicine. When you press on the tube, a puff of medicine sprays out for you to breathe in. There are other types of inhalers and it is important to use them correctly for the medicine to reach the lungs and help you. Speak with your doctor or asthma nurse for support. You can also follow this link (copy and paste to your URL) from the [asthma.org.uk](https://www.asthma.org.uk) site which has videos on how to use each type of inhaler: <https://www.asthma.org.uk/advice/inhaler-videos/>



### Using a Spacer



Using a spacer can help you, as it attaches to the inhaler and holds the mist of medicine in one place (between the inhaler and your mouth). A spacer lets you breathe in when you're ready, so it's easier to inhale all the medicine into your lungs.



Another type of inhaler contains powdered medicine inside, which needs to be breathed in quickly and deeply, and doesn't need a spacer.



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## What do you need to do now to support your asthmatic child over the summer and before starting school?



- ⇒ Check that asthma inhalers are in date; is there enough medicine in them? If not request a repeat prescription from your GP.
- ⇒ Check that your child/ren remembers how to use their inhaler properly and request help if they don't and if you can't help them either. Contact your GP or asthma nurse or watch the video mentioned previously: <https://www.asthma.org.uk/advice/inhaler-videos/>
- ⇒ Review your child's asthma action plan make sure they understand it and it is up to date.
- ⇒ If your child does not have an asthma action plan, or if their asthma action plan that they have is out of date or they do not understand it, then contact your GP or practice asthma nurse for help.

### How can I prepare for my asthmatic child going to school?

Your child may be going back to school for a new term, starting for the first time or joining a new school. If your child has asthma, or suspected asthma, you may worry about how to prepare for this and you may have concerns about how your child stays safe there. You can deal with any worries or concerns by talking to the school.

Making sure school knows all about your child's asthma is very important, to ensure that you, your child and school staff are comfortable. Book a meeting with your child's teacher or keyworker, this will be useful because you can talk through important information about your child's asthma. You may want your child at this meeting (if they're old enough) and you may want other professionals there i.e. the head teacher or the school nurse. During the current climate this meeting may not happen in person, it may have to be over the phone or video call. This can be checked when you book the meeting.

In the meeting, it's a good idea to talk staff through your child's asthma action plan and give staff a copy to keep.

Let them know what your child's usual triggers are and explain how asthma affects your child. This includes their symptoms and signs to be aware of for when they need to use their reliever inhaler, like wheezing, coughing, difficulty breathing and a tight chest.

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Make sure the school know how to contact you if your child has any asthma symptoms at school - for example, if they needed to use their reliever inhaler. It is also important that you let the school know if your child is getting asthma symptoms at home.

Show the teacher or keyworker your child's reliever inhaler and explain how to use it. All staff that have contact with your child should know how to look after your child's asthma. This includes lunchtime supervisors and supply teachers. Explain that if your child has a spacer, they must always use it, as it helps their inhaler to work better.

A school asthma card includes contact details and essential information about your child's asthma (see image on the left). Fill it in with your child's GP or asthma nurse and take it into your child's school. You can download it from the asthma.org.uk site: [https://www.asthma.org.uk/c58384a9/globalassets/health-advice/resources/schools/school-asthma-card2020\\_download.pdf](https://www.asthma.org.uk/c58384a9/globalassets/health-advice/resources/schools/school-asthma-card2020_download.pdf)

## Managing asthma at secondary school

When your child goes into secondary school, they should be managing their asthma themselves but there are a few things you need to make sure your child does:

- ⇒ They need to check that their reliever inhaler is in their bag before leaving for school every day. It should be kept somewhere they can get to easily at any time, like during PE or if they are on a school trip.
- ⇒ Your child should know if their school has spare reliever inhalers, in case they lose or forget their own. However, they should not rely on this. It will always be quicker and safer if your child can get their own inhaler quickly and easily.
- ⇒ Your child should know when they need to use their reliever inhaler.
- ⇒ They should recognise the symptoms of an asthma attack and know when to ask someone to call an ambulance.

Having asthma in year 7 can be an especially risky time for children, because of the amount of change a child experiences when moving up from primary to secondary school. It can mean a new environment, with the potential for new triggers. It is still a good idea to discuss concerns with your child's new class teacher/tutor, who may share this information with other members of the staff team i.e. the pastoral team and/or school first aider.

For more information visit <https://www.asthma.org.uk/> They have a range of helpful resources such as the asthma and my child guide, asthma calendars and sticker chart (see image on the right) to help you and your child track symptoms together, recovery plans, peak flow diary charts and the previously mentioned asthma plan and school asthma card. Take a look at their resources page <https://www.asthma.org.uk/advice/resources/>



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## Preparing your child to start school

It is completely natural to feel anxious about your child starting school, change and the unknown can make many of us feel this way. Your child may also be worried but may not necessarily be able to tell you about it. Some common reactions from children when starting school can include:

Feeling rest-  
less or fidgety

Loss of appe-  
tite/Fussy

Becoming  
withdrawn

Reverting to early behav-  
iours (i.e. bedwetting,  
thumb sucking)

Having sleep  
difficulties

Feeling anxious

Becoming  
clingy

Challenging/  
aggressive  
behaviour



These are all ways in which your child is responding to a change in their routine and new and challenging situations, it is normal and you can help by:

- Talking to your child about their anxieties and discuss what may help them to address and overcome these.
- Working with school staff to address your child's anxieties/worries.
- Offering support in simple ways to your child, cuddling them, or joining in their favourite activity and playing with them.
- Listen actively to your child, be understanding of their needs and respond to them.
- Remember you aren't alone if you need help speak to school, your GP and the school nursing team.

**TOP TIPS**

### Tips to prepare your child for school:

- ⇒ Talk to your child about starting their new school, this will give you the chance to ask if they are worried. Remember to say what an exciting and positive time this will be. They will meet new friends and learn new things!
- ⇒ Read books together about starting school, this will encourage questions and help children build a picture of what school will be like.

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- ⇒ If you haven't already done so, it's a good idea to send your child to nursery or pre-school, this encourages self-confidence and social interaction and can help with forming routines.
- ⇒ Practice your child's new morning and bedtime routines in the holiday, this will help them transition to the new school routine more smoothly.
- ⇒ Practice school runs to help with effective time management and easing of stress for all.
- ⇒ Involve your child in choosing their uniform and encourage independent dressing as this will help with self-care skills and new routines.
- ⇒ Encourage your child to get to know potential new classmates and arrange play dates to encourage social interaction and easing of anxiety on their first day.
- ⇒ Try to role play scenarios so that your child gets an idea of what it may be like being in a classroom and expected behaviour to help encourage good behaviour at school.
- ⇒ Try to ensure your child is fully independent in toileting skills to avoid potential embarrassment and mishaps.
- ⇒ Always seek help and advice from your child's teachers/educational staff if you have any concerns about your child in school.



**Screen time balance reminder!** Having more free time over the holiday may mean your child can access devices such as phones, tablets and laptops etc. more. There is no fixed time frame we can recommend, but we would suggest a healthy balance of activities. See page 10 for links to articles on internet safety and safe screen time.



**Easy fruit and veg recipes to try with the kids!** The summer is a great time to get children involved with making fun and healthy treats, such as; fruit or veg skewers, rainbow pizzas, frozen fruity yoghurt bites and fruit ice lollies. Take a look at the links on page 10 for recipes or search online for more ideas.



It is important to remember that we are not out of the pandemic and should continue to be sensible when meeting people outside our families/bubbles. **Remember to keep washing your hands!**

We hope your child/ children enjoyed the last term of school and expect you are all looking forward to the summer holiday.



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## What is going on this summer near you?

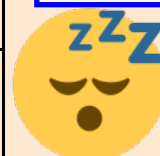


Remember the Coventry school nursing team are here for you, even during the holidays. If you need support please get in touch!

We are running audiology clinics during the holiday for those children who were in Reception class from September 2020–July 2021. Take a look at the table below for details:

Date:	Location:	To book call:
22.07.2021	Woodside Hub	Charter Avenue base 01926 495321 Ext 7417
28.07.2021	Moat House Leisure Centre	Moat House base 01926 495321 Ext 7494
10.08.2021	Moat House Leisure Centre	Moat House base 01926 495321 Ext 7494
12.08.2021	Mosaic Family Hub	Charter Avenue base 01926 495321 Ext 7417
23.08.2021	Moat House Leisure Centre	Moat House base 01926 495321 Ext 7494

**Free Eventbrite sessions** – you may already be aware, that the team is providing free, toileting and sleep sessions, especially for parents/carers. These sessions are packed with advice and information to support you with any concerns you may have. There is also a chance to ask questions after the sessions. Be sure to book on as soon as you can, places are limited!



In the previous newsletter we spoke about sun safety and in the spring 2021 newsletter we spoke about road safety; as we are hopeful for more sunshine and are likely to be on the road more during the summer on walks or on our bikes etc. it is a good idea to take a look at these previous newsletters to remind yourself of the advice and tips we provided for your safety. You can access these by visiting the health for kids website - see links for these on the right- if you have access to a printer, you can download and print page 6 of the summer newsletter so your child/ren can complete the summer activity sheet.

Name of session	Date and time	Link to book free ticket:
Toileting Information Session	11/08/21 2:00pm-3:00pm	<a href="https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/toileting-information-session-tickets-154277422925">https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/toileting-information-session-tickets-154277422925</a>
Sleep Information Session	20/08/21 1:00pm - 2:00pm	<a href="https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/sleep-information-session-tickets-154279952491">https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/sleep-information-session-tickets-154279952491</a>

<https://www.healthforkids.co.uk/coventry/coventry-school-nursing-summer-newsletter-2021/>

<https://www.healthforkids.co.uk/coventry/school-nursing-newsletter-spring-2021/>

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## Family Hub summer activities!



Hub:	Activities / sessions planned
Wood Side Family Hub, Upper Ride, Coventry, CV3 3GL	Breakfast Club 9 - 10 every Wednesday, Thursday and Friday throughout summer (last week is week commencing 23rd August). For more details, call 024 7697 8090 or email <a href="mailto:WoodSidefamilyHub@coventry.gov.uk">WoodSidefamilyHub@coventry.gov.uk</a> and check out their social media pages.
Mosaic Family Hub, Jardine Crescent, Coventry, CV4 9PL	No fixed programme of activities but they are working with Sky Blues in the Community, the Summer of Fun and the HAF program that is running and supporting the hub over the 2 week period. For more details, call 024 7697 8160 or email <a href="mailto:MosaicFamilyhub@coventry.gov.uk">MosaicFamilyhub@coventry.gov.uk</a> and check out their social media pages.
The Moat Family Hub, Deedmore Road, Coventry, CV2 1EQ	Have activities planned for the holiday, see their time table below. For more details, call 024 7697 8036/email <a href="mailto:TheMoatFamilyHub@coventry.gov.uk">TheMoatFamilyHub@coventry.gov.uk</a> and check out their social media pages. <b>BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL FOR PLACES!</b>
Park Edge Family Hub, Roseberry Avenue, Coventry, CV2 1NE	Have activities planned for the holiday, see their timetable below. For more details, call 024 7697 7880/email <a href="mailto:ParkEdgeFamilyHub@coventry.gov.uk">ParkEdgeFamilyHub@coventry.gov.uk</a> and check out their social media pages. <b>BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL FOR PLACES!</b>
Harmony Hub, Clifton Street, Coventry, CV1 5GR	Have activities planned for the holiday, their timetable is coming soon. For more details, call 024 7697 8030 or email <a href="mailto:HarmonyFamilyhub@coventry.gov.uk">HarmonyFamilyhub@coventry.gov.uk</a> and check out their social media pages.
Families For All Hub, 454 Foleshill Road, Coventry, CV6 5LB	No planned activities as they are waiting for restrictions to lift, so keep checking in with them. Call 024 7697 7991/email <a href="mailto:FamiliesforAllFamilyHub@coventry.gov.uk">FamiliesforAllFamilyHub@coventry.gov.uk</a> and check out their social media pages for information.
Aspire Family Hub, Humber Avenue, Coventry, CV1 2SF	Call 024 7697 8100 or email <a href="mailto:AspireFamilyHub@coventry.gov.uk">AspireFamilyHub@coventry.gov.uk</a> for information. Keep an eye on their social media pages.
Pathways Family Hub, Lawrence Saunders Road, Coventry, CV6 1HD	Call 024 7697 8130 or email <a href="mailto:PathwaysFamilyHub@coventry.gov.uk">PathwaysFamilyHub@coventry.gov.uk</a> for information. Keep an eye on their social media pages.

Find your nearest family hub:

<https://www.coventry.gov.uk/familyhubs>

The Moat Family Hub & Park Edge Family Hub  
Coventry City Council  
Summer Activities  
Coventry FamilyHub PARTNERSHIP

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>The Moat Family Hub</b> 10am - 2pm		<b>Park Edge Family Hub</b> 10am - 2pm		
Arts & Crafts 26 <sup>th</sup> July		Coffee & Cake 28 <sup>th</sup> July		
Guiding Young Minds 2 <sup>nd</sup> August	Sensory Room available to book @ The Moat Hub	Arts & Crafts 4 <sup>th</sup> August	Sensory Room available to book @ The Moat Hub	Aptitude Youth Summer Activities @ The Moat Hub 3-6pm [11-17yrs]
Outdoor Games 9 <sup>th</sup> August		Nature/Animals 11 <sup>th</sup> August		
Nature/Animals 16 <sup>th</sup> August		Guiding Young Minds 18 <sup>th</sup> August		
Under Water 23 <sup>rd</sup> August		Outdoor Games 23 <sup>rd</sup> August		



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## Useful Resources: *Check out a few of the great resources which may be of help to your School, families, primary and secondary school children:*

### **Asthma:**

<https://www.asthma.org.uk/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/asthma/>

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/childhood-asthma/>

### **School readiness:**

<https://www.pacey.org.uk/working-in-childcare/spotlight-on/being-school-ready/>

<https://www.healthforkids.co.uk/coventry/school-readiness/>

<https://letstalk.coventry.gov.uk/early-years-school-readiness-q-and-a>

### **Internet safety and screen time balance:**

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/blog/how-much-screen-time-okay-my-child>

<https://parentzone.org.uk/article/5-things-parents-should-know-about-screen-time>

### **Fruit and vegetable recipe ideas:**

<https://www.healthylittlefoodies.com/fruit-kebabs/?nowprocket=1>

<https://recipes.sainsburys.co.uk/recipes/vegan-rainbow-vegetable-kebabs>

<https://www.eatsamazing.co.uk/family-friendly-recipes/easy-recipes-for-kids/10-easy-recipes-cook-kids-summer>

<https://www.eatsamazing.co.uk/family-friendly-recipes/dessert-sweet-treat-recipes/10-easy-homemade-ice-lolly-recipes-for-kids>

<https://www.myfussyeater.com/healthy-rainbow-veggie-tortilla-pizza-recipe-kids/>

<https://realfood.tesco.com/recipes/rainbow-fruit-pizza.html>

### **Additional support:**

Autism support - <https://www.autismhampshire.org.uk/index/covid-19-resources/transition-back-to-school-after-lockdown-resources>

For advice and support during these uncertain times you can visit some of the following websites for more information and support on your mental health and wellbeing:

<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters>

<https://cwrise.com/> Ben.org.uk

[youngminds.org.uk/](http://youngminds.org.uk/)

[www.rethink.org/](http://www.rethink.org/)

[www.mind.org.uk/](http://www.mind.org.uk/)

If you are a parent - text our parent line on 07507 329 114

If you are age 11-18 - text us on 07507 331 949



**Parents can apply for a sunshine lanyard for children with a hidden disability. This means they do not have to wait in queues and can go straight in. Click here/visit site to order one:**

<https://hiddendisabilitiesstore.com/?SID=5ebe5860eca442d46ed981c2a4d6e0d2>

 <https://www.facebook.com/coventryfamilyhealthandlifestyleservice/>

 @CoventryFHLS

## CONTACT US



## HEALTH FOR TEENS

**Moat House School Nurse Team:**

01926 495321 Ext 7494

[Swg-tr.MoatHouseSchoolNursing@nhs.net](mailto:Swg-tr.MoatHouseSchoolNursing@nhs.net)

**Charter School Nurse Team:**

01926 495321 Ext 7417

[Swg-tr.CharterAvenueSchoolNursing@nhs.net](mailto:Swg-tr.CharterAvenueSchoolNursing@nhs.net)